



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

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

T

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-third Session – Quarante-troisième session - 43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023

**VERBATIM RECORDS OF MEETINGS OF COMMISSION II OF THE
CONFERENCE**

Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023

**PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES DE LA COMMISSION II DE LA
CONFÉRENCE**

Roma, 1-7 de julio de 2023

**ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES DE LA COMISIÓN II
DE LA CONFERENCIA**

**CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE
CONFERENCIA**

Forty-third Session – Quarante-troisième session - 43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023

**VERBATIM RECORDS OF MEETINGS OF COMMISSION II OF THE
CONFERENCE**

Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023

**PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES DE LA COMMISSION II DE LA
CONFÉRENCE**

Roma, 1-7 de julio de 2023

**ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES DE LA COMISIÓN II
DE LA CONFERENCIA**

Table of Contents – Table des matières – Índice

**FIRST MEETING OF COMMISSION II
PREMIÈRE SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
PRIMERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
(3 July 2023)**

		Page
Item 20.	Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level)	
Point 20.	Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget)	
Tema 20.	Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto)	1
<i>(C 2023/3; C 2023/3 WA11; C 2023/3 WA12; C 2023/3 Information Notes 1-3; C 2023/LIM/11)</i>		

**SECOND MEETING OF COMMISSION II
DEUXIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
SEGUNDA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
(4 July 2023)**

		Page
Item 20.	Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level) (<i>continued</i>)	
Point 20.	Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget) (<i>suite</i>)	
Tema 20.	Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto) (<i>continuación</i>)	25
<i>(C 2023/3; C 2023/3 WA11; C 2023/3 WA12; C 2023/3 Information Notes 1-3; C 2023/LIM/11)</i>		

**THIRD MEETING OF COMMISSION II
TROISIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
TERCERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
(4 July 2023)**

		Page
Item 20.	Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level) (<i>continued</i>)	
Point 20.	Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget) (<i>suite</i>)	
Tema 20.	Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto) (<i>continuación</i>)	43
<i>(C 2023/3; C 2023/3 WA11; C 2023/3 WA12; C 2023/3 Information Notes 1-3; C 2023/LIM/11)</i>		
Item 18.	Programme Implementation Report 2020-21	
Point 18.	Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2020-2021	
Tema 18.	Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2020-21	59
<i>(C 2023/8; C 2023/8 Web Annexes 1-9)</i>		
Item 19.	Programme Evaluation Report 2023	
Point 19.	Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 2023	
Tema 19.	Informe sobre la evaluación del programa en 2023	73
<i>(C 2023/4)</i>		

**FOURTH MEETING OF COMMISSION I
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION I
QUARTA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN I
(6 July 2023)**

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF COMMISSION II
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE LA COMMISSION II
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME DE LA COMISIÓN II

Page

79



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

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

T

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-third Session
Quarante-troisième session
43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023
Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023
Rome, 1-7 de julio de 2023

FIRST MEETING OF COMMISSION II
PREMIÈRE SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
PRIMERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II

3 July 2023

The First Meeting was opened at 14:27 hours
Mr Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La première séance est ouverte à 14 h 27
sous la présidence de M. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la primera reunión a las 14.27
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Presidente de la Comisión II

Portions marked as [XX] were inaudible due to technical reasons. Please submit all corrections
to: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Les parties signalées par [XX], pour des raisons techniques, étaient inaudibles. Veuillez communiquer
toute correction à: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Las partes marcadas como [XX] fueron inaudibles debido a razones técnicas. Por favor, envíe todas
las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

- Item 20. Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level)**
- Point 20. Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget)**
- Tema 20. Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto)**

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to all of you both in the Red Room and in the virtual room, and welcome to the Commission II. I am now pleased to open the first meeting of Commission II.

First and foremost, I am honoured to have been elected as Chairperson of Commission II, and very much appreciate the trust you have placed in me to facilitate our discussion. I would like to also express my appreciation to my colleagues from the Asia Group for nominating me for this challenging task, and yet interesting too at the same time. I also welcome the Vice Chairperson of Commission II elected by the Conference to the first *Report of the General Committee* and who is Ms Ratchanok Sangpenchan of Thailand.

Colleagues, I know, and you know too that life is not going to be easy for me being the Chairperson of this Commission. Nevertheless, I am confident that with your goodwill and collaborative spirit, we will complete our work in a satisfactory and timely manner. Together with me are the team of the Secretariat, Mr David McSherry on my left and Ms Mahrukh Sarwar next to Mr McSherry. We will do our utmost to ensure the smooth running of the work of the Commission.

Upon consultation with various Regional Groups, I have received the following nominations from Members of the Drafting Committee: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Portugal, South Sudan, Spain. Last but not least, the United States of America. I invite those Regional Groups that have not yet submitted their nominations of Members to the Drafting Committee to contact the Secretariat of the Conference with those nominations as soon as possible.

I also note that we are awaiting confirmation of the nomination of the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee. You see it clearly, no one wants to be close to this Commission.

The timing of the meeting of the Drafting Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, 5 July. Members of the Drafting Committee will be contacted directly by the Secretariat to confirm the arrangements of the Drafting Committee. To make the best use of our time at our disposal, may I appeal to you to keep your interventions as brief and as focused as possible, and please, do not rush your interventions. The quality of interpretation will be improved if interventions are met at the reasonable pace.

Furthermore, I would like to remind you that to ensure accurate interpretation of statements, timely production of verbatim records and we are posting on the Conference website, Delegations are kindly requested to submit the electronic version of their statements to Conference-Statements@fao.org.

Finally, may I remind you that in the interest of good time management, it is important that we start each meeting on time. Please, ensure that you are here in the Red Room or have joined via the virtual platform at times indicated in the Journal of the Conference.

Let us now turn to our timetable as contained in Document C 2023/INF/1. The Commission will commence its substantive discussion today with Item 20, *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*. On completion of our consideration of Item 20, we will move to the Items on the Agenda that have been considered through the written correspondence procedure. These are Item 18, *Programme Implementation Report 2020-21*. The second one is Item 19, *Programme Evaluation Report 2023*. Members' written inputs on the above Items, 18 and 19, have been received and compiled, and may be found on the dedicated page on the Conference website, and for which we will consider the draft conclusion only.

We will therefore now move to Item 20, *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*. This includes the draft resolution on the budget level. Please,

ensure that you have the following documents in front of you. First C 2023/3, *Medium Term Plan (MTP) (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*. Second one, Web Annex 11, *Cost increase methodology and estimates*. Third one, Web Annex 12, *Scheduled sessions*. The fourth one, *Information Notes 1 and 2, PWB 2024-25, Information note on Budgetary Scenarios*. And Information Note 3, *Sources and purposes of voluntary funding in the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*. Last but not least, Document C 2023/LIM/11, *Guidance from Council on the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*.

The Secretariat introduction to this Item was published on the Conference website prior to the start of the Conference Session.

Introduction to Item 20: Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25

Ms Beth Crawford, Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget

The Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP) covers a period of four years and provides the programmatic framework for results and monitoring to support the achievement of objectives by Members and the international community. The Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (PWB) presents an integrated view of total resource requirements to carry out the biennial programme of work comprising two distinct sources of funding: assessed contributions and extrabudgetary resources.¹

The MTP/PWB derives from the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 endorsed by the Conference in 2021, which supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind.

The Strategic Framework 2022-31 encourages innovative and forward-thinking approaches that are riskaware, adaptable and responsive to unforeseen events, and the twenty Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), capitalize on the wealth of FAO's multidisciplinary technical expertise to tackle existing and emerging challenges.

After partially recovering in 2021, the global economy has been experiencing a renewed slowdown in 2022, fuelled by a series of overlapping crises, including the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, the war in Ukraine, soaring food prices and overall inflation, and tightening financial conditions in most regions. The most recent estimates indicate that both the number of people affected by chronic hunger and the prevalence of undernourishment are on the rise.

With ongoing, complex and overlapping crises which continue to affect global food security, especially in the poorest countries and among vulnerable populations, agrifood systems are at the core of the 2030 Agenda and offer key opportunities to help us reach the SDGs.

In this context, the MTP (Reviewed) 2022-25, through the PPAs and the *four betters*, delivers results against its results framework through identified PPAs and – in line with the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda – through a systems approach, considering social, economic and environmental development dimensions simultaneously, addressing the relevant trade-offs and optimizing synergies in achieving the SDGs.

After six successive biennia of a flat nominal budget and corresponding decline in purchasing power of USD 67.2 million or approximately seven percent, the Director-General has presented for 2024-25 a net appropriation budget with cost increases added, thus maintaining purchasing power parity (“zero real growth”). The budget also includes increased recoveries of USD 22.7 million for direct and indirect support costs associated with the growing extra-budgetary programme and reallocations to high priority areas.

¹ Basic Texts, Volume II.F, Resolution No. 10/2009, *Implementation of the IPA regarding the reform of the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system* (IPA Actions 3.1 to 3.11).

The MTP (Reviewed) 2022-25 and the PWB 2024-25 are submitted to the Conference for its review and approval, including on the proposed budget level of USD 1 021.7 million at a budget rate of exchange of EUR 1 = USD 1.12.

CHAIRPERSON

The budget level for the biennium 2024-25 is what I consider the centre of our task in Commission II. Having said this, however, we do not have all the time in the world. We are scheduled to complete our task in total of five hours. Two and a half hours today, Monday, and morning of Tuesday. The Commission will recall that the Council had encouraged continued efforts towards reaching a consensus on the level of budget through the informal consultations that were convened between Members in the period leading up to the 43rd Session of the Conference.

At this juncture, I would like to acknowledge the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) led informal consultation process conducted in May and June, with the aim to reach consensus on the budget level. And I consider that consultations have been highly useful in promoting exchange between Members and bringing Members already very close to reaching consensus. Now, the task ahead of us, as Commission II, is to complete our deliberations on the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25, and reflect these deliberations in our Report to the Plenary of the Conference, including on the budget level.

With that, before I open for debate, I was reminded by the Secretariat that This Red Room is not yet ready for fully functioning of pressing the button for queuing. But rather, we are doing it manually today – raise your flag. I now give the floor to the Delegations who wish to make interventions on this Agenda Item. In making your interventions, my plea is that I would like to invite you to clearly indicate whether you are ready to join a consensus on the budget level in this room.

With that, I shall now call upon the first speaker to break the ice.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Es para mí un honor hablar en nombre de la Unión Europea (EU) y de sus 27 Estados Miembros.

Además de los siguientes estados que se alinean con su declaración y que son los siguientes: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Mónaco, Montenegro, Republica de Macedonia del Norte y Ucrania,

Acogemos con satisfacción la presentación del Plan a Medio Plazo (MMP) y del Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto (PTP) para el próximo bienio. Reconocemos el proceso que hemos seguido esta primavera a través de los órganos de gobierno, donde hemos debatido sobre las prioridades para el próximo bienio y, además, las consultas informales convocadas por el Presidente Independiente del Consejo con el objetivo de alcanzar un consenso por parte de los miembros sobre la decisión de la resolución presupuestaria.

Para la UE y sus Estados Miembros ha sido importante centrarnos en el contenido del PTP. Para garantizar que la FAO pueda cumplir su mandato en sus actividades básicas, es importante que los miembros puedan acordar una resolución presupuestaria con un contenido operativo y unas conclusiones que puedan servir de directrices para la Organización durante el próximo bienio.

Estos elementos son importantes para generar confianza y una buena acogida del PTP por parte de los miembros. El proceso desarrollado esta primavera ha demostrado que podríamos haber iniciado los debates antes, lo que habría dado más tiempo para comprender mejor la propuesta y sus diferentes aspectos.

Esperamos que la FAO siga actuando como una organización de conocimiento, centrándose en producir, gestionar y compartir conocimientos, con el fin de mejorar nuestra comprensión y, en última instancia, alcanzar nuestros objetivos comunes. Esto puede garantizarse no solo gracias a los conocimientos técnicos de la Organización, sino también mediante funciones de apoyo como la supervisión, los recursos humanos y la logística.

Debe poder garantizarse la ventaja comparativa de la FAO. Necesitamos poder contar con la FAO para que cumpla su función de contribuir a alcanzar los Oficina de Apoyo a las Oficinas Descentralizadas (ODS), ofrecer alimentos inocuos y nutritivos para todas las personas, trabajar en el

marco del enfoque «Una salud» y encabezar la transformación de los Sistemas Alimentarios Sostenibles.

Por tanto, apoyamos las prioridades de la reciente reunión del Consejo sobre la importancia del trabajo normativo y técnico de la FAO. Queremos hacer hincapié en el papel que desempeña la FAO en la gestión y aplicación de los convenios y órganos creados en virtud de tratados, subrayando el papel crucial de depositario que la FAO desempeña en muchos de ellos.

Nos gustaría también subrayar que la aplicación de las estrategias transversales y los planes de acción sobre la participación del sector privado, la ciencia y la innovación, la biodiversidad y el cambio climático son factores fundamentales para el próximo bienio.

Los Estados Miembros de la UE pueden acordar un aumento razonable del nivel presupuestario que tome en cuenta los incrementos de costes por la inflación, pero queremos subrayar que el aumento debe ir acompañado de una clara mejora de la eficiencia. Por consiguiente, seríamos muy partidarios de que se incluya una referencia en la resolución presupuestaria a la necesidad de que la Organización siga trabajando en la mejora de la eficiencia. Esta mejora de la eficiencia no consiste en hacer menos cosas, sino en hacer más y mejor con los recursos disponibles, en un momento en que los presupuestos nacionales de los miembros están ya sometidos a fuertes restricciones. También nos gustaría solicitar un razonamiento transparente y sistemático de los puestos adicionales presupuestarios, incluyendo una reducción de los puestos adicionales a nivel de Director y un mejor equilibrio entre los nuevos puestos en la Sede Central en Roma y en las Oficinas Nacionales.

Por último, en el próximo bienio debemos estudiar más a fondo cómo puede desarrollar la FAO una visión para una financiación más sostenible de la Organización. Solicitamos que se lleve a cabo una visión global de la financiación de esta Organización, que incluya el uso de las cuotas y las contribuciones voluntarias, la gestión de los diversos acuerdos de financiación y la forma en que estos contribuyen a la consecución del mandato, los objetivos y el marco estratégico de la Organización de manera eficaz, eficiente y transparente.

Ms Lieslot GERMONPREZ (Belgium)

Belgium aligns itself with the Joint Statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

Our government pays the greatest attention to rigorous and effective management of the budgets of international organizations. Belgium's cross-cutting policy in this regard remains that of Zero Nominal Growth considering the macroeconomic context and national budget pressures.

In the strongly inflationary context, and under certain conditions, Belgium may consider derogating from this rule on a case-by-case basis and accepting a moderate increase; provided that solid justifications exist and that all efficiency and economy measures have been explored.

We are well aware that FAO with its mandate has currently an important role to play in the food crisis and to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Belgium is therefore prepared to support a compromise solution that must address efficiency savings (such as the reduction of the number of proposed additional D-positions and savings on travel costs). We would therefore very much appreciate that an efficiency savings factor be included in the Draft Resolution.

In this context, it is more than ever important that the core activities of FAO are at the forefront. We therefore support the priorities as stated in the 172nd Council conclusions, on the importance of FAO's normative and technical work.

Belgium contributes since many years to the FAO Flexible Voluntary Contribution Mechanism (FVC) and the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA). Belgium will continue to provide FAO with the flexibility it needs through quality funding and urges other Members to do the same in order to allow FAO to deliver on the mandate it has been given.

Hereby, we highlight the importance of FAO working closely with Members and other potential funding sources to determine better oversight processes to encourage flexible contributions.

With these comments, Belgium is committed to arrive at a consensus solution for the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-2025.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

As we have stated during the latest session of the FAO Council, Brazil supported the Director-General's proposal of adopting a budget level with zero real growth for the next biennium with a net appropriation of 5.6 percent in relation to the previous budget.

We endorse the conclusion of the last Session of the Council, which endorsed the protection and funding of normative and technical work of FAO, including the Technical Cooperation Programme, as well as the conventions, treaty bodies, including depositary functions and intergovernmental arrangements.

We appreciate the work carried out by the Independent Chairperson of the Council in recent informal consultation on the issue, and we commend the flexibility shown by Delegations that have understood the importance of maintaining FAO purchasing power after 12 years without any change in the budget level.

Regarding the programmatic framework, Brazil welcomes the attention placed on bioeconomy on the Programme Priority Area BE2. Brazil believes that the socioeconomic role of forests as elements of bioeconomy should be further strengthened for a balanced approach of the concept, which must be encompassed perspectives of developing world. We are convinced that the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) collaboration on the interlinkage between agriculture and forestry is the framework in which the issue of bioeconomy at FAO should be developed.

Finally, Brazil reiterates the need for FAO to seek more regionally balanced academic representation, as well as to duly consider regional specificities and develop knowledge, products and carrying out its science and evidence-based normative and standard setting work.

Mr Nathaniel IMPERIAL (Philippines)

The Philippines would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council for his efforts in convening the Membership to informal consultations in the period leading up to this 43rd Session of the Conference, as called for by the Council's 172nd Session, to reach a consensus on a budget level between the currently proposed one in document Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (C 2023/3) and the 2022-23 nominal level.

The Philippines can support the budget being proposed by the FAO Director-General in document C 2023/3 recognizing that this is only to maintain purchasing power parity: a zero real growth, and that any reductions in the proposed budget will require reductions in some areas of work.

However, in view of the concerns of some Members on the budget level as proposed by the Director-General, the Philippines can work towards the consensus and support the Chairperson in reaching consensus.

May we also take this opportunity to highlight some priorities identified by the Council's 172nd Session whether the full budget proposed by the Director-General is approved or a level that is a little less than what was proposed is reached.

The Philippines would like to see a Programme of Work and Budget that protects and funds the normative and technical work of FAO, including the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), as well as the conventions, treaty bodies, including depositary functions, and intergovernmental arrangements. Additionally, a programme that the Philippines is particularly banking on the TCP's catalytic role in resource mobilization, improvements in farming systems, strengthening institutional capacities, instituting policy and regulatory reforms for agricultural development and improving forms of collaboration at the regional and international levels.

Support FAO's core functions and mandate through resources from its regular budget and ensure that voluntary contributions should be aligned with the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-31.

Adequately fund decentralized offices, including with adequate technical and other resources, to improve the implementation capacity of FAO as an Organization.

And finally, to strengthen further oversight, internal control and support functions.

Our FAO needs to have the resources it can muster efficiently and effectively to support us in progressively realizing our Sustainable Development Goals, especially food security, improved nutrition and poverty alleviation.

Mr Alwin KOPSE (Switzerland)

Switzerland thanks the Secretariat for the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*, and its focus on both responding to the current food crisis and supporting the transformation to more resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems. We note the proposed areas of programmatic emphasis and de-emphasis and recall the importance to maintain a balance between the *four betters*, in particular, the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, whether lands, soil, water or biodiversity, needs to remain at the core of FAO's work.

Switzerland agrees with the recommendations provided by the Council to prioritize FAO's normative science-based and evidence-based competence, where FAO added value lies, and which should be maintained and strengthened and better connected to its programmes. FAO needs to react to multiple crises. It is important that FAO's response follows the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus approach, balancing short-term needs with long-term development and focusing on FAO's value added.

In this regard to the proposed new PWB 2024-25, makes FAO's large humanitarian engagement clear and shows the necessity to build resilience and anticipatory action. The world is facing multiple and interconnected challenges that severely affect food systems and are compromising our ability to provide safe, healthy, nutritious food for the entire population, as well as future generations. FAO needs to play a leading role in addressing these challenges through its normative work on food systems transformation and by assisting the Members in the necessary adaptations of their respective food systems.

Therefore, Switzerland supports a zero real growth budget for 2024-25, and also highlights the need in the medium to long term to further increase the budget level of net appropriation. Indeed, we note an increasing imbalance between the level of assessed and the voluntary contributions and would therefore welcome a rebalancing between the different contributions in the medium to long-term. This would strengthen the multilateral character of FAO and enable us all to tackle, jointly, through FAO, the future challenges we will be facing.

With these remarks, Switzerland approves the revised Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025, at the budgetary level proposed by the FAO Management. We can agree to a reference in the resolution to the continued need for efficiency gains as suggested by the EU. We are certainly ready to work on a consensus solution.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

The statement that I am going to do is on behalf of the Africa Regional Group (ARG) led by Cameroon and composed of Mali, Niger, Zambia, South Africa and Ethiopia are speaking on this Agenda on behalf of Africa. This statement was endorsed in this July meeting.

Our Regional Group welcomes the preparation, by the Director-General, as a normal planning process, of document C 2023/3, which is intended to be presented for adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference. We equally welcome the relevant Web Annexes and Information Notes.

The Africa Regional Group (ARG) appreciates the consultative process launched by the 172nd Session of the Council, under the facilitation of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. This process was essential to bridge the information gap that persisted even during the 172nd Session of the Council and beyond and to build consensus around the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025.

The Africa Regional Group wishes to recall its statement delivered at the 172nd Session of the Council which suggested the following:

To encourage all efforts towards reaching a consensus on the level of the budget, including through informal consultations between Members and Management, in the period leading up to the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Avoid a seventh consecutive biennium with the same budgetary appropriation, especially after COVID-19, which will lead to reduction of the technical capabilities of FAO, thus negatively affecting its Purchasing Power Parity globally.

Build consensus around an increased budget to cater for incremental cost requirements due to cost increases. Reduce the number of options and scenarios, in view of achieving the consensus on the budgetary net appropriation.

The main objective was to agree on a budgetary level that will help the Director-General to deliver on the agreed Programme of Work.

The outcomes of the informal consultations led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council could be summarised as follows: the Director-General's net budgetary appropriation that includes an incremental cost requirement of USD 55.8 million (a 5.6 percent increase) seems to rally a consensus vote.

This will therefore secure a net appropriation of USD 1 061.4 million.

Technical programmes are protected at the same level as normative activities.

Management is encouraged to maintain the actual organization chart to ensure continuity in programme delivery and accountability.

The Africa Regional Group is happy to endorse the above outcomes.

The Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2022-2025 (reviewed) that sets out the Strategic Objectives and Outcomes for the achievement by Members and the International Community with support from FAO, is a comprehensive and self-explanatory document as it provides an overview of the stronger linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the *four betters*; describes further the balance of the three pillars of sustainable development including through the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) with the streamlined and improved approach to outputs and their measurement to integrate Country Programming Frameworks more fully in the strategic results framework. We endorse its narrative.

We are sure that the budgetary appropriation of USD 1 061.4 million will be approved by this Conference, and that is our wish as we move to the next planning phase, including the revised Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-2025 to be examined at the 174th Session of the Council in November 2023, the Africa Regional Group considers the following priority areas to be fully protected:

The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) continues to be implemented according to the approved regional distribution. The revised PWB 2024-2025 should explore options for increasing the percentage level up to 17 percent of the Net Appropriation.

Maintain and enhance the technical capacity of FAO in the decentralized offices to be able to improve its policy, programmatic and operational delivery to continue to be a trustworthy partner for governments.

Sustainable livestock development does respond to the context of our region, notably the small-scale livestock.

Sustainable aquaculture development and blue economy, forest and soil management.

We also take note of the estimated extra-budgetary resources of USD 2 979.3 million.

We encourage Members to make voluntary contributions to facilitate the programme implementation and achievement of FAO's Strategic Objectives and Corporate Initiatives.

In closing, with the above comments, our regional group recommends an unequivocal vote of the proposed increased net budgetary appropriation that will support programme delivery. I have also heard here the issue of including in the element of efficiency savings; we are open to that.

Sr. Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Me gustaría comenzar agradeciendo y destacando el trabajo realizado por la Directora Beth Crawford, y su equipo, en la preparación de los documentos sobre *Plan de Plazo Medio para 2022-25*, así como el proyecto de *Resolución sobre el Presupuesto 2024-25*.

Como lo manifestamos durante los debates del 172º Consejo de FAO, queremos recordar que los documentos estratégicos y programáticos que aprobamos todos los miembros, básicamente, demuestran el valor que tiene la FAO, como Agencia Intergubernamental de Naciones Unidas, para generar respuestas y acciones concretas, en el marco de las necesidades y prioridades nacionales, a los desafíos en materia de sostenibilidad que enfrentan los diversos sistemas agrícolas en diferentes regiones, en particular, en los países en desarrollo.

En esa línea, nos gustaría reiterar que existen diversos enfoques, abordajes, tecnologías y herramientas de producción sostenible para mejorar los sistemas agroalimentarios y, en esa idea, la FAO, como plataforma neutral, debería actuar como una usina de todas las ideas comprobadas por la ciencia para que cada Miembro adopte el perfil agro-productivo que mejor se adapte a sus contextos locales para alcanzar el objetivo de Hambre Cero.

Adicionalmente, como lo hemos indicado en los pasados Comité del Programa, Reunión Conjunta y Consejo y, en línea con el compromiso público asumido por la Administración oportunamente, nos gustaría recordar la necesidad de introducir enmiendas sobre el documento de Plan de Plazo Medio para alinear su contenido con la solución alcanzada previamente en el documento *C 2021/LIM/4* de la última Conferencia, así como con los conceptos discutidos y aprobados por consenso entre los Miembros en el marco de los trabajos de los Órganos de Gobierno de FAO.

Por otro lado, en relación al contenido del proyecto de Resolución sobre el Presupuesto 2024-25, la Argentina, como lo ha expresado en otras oportunidades, augura el mantenimiento del principio de Crecimiento Nominal Cero en FAO y en todo el sistema de Naciones Unidas.

Sostenemos esta visión, en particular, teniendo en cuenta el impacto crítico en materia económica y financiera que ha tenido -y aún tiene- la pandemia del COVID-19, así como sus efectos colaterales en términos de inflación mundial, ciclos recesivos globales, políticas monetarias expansivas que han acelerado la depreciación de las monedas de los países en desarrollo y sus implicancias en el aumento de riesgos en las deudas externas nacionales.

No obstante ello, y reconociendo los avances alcanzados durante las discusiones informales que organizó el Presidente Independiente del Consejo, así como entendiendo el valor de las notas informativas suplementarias circuladas por la Administración, entendemos que será posible buscar un escenario alternativo de ajuste porcentual a la propuesta original para, primero, dotar a la FAO de los recursos que necesita para primero continuar desarrollando su irremplazable aporte a la seguridad alimentaria mundial y, segundo, permitir que los Miembros puedan acompañar la estructura presupuestaria bajo un prima de consenso.

Sobre este punto, nos gustaría agregar que, dado el estado de los atrasos en las cuotas y contribuciones de un número considerable de Miembros, es fundamental tener en cuenta las dificultades que experimentan los países en desarrollo para cubrir sus obligaciones financieras con FAO y, en ese entendimiento, nos corresponde a todos ser permeables a estas necesidades y sensibilidades concretas a la hora de buscar caminos alternativos para presupuesto del Organismo.

En esta idea, pensamos que a efectos de enfrentar el aumento de costos que se describen en la propuesta de FAO, que desde luego, nuevamente, entendemos y ponderamos en nuestra posición, sería preferible que estos incrementos, por ejemplo, se cubran mayoritariamente a partir de la identificación de la recuperación gradual de gastos de apoyo y eventualmente gracias a mayores ahorros, la integración de servicios administrativos con los organismos que tienen sede en Roma y a través de la

concentración de la prioridades programáticas de FAO en función de sus responsabilidades de custodia sobre indicadores de Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) particulares.

seguro médico después del cese en el servicio. Para finalizar, observamos un nivel de dificultad adicional en la relación con las asignaciones de mayor dinero a algunas áreas dentro de la Organización. La primera reflexión es porque el principio de “crecimiento real cero” no se aplicaría por ejemplo a los compromisos de financiación de la FAO para los distintos convenios, órganos de tratados y mecanismos intergubernamentales bajo su responsabilidad. En especial llama la atención que se desconozca el aumento de los costos que puedan haber sufrido foros como CODEX o Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF), claves para la reputación de FAO como instancia de elaboración normativa basada en ciencia y cuyos productos tienen implicancias sistémicas y mandatarias para todos los miembros.

Como contraposición, en el documento se propone que con las cuotas de todos los miembros de financiar con 1 millón de dólares al "Centro de Coordinación sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de las Naciones Unidas" y con una suma menor al Foro mundial de la FAO también conocido como “Foro Mundial de la Juventud”, entre otras plataformas. Estas iniciativas loables sin dudas, pero de carácter institucionales con una participación de los miembros reducida o inexistente. Pensamos que, en todo caso, estas propuestas deberían dotarse de recursos a partir de contribuciones voluntarias.

Para ser claros, los procesos voluntarios y/o de participación restringida de los miembros deberían ser financiados por contribuciones voluntarias. Al contrario, los procesos en el que participan todos los miembros y tienen resultados e implicancias sistémicas para toda la membresía deberán, según nuestro entender, sostenerse a partir de las contribuciones ordinarias de los miembros.

Con estos comentarios la Argentina agradece la oportunidad de expresarse sobre tan importante asunto, toma nota del contenido de los documentos, y aboga por diagramar una estructura presupuestaria que atienda las visiones de todos los miembros para llegar a una solución de consenso.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

First, let me congratulate you on the hard task of chairing Commission II. Indonesia welcomes the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*. Indonesia appreciates the Director-General and the Secretariat’s budget increase proposal, as well as the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for holding informal meetings to achieve consensus on the budget issue.

We understand that ongoing complex and increasing numbers of crises continue to affect global food security, but at the same time, appreciate FAO’s efforts to focus on the Organization’s strategic programmes to deal with these global challenges to effectively develop programmes in food and agriculture sectors. Indonesia would like to join others in supporting the request of the FAO’s budget increase, as well as in support of the FAO’s new scale of assessment in accordance with the UN scale of assessments agreed during the last Fifth Committee in New York.

We continue to encourage FAO’s Secretariat in its effort to find savings and efficiency. We welcome the effective presence of FAO at country level, and specifically, through the Country Programme Framework. These partnerships provide beneficial technical support in programmes that help develop our national policies and scaling up innovation practices based on our national priorities. We also stress the importance of flexible, lightly earmarked and unearmarked funding to support the priorities as outlined in the integrated Programme of Work and recommend that FAO further elaborate possible mechanisms and approaches to attract more flexible funding.

Each year, we continue to ask FAO to do more and more to achieve its objectives and mandates. However, we believe that we cannot ask to do more without adequate resources. We endorse the conclusion of the last FAO Council and the priorities described within because it provides the needed flexibilities for FAO to direct its much needed resources in 2024 and 2025, and we propose that we have the same approach here in the Conference.

Ms Bjørg SKOTNES (Norway)

We welcome the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*. And I also wanted to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for facilitating the consultations on the budget. I think that has been a really important process.

We support the priorities outlined in the Council conclusions on this Item, among others, on FAO standard setting role and the role as an [unclear 00:44:46]. We think it is important in the current global food crisis. We also want to see efficiency savings and we look forward to seeing those elements contained in the resolution.

I also thought the suggestion from the EU on a funding vision paper, is a good one, so we look forward to FAO responding to that suggestion. I think it is important for the sufficient funding for FAO in the long run. On the level of the budget, we are flexible up to 5.6 percent as suggested by the FAO Director-General.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

Thank you to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for facilitating the informal consultations on this, and to other Members for being so open to real conversations on this as we went forward. I think the past few months have been really useful and thoughtful process. With more than 2.4 billion people now not having access to adequate food, we have heard this so many times over the past few days, FAO has such an important role to play in the food crisis that we are facing right now.

We also note that Russia's unjustified and unprovoked war against Ukraine has worsened this crisis and put millions worldwide at much greater risk for hunger, exacerbating negative effects of the other challenges that we are facing – COVID-19, climate change, all the other conflicts on global food systems. FAO has stepped up its efforts in responding to all of our Members' requests to do more to respond to this crisis and all the others that we face today.

Given its important role, we have recognized that FAO needs the resources to do what we are asking them to do. In addition to the urgent crisis response work, the United States also appreciates its increased support to the standard-setting bodies of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the Science and Innovation in Climate Change Strategies. And the United States also appreciates the additional resources to the Office of the Inspector General and for oversight functions, as well as for the Human Resources Division. These resources are essential for the effectiveness of this Organization in carrying out its mission.

We also agree with the suggestion made by others, and like Cameroon, we are open to the impulse to include a reference to efficiencies in the Resolution as well. At the same time with all of these, we understand the financial strain that some Members face, and we feel that this budget effectively balances the required additional support for FAO against the needs and commitments.

So, while the United States continues to hold a general zero nominal growth policy in FAO and across international organizations, we support an increase this year because FAO's work to lay the groundwork for sustainable, resilient and inclusive global food systems that can withstand shocks is more important now than ever as the world faces the highest risk of famine in a generation. So given the dire situation we face, if there were ever a time to increase the budget of the FAO, now is it. We must do more, and it is a good step in the right direction.

With that said, I want to be really clear about what I am saying here. The United States can join consensus on a level up to and including the level proposed by FAO Management and we encourage others to do the same.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to start with words of thanks to you and congratulations to you on your election as a Chairperson. We wish you every success and success as well to your whole team.

The current global food crisis dictates the need to pull the efforts of the global community in search of pathways to transform food systems, strengthening their resilience, effectiveness and productivity. The urgency of this task is even greater in the context of the need to achieve the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Several of which, in particular SDG 1 have FAO as a key

coordinator or co-implementer in the UN system. The Russian Federation supports the course embarked upon by the Director-General during the crisis to strengthen FAO's capacities, in particular with respect to standard setting and technical functions of FAO, including in implementing the Technical Cooperation Programme and the functioning of FAO's Decentralized Offices.

The final recommendations from the 172nd Session of the Council on the draft Programme of Work and Budget underscored Members' agreement with the main areas of work for the Organization over the coming biennium. The common guide for these areas of work is the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 which sets out the primary goals and objectives of the Organization moving forward.

Taking into account the challenges FAO faces, the Russian Federation understands Management's decision to depart from the principle of zero nominal growth for the 2024-25 budget cycle, that said for us and for many other Members zero nominal growth is considered to be a guarantee to support the sustainable functioning of the Organization, optimizing the Organization's expenditure and ensuring efficient, effective internal management.

Traditionally, we defend this principle in the UN system. Considering the exceptional circumstances of the current crisis, accompanied by economic stagnation, increasing inflation and external debt, the Russian Federation is prepared to move away from this principle for the planning of FAO's budget expenditure for the coming biennium on an exceptional basis. We count on the development of a decision which is acceptable to all Members on the programmatic elements and the expenditure part of the budget. This guarantees unconditional agreement of financial contributors to take on additional financial obligations to support the functioning of FAO.

We are grateful to the Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Hans Hoogeveen, for convening in May and June, in line with the instruction from the 172nd Session of the Council, consultations to reach consensus among Members. We support the principle of consensus as the basis of the draft for the corresponding resolution on expenditure.

We are compelled to note that attempts made by several countries during the budget consultations to move away from the accepted format for the Resolution by including in it programmatic elements which do not belong in the Resolution, do not help the reaching of consensus. We endorse the practice of clearly splitting the budget and programmatic aspects of the decision reflected respectively in the Resolution on the budget allocations and the separate recommendations of the Conference on the Programme of Work.

The Russian Federation would like to conclude, and as a response to what was said by the representative of the United States, we would like to once again, call on the United States (US), in relation to its subjective comments and in relation to what is going on in Ukraine, we call on them to make sure that these comments are shared in the proper UN fora. FAO is not one of them. We are seeing that the US and its partners are providing a lot of weapons to Ukraine to the tune of many millions of dollars, and none of this, of course, is helping to resolve the issues related to food insecurity.

In relation to conflict in Ukraine, the United States and its partners are not helping consensus by raising these issues here at FAO. Once again, these statements are of no value here at FAO – these empty statements which serve to resolve nothing.

Sr. Jorge Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Nuestra Delegación ha examinado el documento sobre el *Plan a Plazo Medio (PPM) para 2022-2025 (revisado)* y el *Programa de trabajo y presupuesto 2024-2025*. Hemos apreciado las gestiones de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO) en los últimos años para realizar y ejecutar su trabajo con el monto del presupuesto de los últimos seis bienios.

Para esta sesión agradecemos las notas informativas que se formularon en las que se han incluido los escenarios y las repercusiones en el programa y el presupuesto sobre las hipótesis expuestas. Agradecemos también las Consultas Informales convocadas por el Presidente Independiente del Consejo como mandato del Consejo para buscar un consenso sobre esta importante temática.

Reconocemos también que los desafíos actuales, tales como el cambio climático, los conflictos, la desigualdad, las dificultades económicas y la pobreza impiden alcanzar al ritmo deseado sus Objetivos de desarrollo sostenible (ODS). Sin duda, es un reto poder apoyar bajo las circunstancias actuales a todos los Miembros en sus diferentes necesidades y bajo diversas capacidades nacionales o regionales, teniendo en cuenta también los problemas incipientes que no podemos y no podremos dejar de atender.

Reconocemos la importancia de FAO en su labor, estamos convencidos de que necesitamos una FAO más robusta y dinámica y sabemos que para cumplir el mandato en la seguridad alimentaria mundial a través de las diferentes divisiones, programas, proyectos, procesos e iniciativas, es necesario contar con los recursos que le permitan desarrollar sus esferas de trabajo. Por ello, para nuestra Delegación, el encomiable trabajo de la FAO y la asistencia a través de su personal técnico especializado son relevantes para construir y mejorar las capacidades nacionales para lograr un impacto positivo en sectores vitales como la agricultura, la pesca, la acuicultura, la nutrición y los sistemas agroalimentarios.

Por ello apoyamos el Programa de Trabajo de la Organización manteniendo los puestos de carácter técnico, que se mantenga el Programa de cooperación técnica en al menos 14% del presupuesto total. Para los países en desarrollo, los programas de cooperación técnica tienen un impacto positivo que repercute también a nivel regional y, para Costa Rica, el intercambio que se pueda generar a raíz de este tipo de cooperación puede llevar a resultados muy positivos.

Nuestra postura con relación al presupuesto es encontrar un consenso que permita a la Organización el desarrollo de su mandato y las esferas de trabajo. Solicitamos que se busquen los diferentes medios para poder realizar ahorros por eficiencia en este próximo bienio.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

Just in response to the statement made by the Russian Federation, I would simply note that the United States has only raised Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine in the context of the food insecurity it has caused in the world, which is precisely the mandate of the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

The Russian Federation would not like to break up this meeting with explanations from the United States. We know that some people are trying to bring dialogue to other fora.

The Russian Federation says that the United States is using the conflict as a factor of the current food crisis. Focusing attention on the war but not talking about the reasons for the war. The United States often says that we are responsible, we are guilty. That is their assessment of the situation – their subjective assessment.

If the United States is talking about conflicts like what is going on in Syria and looking at food insecurity in general, then we need to talk about conflicts in general. Why does the United States only talk about the conflict in Ukraine? The US talks about the sanctions that they have against the Russian Federation. We know that these sanctions have a huge effect – a financial effect, transport effect on systems around the world. If the United States would like to discuss these issues in a global context, then finding a way to resolution, then we would need to have these discussions heard in the UN Security Council. We know why we are here now. We are discussing the Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization.

So our comments were fully within the context of our discussion. We drew attention to the fact that the US is sharing its subjective assessments. I hope that I responded to what was said by the United States Representative.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Let me start by also thanking you for taking on the role of chairing this Commission, and we look forward to working together with you.

The United Kingdom (UK) would like to thank FAO for the documentation on the Programme of Work and Budget and the subsequent Information Notes, including those provided for the informal consultations that were held by the Independent Chairperson of the Council towards the aim of reaching a consensus on the level of the budget between the current level and that proposed as agreed by FAO Council.

The UK very much supports programme priorities set out in the document, including on One Health, and we welcome the emphasis given to implementation of the Strategies agreed by FAO with its Governing Bodies on Climate Change and Science and Innovation. We also underline the importance of FAO's unique normative and standard-setting work. We strongly agree with Argentina on the importance of work on the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) as core functions of FAO.

We do recognize at the same time the years of zero growth and the need for an increase, and especially in the current context of the global food crisis, exacerbated by climate change, by conflict, and yes, by Russian Federation's illegal invasion of Ukraine. That clearly has an effect on global food security that we observe having an effect on FAO, taking resources away and costing other agencies in Rome much more in order to carry out their mandate. So, there is a clear link there to what we are discussing today.

At the same time, we also note that all national budgets are under pressure in the current international financial climate, and an increase therefore of 5.6 percent as proposed is a challenge. We join others therefore in calling for FAO to identify greater efficiencies to ensure that FAO uses all Members' contributions as effectively and efficiently as possible to deliver results in country.

It would be helpful for FAO to identify further measures that could demonstrate further efficiencies and savings, whether that be as has been suggested through integrated savings connected to administration cost with the other Rome agencies or perhaps, in a reduction of allocations from the core budget to events, such as forums or other events that FAO is holding that could instead be supported by voluntary contributions. We look to FAO to provide us with some suggestions here to demonstrate how FAO can achieve these additional savings that all its Members are being obliged to do. It will certainly help us towards reaching a consensus.

Finally. We do also note the increase in FAO's budget overall – thanks to significant increases in the voluntary budget. In that context, we think that a review of FAO's financial and administrative structure to ensure that the Organization is fit for purpose and in line with the Organization's evolving funding structure would be very useful, and we support FAO in taking that forward.

MR NOBUYUKI KIKUCHI (Japan)

We have some remarks and comments on the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*. On the MTP, we can basically say that the focus and the core areas aligned with our priority, for example, we are now in a crisis and the FAO is planning to make a further effort to address this crisis that is very much aligned with our focus, especially since this complex food crisis was worsened by the war in Ukraine, we need to make further efforts to address that. I would like to see that that would be materialized in FAO's future work.

We also agree with the views of the FAO on the importance of the innovations and the science, and that should be even further encouraged, and that FAO's priority is aligned with our priority too. In this context, we also believe that our cooperation should be more enhanced, cooperation with the private sector should be enhanced, and that the private sector can play a more important role, which is also mentioned in the FAO's priority. This is something that we would like to see.

Other things to the Medium Term Plan, the Japanese Government would like to highlight the importance of the impartial and objective data. We have decided to provide the voluntary contribution to Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), and other international organization, in order to address this crisis, and also in order to stabilize the international market. I think the importance of the various data related to the foodstuff and its related factors, such as the logistics, shipping and so on. I think that is very important, so when you implement these, we would like to see you put the fair amount of energies and attention on that point.

On the PWB, I would like to emphasize that the Japanese Government's basic position is it to keep zero nominal growth, and that is still there. But at the same time as other contributing parties pointed out, we are in a unique situation facing the crisis. We see a lot of the phenomenon such as the inflation in the global markets in the global societies. So many other issues that are relevant to the budget necessity. Also, I see there are good intentions to make an effort to save the budget and make the Organization's operation more effective, that should be very much be appreciated.

Having said that, there are a couple of things that I would like to highlight regarding the programme and the budget. Whilst we strongly believe that the transparency of the governance is important, when it comes to the plan and the budget, these are key issues. I would like to make a request for FAO to continuously make a further effort to make sure there is transparency to meet the request and aspirations from the Members.

In this context, I would like to request that you would accept the audit of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) as early as possible. I think that would also contribute to the enhancement of the transparency of the governance and also enhance the confidence of Members on the Organizations. I think it is of mutual benefit, a kind of win-win situation. Regarding the Organization of FAO, with high priority, some of the new posts and functions that have been created, such as Chief Economist and Chief Scientist. This has been a very good effort to make the Organization work efficiently. Also, you have been making a lot of effort to work on evidence-based and science-based that should be kept and even further strengthened.

The other thing is that the legitimacy of the work of the FAO is very important for all Members, so for the sake of keeping the high legitimacy of the work, I think the FAO should make adequate focuses on the mandate clearly endorsed by the Members. Having said all of this, I said that we would understand the usual situation, and should require some sort of flexibility in making the budget for this time. On the condition that the FAO would make an adequate and fair addition to what I just raised now, we would be ready to join the consensus up to the 5.6 increase.

Ms Jenny Louise REID (New Zealand)

I want to join colleagues here in congratulating you in your position as Chairperson and wish you well. New Zealand also wants to thank Beth Crawford and her team for the hard work that they have undertaken in preparing us with multiple papers for reading and understanding, and the efforts of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for the considerable efforts to try and lead this group through to a form of consensus.

For New Zealand, we are very prepared to support consensus and we are flexible with what that would be, but up to the proposal provided by the Director-General, like a number of others in the room, we can support up to that level of increase. We also support the priorities for the work of FAO as outlined and supported by the Council, particularly the normative work, the science-based work of this Organization that's critical and fundamental to the work of FAO, and also we fully support and welcome the increased activity implementing the strategies for both climate change and science and innovation.

We also fully support what is being raised by a number of colleagues; the efforts of FAO for increased efficiencies and for cost saving, but we are in a time of a food security crisis so there is definitely for a need for an increase in budget, and we really push this Conference to endorse a level of budget increase up to a maximum of that proposed by the Director-General.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

We have confidence in your leadership encouraged to get us through to a positive consensus-based conclusion. Australia thanks FAO Management for the presentation of the proposal of the *Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*, and the processes that have followed, including consideration by the Finance Committee, consideration by Council and its recommendations, as well as the informal consultations undertaken by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). We have valued the intent and the progress made in the ICC's processes.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Ms Beth Crawford who has supported us throughout all of these processes, and answered with good intent our many, many questions.

Throughout these processes, Members have learnt more about the cost pressures facing FAO. We have recognized the implications of alternate budget scenarios, and we have had a chance to share our priorities, including as we agreed at the last session of Council.

Australia's approach to the 2024-25 PWB have been and continue to be based on the following principles: Australia values FAO's work. We need an adequately funded FAO, to effectively conduct the important work that it does, resources must match the functions and performance that we demand of FAO, particularly at this time of a global food crisis, exacerbated by Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine. The impacts which have been felt globally, including in my far region of Southwest Pacific.

Our second principle is that Australia recognizes that there are cost pressures. This includes globally and especially in areas where FAO is delivering its work, regionally, remote areas. There are inflationary pressures which have impacted affordability. But finally, we also recognize that the impact of a zero real growth budget may challenge some Members who face circumstances that make it difficult to absorb an increase in payments.

So, with that Chairperson, Australia has flexibility to support a consensus up to and including the 5.6 percent increase. At the same time, we seek FAO to continue to strive for efficiencies, as we as national governments must do to maximize its impact. To this end, Australia is supportive of elements regarding efficiencies to be included in the resolution and think this might help our consensus in your process, Chairperson.

Areas in which efficiencies might be found include appropriate balance in D-level positions, United Nations Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) cost sharing arrangements, technological developments; and we sit in a room where new technology has been implemented just recently. As well as effective funding in regional areas, and balancing with headquarter roles, are areas where efficiencies can be found. I do not intend this list to be prescriptive, but FAO has previously asked for guidance on what areas are important for efficiency savings, and I offer it in this intent.

Like others, Australia supports the Council resolution regarding priorities, this includes normative and standard setting in technical work, treaty bodies, depositary roles, and like Argentina and the United Kingdom, we highlight the unique and incredibly valuable role of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and want to ensure their funding is sustainable into the future.

Australia also emphasizes the need to adequately resource and implement the strategies on science and innovation, climate change, biodiversity, and the private sector. These strategies are what set us up for the future, which can support our industries, help get food to the areas in the world where it is needed.

I would also like to support Brazil's call for regional balance and allocation and implementation of FAO's resources in implementing these strategies.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the need for oversight, and continued internal control, and we like others, support the strengthening of the role of the Office of the Inspector General.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

I will try to be as brief as possible in my comment in by way of responding to this statement made by Australia, Japan, and the United Kingdom. I would like to say that it is difficult to expect from these countries, which are responsible for the worsening of the situation in Ukraine. The situation in Ukraine should weigh heaviest on these countries. These countries are supplying huge amounts of weapons to Ukraine, millions of millions of dollars, and these countries talk about the need for efforts to counter the food crisis and also talk about the fact that they don't have enough money in their economies but have money for weapons for Ukraine.

So, once again, some people make me smile, but because of the actions of these countries, people are suffering. When it comes to what Russia is doing, Russia has acted in keeping with Article 51 of the

United Nations Charter. So, if these countries wish to discuss the fundamental reasons for food security, we must discuss conflicts as a whole, and we must consider the decisions, sanctions taken despite the UN Security Council. These sanctions are having a huge effect on the world economy, and therefore having an impact on vulnerable populations.

Mr Hyungsik KIM (Republic of Korea)

Through the initial consultations and ongoing discussions, it is well understood that the next biennium comes at a critical moment where collective tangible and meaningful exchanges are required to address immediate needs and build resilience for the future, but some donor countries are facing difficulties in securing international aid budgets, due to economic downturns and inflation within their own countries, leading them to prioritize resolving domestic issues.

However, the Republic of Korea recognizes the need for FAO to expand its role in tackling these challenges and emphasize their priorities. Therefore, in this context, Korea acknowledges the necessity for FAO to strengthen its role and increase funding to a reasonable and appropriate level. In conclusion, the Republic of Korea has a flexible in-budget level of 5.6 percent increase, which is suggested by the Director-General.

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

Comme vous l'avez dit, la tâche qui vous attend n'est pas facile, mais elle est vraiment essentielle. Je souhaite tout d'abord dire que souscrit pleinement à ce qui a été dit par mon collègue espagnol au nom de l'Union Européenne et de ses 27 états membres. Comme l'a dit ma collègue belge également, la politique transversale de la France en matière de budget des organisations internationales demeure la croissance au minima minimum.

Dans le contexte fortement inflationniste, et sous certaines réserves, la France peut envisager au cas par cas d'accepter certaines dépenses au-delà de ce seuil, à condition que toutes les mesures d'efficacités soient simultanément mises en œuvre. Ainsi, nous pensons qu'un certain nombre d'efforts peuvent encore être faits pour réduire le budget régulier, et donc, les contributions payables par les membres. Les réductions du nombre de nouveaux postes du Directeur au nombre de sept dans le Programme de travail et budget (PTB) proposé par le Directeur général apparaît par exemple nécessaire comme l'a dit mon collègue espagnol.

Au-delà du niveau du budget, nous pensons que celui-ci doit financer les priorités énoncées par le Conseil à sa 172^{ème} session. Ainsi, nous souhaiterions un meilleur équilibre entre les créations de postes au siège de l'Organisation et les créations de postes dans les Bureaux pays et les Bureaux régionaux. De même, le soutien de la FAO aux traités et conventions dont elle est dépositaire est crucial. Nous pensons en particulier que l'accord PSAM doit être adéquatement financé pour répondre aux défis liés à l'augmentation du nombre de parties que nous saluons et encourageons.

Mr Su GUO (China)

We would like to join the other Members to congratulate your new position as the Chairperson, and China welcome the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 (MTP)* prepared by the Management of FAO and also the *Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25* proposed by Director-General, and would also like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC)'s efforts to do several informal consultations to facilitate to reach consensus among Members.

While China notes that it is has been in half to reach the goals set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where the reality tells us that the number of people suffering hunger still increases, so we still have a long way to go.

As the leading international Organization, it needs more resources to support FAO to implement its core mandate than ever before. While considering the high inflation, and also the downturn of the economy in a 12-year zero growth of the budget,

China is ready to join the consensus to support the increase of the PWB. And as a country that increased assessed contributions is largest among all Members, China will support FAO to become

stronger and healthier to deliver the mandate and Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) in the MTP, as required by Members.

China is also willing to work with FAO and other countries to find ways to mobilize resources, especially through South–South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation.

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues, before I pass the floor to Ms Beth Crawford for remarks, I think we just had a very rich discussion, and I am happy to hear your response in expressing positions with regards to the outset whether you can go along with consensus. But at least in your expression of positions, you have stated that it is, at least from my side, is clear the positions.

Again, before I pass the floor to Ms Crawford, I also sense some preference with whether priorities to be reflected in the resolutions are supposed to have them reflected in the Report.

Probably your response, Ms Crawford could guide into what has been the practice, and what difference does it make in having elements and priorities reflected in the Report.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget)

There were not very many specific questions directed to Management, but I did just want to thank the Members so very much for this session today, but also the discussion over the last year or so really leading up to this point, and I think for me, it has been a sort of a very clear path that we have followed, and I think that there are lessons learned, also on my part, along the way of what type of information that we need to bring to you as early as possible.

Additional elements, additional approaches that we can take to ensure that we have a very good understanding from our side, what your needs are; what we believe we need to deliver that to you.

To have an open discussion like we have been having over this last period, so I really want to thank you and for expressing so clearly your positions today. Maybe just to recall again that of course now after the Conference discussion and guidance on the budget, we move into the final process which is the preparation of the *Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget (Adjustments to the PWB) 2024-25*.

So that document would reflect any guidance that we have specifically received from you, but it could also start to give additional information on elements that all of you have raised and all of you have referred to the importance of the efficiency savings. We fully agree with you that that is extremely important, and I think as you have also heard, our Director-General refers so many times to the need to be efficient and effective, that is really part and parcel for the way that we work. Frankly it is also how we have been able to operate under a flat budget for the last 12 years. We've had to be as efficient as possible, so we will be providing more information for you on that.

We can start in the *Adjustments to the PWB*, but also in future documents to be clear on how that is really part of the way that we are working and approaching how we deliver and ensure that we have maximum results for you.

The topic of the integrated budget, the types of funding, there too we will start to open up that conversation with you moving forward on that balance, how do the resources work together, the regular programme, the extra budgetary, how do they help us bring together the results of the country level, delivering the normative work – these are all interesting topics that I look forward to taking forward with you as we move throughout the 2024-25 biennium.

The Chairperson then also asked me specifically on the practice of the Report of the Conference. In the Report of the Conference, there is a section that is entitled 'Medium Term Plan', in this case the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) for 2022-25 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*. The first section of that Report is the section that provides the narrative guidance to management.

I have heard many of you very aligned on the types of priorities that you would wish to emphasize and stress and guidance that you wish to provide in that section of the Report. So, this is sort of the normal drafting of the Report that comes from a Governing Body, and that is the part that we would be

looking at carefully for the *Adjustments of the Programme of Work and Budget* and also for the way that we implement the Programme of Work and Budget for 2024-25.

Then below that section of the guidance, is the budgetary appropriations resolution for 2024-25. There was a draft of that in the Programme of Work and Budget document, that is the practice normally, so that is a technical section of the Report which is in a resolution that will be voted on by Conference, by the entire Membership, of the budgetary appropriations level.

That is where we also put in what the budget level would be, what it was for 2022-23, what it would be for 2024-25, what the split is between the Euros and Dollars. So, the very specific guidance on the actual budget level that would be then approved or voted on by Conference. I have heard many of you say that you would wish in that section to have a paragraph on efficiency savings. From a guidance to Management point of view, it is exactly the same for us if it is in the first section, which is the narrative guidance.

It would be unusual to have something like that in the budgetary appropriations resolution, but it is the Conference Report, and we are in your hands in that regard.

CHAIRPERON

Colleagues, I see from your interventions that you have a broad consensus on the budget level elements of the Medium Term Plan (MPT) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB), but before I move ahead to the next steps, I would like to again open the floor for final interventions and remarks.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank Ms Beth Crawford for the clarifications provided on the procedure. From the point of view of common sense, we think we need to follow the accepted practice whereby the resolution on the budget allocations fix the general expenses and expenditure of the Organization agreed upon by Members, included in this Resolution, any type of programmatic elements takes them away and highlights them away from other programmatic areas. We are talking about the *Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25*, which was presented by the Director-General.

From our point of view, we should not be highlighting certain programmatic areas away from others when it comes to this Resolution. Of course, Ms Crawford very clearly said, when the programmatic elements are included, they were included in separate resolutions of the Conference. This allowed for certain things to be mentioned like transparency of the work, efficiency savings and other things instructed by the Conference.

If we include all these programmatic elements in the budget resolution, then from our point of view, we will need to refer to the document that would outline the implementation. We would like to keep to the current practice with the clear definition and separation between the budget elements of the PWB and the programmatic elements.

Ms Wannika WUTTHI (Thailand)

We just want to make an indirect comment. Thailand considers the zero nominal growth budget to be better tailored to the current times of economic crisis, and also in consideration of the fact that the new United Nations (UN) scale of assessment foresees, consistent in crisis for many countries, including Thailand. We are nevertheless willing to go along with the majority of Members. Given the pressure of adopting a consensus decision on the budget level, we recommend to further explore the potential for efficiency savings, the right for improved and systemic digitalization and use of online meeting tools to reduce travel costs when appropriate.

Finally, we encourage a workplace culture that facilitates saving both for the financial budget and the environment and promotes saving a way of behaviour in the daily management of the Organization.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I think it was really helpful to hear about those next steps, and how indeed we will have the opportunity to look at adjustments that will reflect the guidance given by Conference and set those out.

Whilst there does seem, as you say chair, to be a general consensus in the room towards the need to reach a consensus, first of all, and secondly that there is an agreement that we should have some form of an increase in the budget to address the additional challenges, there also seems to me to be a general call for further efficiency savings, and I wonder therefore if it might be an opportunity to look at the possibility to consider demonstrating that through a slight reduction to the percentage proposed, as a way of demonstrating the efficiency savings, the commitments to doing that.

And I think we have also heard some suggestions in the room this afternoon about possible ways of doing that, of course FAO is always going to be best placed to come up with more and better suggestions probably than we can do from the outside, but certainly there may be scope to look at the way that certain events are funded, whether they could be covered perhaps by voluntary funding, perhaps further on travel.

There are other areas, and I think we have talked about all the Members that are funding the Organization are also being confronted with having to make quite significant cuts to their own budgets and what often happens in our administration, is that we simply get told to make a cut of “x” percent, and that can be up to 30 percent, and then we have to go away and deliver that, and of course there is no suggestion of that here, but while we are looking at an increase, and I think we do have agreement that that would be the way forward, we do not have a consensus, I think, yet on the precise level, and my sense is that if we were able to look at perhaps just demonstrating that commitment by shaving off “point something” percent, 10 percent of the increase, which would take us maybe to around 5.1 percent, or something like that. Just to really demonstrate in real terms that commitment to delivering the kinds of efficiencies that we are looking for – better Rome-based Agency collaboration, whatever it is, then that might be a way forward in terms to helping us to reach consensus.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

What we want to say, Chairperson, is that even if the discussion has become a political one now, to set up a budget level, because it is no longer based on technical considerations. We would really suggest that we give that kind of confidence to the Secretariat because we are almost there when we say that we can go a long way in addition of the efficiency savings. So, if we want to have, either we have it in or we do not have it and we reduce the amount, so this is a little bit complicated what I need to say.

And I am not sure that presently, as a Member, we are equipped with the necessary instrument to see that this is the amount which should be butchered; and I am sorry to use that word, in the Director-General’s proposal.

I am not so sure that we are really equipped. It will get us to a very difficult and lengthy discussion. Let’s give the benefit of the doubt to the Secretariat, that is why we said we are open for a discussion on the inclusion of the element of efficiency savings.

Let us give the benefit of doubt to the Secretariat that they will come up, because they are better equipped than us Members. It is true.

It is a political discussion. Let us give that benefit of doubt to the Secretariat that they will come up in November with something that may be acceptable to everybody, because the budget of the efficiency saving, they say ok, you can squeeze and get to this level of probably USD 50, 30, 20 000 of efficiency savings. It could be what they can reach or what they can afford. But it may be good not to insist too much on we need a figure, to reduce that figure, because personally, I am not equipped, and it will be a very difficult discussion among us. Some of us will even raise it very high and may be blocked. Let us work this thing to go swiftly.

You said it at the beginning. We have only five hours to complete our Agenda, including the discussions on written correspondence and so on. We are in your hands Mr Chairperson. We would prefer to have this discussion go swiftly. Not to be.

I remember in one of the discussions that I said... I do not want to say today... it is something that I would like to say, but sometimes we discuss peanuts. I said it some years back, do we think that the time that we are spending in interpretation; that money is gone. We discuss USD 20 000 for example. This hour that we are using here, that money is already gone in interpretation. So, we say we should

strive to start that efficiency savings from now on, even within the Members, and the Governing Bodies discussions.

CHAIRPERSON

I cannot agree more with you in response to remarks by our distinguished colleagues from the United Kingdom lower than 5.6.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En nombre de la Unión Europea (UE) y sus 27 Estados Miembros consideramos que, en aras de alcanzar este consenso, que yo creo que ha quedado claro que todos perseguimos, y concretizarlo en una cifra precisa, nos parece que la propuesta lanzada por los colegas británicos hace unos minutos es una herramienta muy eficaz. Así que agradecemos la intervención del Reino Unido y la apoyamos.

Sr. Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Nosotros también apoyamos lo que ha dicho el Reino Unido y agradecemos la propuesta. Nuestro entendimiento es que hay un consenso sobre la necesidad de dotar con mayores recursos a la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO) para que pueda llevar adelante su mandato y desarrollar todas sus actividades. Ahora, quizás lo que nos falta en discusión es cuál es ese monto. Tenemos una propuesta que es la oficial que se discutió en el Consejo, pero nos parece desde nuestro punto de vista que lo que ofrece el Reino Unido como punto de entendimiento y de trabajo puede llegar a ser también importante para que encontremos una salida, por supuesto consensuada.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I believe that we are reaching the broad consensus, but of course we have to make some adjustments. But anyhow, just a suggestion, maybe for tomorrow morning we could see the proposition, not for the Resolution itself because I believe it should be the final steps that we should adopt, but to see the draft of our Report here, because we are going to say what is important; the principles that we have adopted in the Council.

With that, I believe every delegation here would be able to be comfortable and to see what is on the table right now. It is just a suggestion that we begin next session with a written proposition on the draft that we are going to adopt of our Report to the Conference.

Mr Luís COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

We want to echo what has been said by the European Union and its Members, fostered by Spain. We also support the proposal made by the United Kingdom, to which we are also very grateful. On the concrete level of the budget expressing clearly and properly our common goal of having some efficiency savings properly reflected in the next biannual Report.

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

Je voudrais également apporter mon soutien à ce qui a été dit par l'Espagne au nom de l'Union Européenne, par le Portugal et par ma collègue du Royaume-Uni qui nous empêche de tourner en rond. Effectivement, je pense qu'un pourcentage de gain d'efficacité appliqué au budget nous permettrait d'avoir une petite réduction qui permettrait à tout le monde d'être satisfait du budget. Voilà, je soutiens complètement ce qui a été dit par ma collègue du Royaume-Uni.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Just very briefly, we echo what Spain, the United States and the United Kingdom said, as stated; that it is very important that all the Members are quite convinced and confident on the budget, since it is a very important factor, and it is quite important function for the Members to discuss.

Sra. Stefania COSTANZA (Italia)

Italia también quiere agregar su voz a la de los colegas de la Delegación de España en representación de la Unión Europea (UE) y de todos sus Estados Miembros y también del Reino Unido. Italia está lista para el consenso.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We appreciate everything, and we are open to everything, to listen to all our colleagues. The only thing that is disturbing is that we want to avoid getting bogged down on small issues that we can resolve ourselves.

The proposal of United Kingdom. It is true. We are all diplomats here. Some have scientific backgrounds. We need facts sometimes before a decision is taken. It is very late now to say that this is the best figure. It is also very difficult to say what is the amount of efficiency savings we want to achieve.

This deserves a bit of work. That's why I said earlier "are we equipped to do that work?" If somebody has done it, please put it on the table. We are open to look at it. But the figure that is coming out of the blue for us is very difficult to approve because we have no facts, nothing to substantiate it. Please think about it. We may come back to this tomorrow morning and see if there is progress. But it is very difficult for us because we have a proposal with programmes and everything. We want to achieve some efficiency savings. How much?

Who has done the iteration to get to that efficiency savings? We need that on the table. It is not just to put up a figure and then we agree on it. It will be very difficult. We don't want to get bogged to that kind of discussion.

I really plead. We write to the capitals to ask for instructions, and we support those instructions with facts. We suggest where we can go. It is up to us to suggest where we can go and get the instructions back. If we are safe, we have not yet received instruction, and we get blocked at this point, without suggesting that this is the best way, this is where the discussion is going. I think we really have some problems.

I really appreciate that we all work towards consensus. It is not one or two, or a group, or a region, you know, imposing a way of thinking, because we all have the possibility of having a way of thinking which is also a positive one, so we are open.

To conclude, we are open to look at any suggestion written on the efficiency savings that is requested and substantiated by concrete elements, unless they want the Secretariat to do it, that is another business. **Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)**

I have been listening to the discussions which have been taking place, and I am very pleased to see the positive discussions and the positive stance which various colleagues have taken.

On the question of efficiencies, I agree with my colleague from Cameroon that to achieve efficiencies, you have to do some sort of a review. We cannot just prescribe "x" percent efficiencies. You have to see the areas where you can achieve efficiencies, you have to review.

I see in the discussions in the room, nobody is against achieving a certain percentage of efficiencies, but efficiencies are never achieved by saying efficiencies of "x" percent; you have to go and review areas and processes, to see where you can achieve efficiencies without affecting the operations of the Organization.

When I say operations of the Organization, I mean, and one or two colleagues have referred to that also, I mean the internal control system of FAO.

The 12 years of zero nominal growth did affect the internal control system of FAO, and I know, I was there, all the wrong things which happened. Because of those cuts, then the zero nominal was there. Most of the cuts were in the non-technical areas.

So, I agree with my colleague from Cameroon – no one is denying that we should have efficiency savings, but there should be a valid process for achieving that. Even the Secretariat, Beth Crawford, does not dispute the efficiency aspects of savings to be achieved, but they have to be reviewed.

We cannot prescribe efficiency savings. You have to see which areas you can review, which areas you can find efficiencies, and so I totally agree with Cameroon; that it should be left to the Secretariat. They can come back and report to us in the Finance Committee.

For the moment, we should not prescribe efficiency savings as if one can do that from the top as it were.

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues I bring in mind that we must stop for tea, and then right after this, I am going to share with you on the next steps.

Ms Lieslot GERMONPREZ (Belgium)

Belgium would like to add its voice to many others and support the United Kingdom's proposal based on the comments that we have made in our previously delivered statements. Therefore, we think that some efficiency savings can be made by reduction of the proposed number of the proposed number of D-posts and economies to be made in travel expenses.

In addition, we would like to support the Brazilian proposal to have the text on the screen tomorrow morning as a basis of our discussions.

Her Excellency Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

Since this is the first time that I take the floor in this session, like others, I would like to congratulate you and the ViceChairperson on your election. Having heard how you have run this first session, I think we are going to have a very good result of our work in commission, so this is positive news.

Also, let me start by giving my full support to Spain and other colleagues from the European Union on what they have been saying so far in the discussion.

At this point, I just wanted to, like others, support the intervention by the United Kingdom. I think it is a very constructive suggestion, and I think that is something that also will be able to take us further on to compromise.

Having listened to some of the later interventions here, I think maybe we are speaking at cross purpose because eventually what we will decide on is the budget level for the Organization and of course what FAO will do with the money that the Members are allocating is of course something that in the end will have to take into account efficiency savings. I think it is good that we are moving towards a level, and I think what we have been saying before is that it is perhaps the Organization itself that is best put to find areas where you can make the efficiency savings, and I think that is what we will do and come back to the process that follows the decision in Conference.

We will have the opportunity during autumn and the next Council Session to see where these areas might be, and I heard several delegations also pointing to areas where you could find possible efficiency savings, but I think it is eventually up to the Organization to come back to us Members.

Here I would like to specifically thank Beth Crawford for her statement, because I thought that was very welcome to see how we can improve the process for the future, so that we would know earlier where we are, and we can work with that.

I also heard your reflections, which I think is also very helpful for taking us to a good decision and consensus.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

Just a short comment on this question of efficiency savings, and I heard colleagues, just now Sweden, stating that we should leave it to the Secretariat, and they should come back. But one comment that I have heard from various colleagues is the reference to the D posts, reduce the D posts, and that is efficiency savings. But how do you identify which D post?

I would like to give you some information. When the independent evaluation took place, they were going to transfer some work of FAO to CGIAR on the grounds that the programmes which FAO said were their priority were being handled by lower graded people, like P3s. So, the past cuts of FAO's budgets, the situation has to be redressed. The situation cannot be "they proposed so many D posts, so let's cut." On what basis? There has to be some logic for cuts. That is why I support Cameroon's

position that the Secretariat should review. If it means cutting the D posts, cut the D posts, but we cannot prescribe cut the D posts first. They must review the situation and come back to us.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Pakistan. I will come back in two minutes.

The meeting was suspended from 16:35 to 16:36 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 35 à 16 h 36

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.35 a las 16.36

Dear Colleagues, when we come back tomorrow at 09:30 hours, we will try to work with the Secretariat to share with you the draft conclusions for you to consider. If that will not work, then we will work on the next step. With that, we adjourn the meeting for today.

The meeting rose at 16:38 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 38

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.38



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

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

T

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-third Session
Quarante-troisième session
43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023
Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023
Rome, 1-7 de julio de 2023

SECOND MEETING OF COMMISSION II
DEUXIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
SEGUNDA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II

4 July 2023

The Second Meeting was opened at 09:43 hours
Mr Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La deuxième séance est ouverte à 09 h 43
sous la présidence de M. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la segunda reunión a las 09.43
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Presidente de la Comisión II

Portions marked as [XX] were inaudible due to technical reasons. Please submit all corrections
to: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Les parties signalées par [XX], pour des raisons techniques, étaient inaudibles. Veuillez communiquer
toute correction à: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Las partes marcadas como [XX] fueron inaudibles debido a razones técnicas. Por favor, envíe todas
las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Item 20. Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level) (*continued*)

Point 20. Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget) (*suite*)

Tema 20. Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto) (*continuación*)

(C 2023/3; C 2023/3 WA11; C 2023/3 WA12; C 2023/3 Information Notes 1-3; C 2023/LIM/11)

CHAIRPERSON

We will now resume our consideration of Item 20, *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25*. This includes the Draft Resolution on the budget level. In order to facilitate our discussions and our considerations, I have requested, as I also explained my plan yesterday, the Secretariat to prepare a draft set of conclusions that we can use as a basis for working forward to a consensus.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La Argentina ha mantenido durante todo el proceso de debate sobre el presupuesto un alto nivel de coherencia en su posición. Nuestra posición se basó siempre en que, en todo el sistema de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU), en las agencias de la Organización de Naciones Unidas las siempre hemos apoyado el crecimiento nominal cero. Y es esta posición la que hemos sostenido durante todos los debates y ha quedado en el récord de estos debates y quiero clarificar que no es una posición particular con la FAO, sino que ha sido siempre una posición sistémica en el marco de todas las agencias del sistema de Naciones Unidas.

Ayer hemos dicho que necesitábamos tiempo para seguir conversando con nuestra capital, para poder evaluar los diferentes escenarios que se presentan y las diversas variables y dimensiones involucradas en esta discusión. Pero ¿cuáles son esas dimensiones? ¿Cuáles son esas variables? En primer lugar, nuestra posición de principios en el sistema de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas. Segundo lugar, ¿cuáles son los niveles crecientes de inseguridad alimentaria global y el rol clave de la FAO para lidiar con ello? La tercera dimensión es el crecimiento de manera desbalanceada de las contribuciones etiquetadas que ponen en riesgo las prioridades definidas por los Miembros en los Órganos de Gobierno de la FAO y la necesidad de no debilitar el presupuesto ordinario. Y cuarto, la posición mayoritaria de los Miembros en favor de la propuesta original del Director General, de acuerdo a lo que hemos escuchado en este debate en el día de ayer.

Analizadas esas variables, la Argentina decide acompañar el consenso mayoritario expresado por mis colegas, pero eso no significa —y eso quiero dejarlo bien en claro—, que no sigamos manteniendo nuestra posición de principios en términos generales del sistema de la Organización de Naciones Unidas en favor del crecimiento nominal cero ni tampoco que abandonemos nuestra preocupación por la necesidad de mayor eficiencia, de aumentar aún la eficiencia en el trabajo cotidiano de la FAO y, sobre todo, la de priorizar aquello que hace a la esencia de su mandato, que son básicamente el trabajo normativo, inclusivo de todos los Miembros, como el caso del Codex Alimentarius (CODEX) o de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF) e, incluso, con nuevas actividades que han demostrado un nivel de inclusividad y de mayor requerimiento por parte de los Miembros como es el caso del Subcomité de Ganadería.

Por lo tanto, creemos que la FAO tiene mucho para hacer en términos de eficientizar su trabajo, mucho para hacer en términos de ser más inclusivos, priorizar aquello que no es lo institucional sino aquello que tiene que ver con su mandato, pero repito, creo que lo más importante al final es tratar de construir un consenso mayoritario que nunca va a ser unánime, pero que tiene que ser fuertemente mayoritario.

Por otro lado, creo que muchas de las propuestas que hicieron algunos colegas ayer de sugerencias de cómo ser más eficientes en la FAO son buenas propuestas, pero la verdad, para ser coherentes con la posición, Argentina nunca aceptó trabajar en cuestiones de micro management desde nuestra posición

como Miembros. Siempre planteamos que los Miembros deben marcar lineamientos estratégicos para que el Management pueda llevar adelante su trabajo. Yo no quiero decirle al Management cómo tiene que ser más eficiente, pero sí le quiero exigir que sea más eficiente. Entonces, sin hacer micro management, tratamos de elaborar nuestras líneas estratégicas para que el Management las pueda capturar y, en consecuencia, pueda llevar adelante su trabajo de manera más eficiente.

Espero que con estas palabras —al menos desde nuestra posición—, hayamos facilitado su trabajo para tratar de construir un consenso mayoritario.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

This is the beauty of multilateralism, being able to be patient, listen to everybody. We heard clearly Argentina yesterday and we accepted to wait. I am glad that he has come in this morning ready to join the consensus. This is great, thank you so much, Argentina. I wanted to say it because it will help a lot as you want to display your proposed conclusion for us to discuss. So, I just wanted, really, to thank Argentina and thank everybody for being so kind to wait for Argentina to come up with its position.

CHAIRPERSON

I join you to congratulate everyone for the flexibility. Like I said yesterday, this is scheduled for us for the last Session. So, we will try our very best to try to conclude this Item 20 in this morning's Session. As we said, we do not have all the time in the world for Item 20, despite the crucial importance of Item 20.

I would like now to invite the Secretariat to share the draft conclusions for Item 20 on the screen, and I will read them out in this Red Room.

Let us now review the draft conclusions paragraph by paragraph. That is my plan.

1. The Conference considered the Medium Term Plan (MTP) (Reviewed) 2022-25 and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25. The observations and recommendations of the Council as well as additional information provided by the Secretariat in Information Notes 1, 2 and 3.
2. The Conference acknowledged the spirit of cooperation between Members, which had facilitated its deliberation on the budget level for 2024-25.
3. The Conference expressed appreciation to the Independent Chairperson of the Council for convening the series of informal consultations in the period leading up to the 43rd Session of the Conference when Members had discussed various elements of the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25.
4. Regarding the substance of the proposals in the MTP and PWB, the Conference:
 - a) commended the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 were rooted in the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and appreciated the close alignment with the Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leaving no one behind;
 - b) reaffirmed the importance of protecting and funding the normative and technical work of FAO, including the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) conventions, treaty bodies, including depositary functions and inter-governmental arrangements;
 - c) encouraged FAO in the implementation of the Strategy of Climate Change and Science and Innovation, as well as on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors and on private sector engagement;
 - d) acknowledged the need to support FAO's co-functions amended through resources from its regular budget and stressed that voluntary contributions should be aligned with the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-31;

- e) underlined the importance of adequately resourcing Decentralized Offices, including with adequate technical and other resources to improve the implementation capacity of the Organization;
 - f) emphasized the importance of oversight internal control and support functions;
 - g) recalled the importance of continuing to seek an adequate balance between posts in the headquarters and decentralized offices;
 - h) requested that opportunities for savings and efficiency measures continue to be identified and let information on these savings and efficiencies be provided through established reporting mechanisms on implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25.
5. In addition, the Conference:
- a) urged Member Nations to make payments of assessed contributions on time and in full;
 - b) encouraged to continue to provide voluntary contributions in support of the implementation of FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31 through the integrated framework Programme of Work and Budget, in particular through more flexible voluntary funding;
 - c) noted that adjustment in resource allocation and/or results framework arising from decisions and guidance of the Conference and from the 2024-25 work planning process would be reported in the adjustment of the PWB 2025-25 for considerations by the Council in December 2023.
6. Concerning the longer-term financial health of the Organization, the Conference deferred consideration of the proposal for replenishment of the Working Capital Fund and incremental funding of the After-Service Medical Coverage past service liability to future biennia and requested Management to continue to explore alternative strategies to address these requirements.
7. The Conference adopted the following resolutions.

If I can briefly invite Beth to quickly walk us through with regards what is different in this particular Resolution as opposed to the original.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget)

I will explain the difference of this draft Budgetary Appropriations Resolution compared to the draft Budgetary Appropriations Resolution that is in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2024-25 document, so that is in *C 2023/3* following paragraph 177.

The only difference in this Conference resolution is the subparagraph that was in the original resolution that was related to the After-Service Medical Coverage, so the funding of the After-Service Medical Coverage. That was originally subparagraph (c), that has been removed. Because of the removal of that subparagraph (c) on After-Service Medical Coverage, there are also some changes in the figures in what is now subparagraph (c); which was originally subparagraph (d) on the total contributions.

The change is the removal of the After-Service Medical Coverage and the resulting total contributions due from Members. At this point in time, those are the changes that have been introduced in this Resolution before you.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go back to paragraph 1. As indicated earlier, we will go paragraph by paragraph.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I think it is a well-balanced one. But, anyhow, we have a few suggestions that we have anticipated to you and the Secretariat. I do not know if you want that I present those ideas to be included in the

proposal right here, just to explain the reason for that and to share with other colleagues those two propositions that we are presenting.

In fact, they are trying to reflect what the Group of 77 (G77) has presented yesterday in Plenary as ideas for the future of the work here in the Organization. Those are two propositions that are positive and to work. The first one is on bioeconomy. It is something that we have discussed with other Members here and, in a way, it is a way forward to improve the work that FAO has been implementing. Bioeconomy, as all colleagues know, are included in the Strategic Framework in the Plan of Work and Budget. So, the idea is to be very concrete, to highlight the importance of bioeconomy, the subject, and to offer an opportunity that Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and Committee on Forestry (COFO) work together on this direction.

The second one is something that we have raised during the Programme Committee in April, and it reflects this idea of keeping the importance and the original balance between regions when FAO is producing documents and studies. So, nothing really new but, in reality, we would like to share with other colleagues and to propose the amendment of this draft in order to improve the content of our Report.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

This paragraph 1, we were wondering if consideration of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) includes also the Web Annexes that were produced. If that is the case, then my comment has no place here, but if we feel that this is a good addition, to add webpages that are accompanying the PWB, I believe we can insert it somewhere. Is that okay?

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Yes, just if the Secretariat, with your permission, could include our propositions. I do not know. Just to share our proposition with other colleagues, so then we can come back to the... After we discuss paragraphs 1, 2 and 3. But, just as a suggestion, to include right now the proposal we have circulated if you can do that.

CHAIRPERSON

What I will do now is I will just flash and share the proposed language, and then we will come back to it and then have a proper placement, if there is support for that. So, Brazil, you can elaborate further when we come to those two paragraphs.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En primer lugar, quisiera agradecerle su esfuerzo a usted y al equipo por haber planteado esta base de trabajo en esta mañana esperando alcanzar el consenso. Yendo por delante, ese agradecimiento es en nombre de los 27 Estados Miembros de la Unión Europea, quisiéramos aclarar que no entendemos por qué los puntos de las conclusiones no están incluidos en el borrador de la resolución como sí lo estuvieron en las Reuniones Informales organizadas por el Presidente Independiente del Consejo.

La resolución es una referencia muy importante en la determinación de los presupuestos y en el pasado si no se usó fue porque estábamos en una situación de 12 años de Crecimiento Nominal Cero (CNC), pero ahora la situación es distinta. Por tanto, insistimos en que apreciando —insisto— positivamente su esfuerzo y las conclusiones plasmadas, sus puntos principales han de estar dentro de la propia resolución.

Además de todo ello, agradeceríamos que se hiciera una inclusión a otra de las cuestiones comentadas en el día de ayer que es la referencia a que en el futuro se pueda trabajar con una mayor antelación y disponibilidad de tiempo. Es decir, con mejores condiciones de trabajo para todos los Estados Miembros. Hay, además, otros elementos que estaban inicialmente en el borrador del Presidente Independiente del Consejo que no vemos ni en el Informe ni en la Resolución, como serían las referencias específicas, explícitas a los ahorros en eficiencia.

Y por último, e insisto de nuevo el agradecimiento a su esfuerzo, querríamos aclarar finalmente de qué porcentaje de incremento supone para poder tener todos los Miembros de esta sala la certeza de aquello sobre lo que se está hablando.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

It is just a logical question. The proposals proposed by Brazil were put up on the screen for a split second. I am wondering if they could be up there for a moment so we could take a photo and share them with our team so they can look at them in between now and when we discuss them.

CHAIRPERSON

Spain, I think there is a specific paragraph with regards to “appreciated saving” and so on so forth. Then you make your intervention there, if you feel strongly about having a percentage there. Would that be okay, Spain?

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I appreciate you showing them, but could you show them just for a few seconds longer?

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Sí, Presidente, por alusiones sencillamente estaba pidiendo las aclaraciones generales. Por supuesto no hay ningún problema en debatirlas de nuevo si fuera necesario en los siguientes minutos, pero es una precisión general.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

We are really hoping that we are going to be in a position to join a consensus, and we are really hoping that it is a full consensus where we can all join together, and we are making all the best efforts to do that. So, thank you for the work that you have done overnight to produce this paper.

It is a piece of paper that we really need to look at in its entirety, and it is quite difficult to do that piece by piece in this way, because in a certain sense you can kind of agree to it in its entirety and not paragraph by paragraph. It would be really helpful if there is a way to let us have a copy of it so that we can see what is written in the entirety of the document with the right kind of attention that this deserves so that we have time to really digest it rather than trying to catch it quickly on a screen that is moving all the time.

So, that would be really helpful, if there is a way of letting us have that by email or something. That would be extremely helpful.

I think the clarifications also on what we are talking about in terms of amounts here are obviously really important to this discussion. As I say, we are really trying to do our best to ensure that FAO gets a significant increase in these challenging times but, again, scrolling down very quickly through that does not help us to try and build that consensus. So, if there is a way this document could be shared, and then we go into the discussion over it and look at it paragraph by paragraph, I think that would allow us to have a more comprehensive approach to this and have a more substantive conversation about how we can reach a full agreement on the way forward.

CHAIRPERSON

Loud and clear. Wait a second. Because sending my email, some of you might not necessarily have quick access to email. We will make a print copy, a hard copy for everyone in the room, and then give you some time, and we will reconvene at 10:30. Will that be okay? Any strong objection? 10:30 reconvene here. Once you get your copies, then you have some time, between receiving your copies until 10:30. But, at the same time, I think we try our best to send emails too. Okay, we adjourn, and we will reconvene at 10:30.

The meeting was suspended from 10:11 to 10:52 hours

La séance est suspendue de 10 h 11 à 10 h 52

Se suspende la sesión de las 10.11 a las 10.52

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues, let us resume paragraph 1.

Sr. Luis Geronimo REYES VERDE (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de)

Quería pedirle a la Directora Beth Crawford, por favor, si pudiera repetir ahora que tenemos el documento en la mano explicar cuál ha sido la distribución con respecto a lo inicial y cómo se ha distribuido nuevamente ahora que tenemos el documento y podemos rayar un poquito para ver cómo quedó.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget)

So, the question was the difference in the draft resolution on budgetary appropriations compared to the version that was in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) document. So, the version in the PWB document follows paragraph 177. So, the difference in the version that has been distributed to you now is that the paragraph that referred to “funding the After-Service Coverage, past service liability, with an additional amount of 14.1 million.” In the original text, that was subparagraph (c). That subparagraph has been completely removed, so there is no reference in this current version to the After-Service Medical Coverage.

Because of the removal of that paragraph, the paragraph in the version that is before you, subparagraph (c), that starts with “the total contributions due from Members” has also been changed to take out any reference to the After-Service Medical Coverage, and the figures in that subparagraph have been adjusted accordingly. Everything else is exactly the same as the version that is in document C 2023/3, following paragraph 177.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We thank your team for such swift preparation of the draft and its dissemination on paper, basically, which is not actually something that FAO has done traditionally. Now, if I may, I have a question to Ms Beth Crawford.

Have we understood correctly that the exclusion of the item that you just mentioned, its deletion, proposing additional funding for the After-Service Medical Coverage (ASMC) programme means that the Organization is going to have additional resources that may be directed to programme activities, which may be deemed as a source of savings at this point because we are not going to be financing the medical insurance programme, which may be used for additional programme activities for FAO?

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget)

So, the After-Service Medical Coverage request is a request that was in addition to the programme of work that is presented to you, so that we have the Programme of Work and Budget that we have been discussing and that has the cost increases added to it.

The request for the After-Service Medical Coverage was for a USD 14.1 million assessment on top of that Programme of Work and Budget. So, the fact that that assessment for the After-Service Medical Coverage has not been approved does not mean that there are any savings. It is an additional request that we had made, and that request has been declined.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Muchas gracias por habernos facilitado este texto sobre el que trabajar. Una vez leído el mismo, La Unión Europea y sus 27 Estados Miembros entendemos que esta propuesta de texto se basa en un incremento del 5,6% cifra sobre la que debatiremos en el momento oportuno.

Respecto al texto en sí, consideramos que hay varios puntos que sí estaban incluidos previamente en el borrador del Presidente Independiente del Consejo y que tuvieron una acogida positiva en las tres Reuniones Informales previamente celebradas, en los días anteriores, y consideramos que habrían de acogerse en este texto. Para ello lo iremos viendo posteriormente párrafo por párrafo.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We are in the Conference and every decision that we are taking should be high level because in principle this is a meeting of Ministers. So, we should consider that it is not because we are all here, my Minister would have been sitting here trying to approve that.

This is something that we need to consider essentially because this is a meeting of Ministers, and going into the details, I don't think that my Minister would have appreciated if he was sitting here to go into the details that we could have worked out in the Council or in other Technical Committees.

So, I really suggest that our colleagues be mindful of that fact because a discussion among technicians is very different from a discussion among politicians because Ministers are politicians globally. So that is the general comment I wanted to make at this point.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

The Russian Federation took part in the informal consultations on drafting the draft of the resolution for the budget. We thank the efforts that have been undertaken by Mr Hans Hoogeveen on reaching a consensus for this decision, but the decision as such has not been reached. The European Union representative said that a consensus did take place, but there was no consensus because the Members expressed different views on the structure of the document.

In our statement we drew attention to distinguished colleagues in that in the practice of FAO, the draft resolution on budget expenditure is an independent document. It does not include programmatic elements. Moreover, the resolution on the top level of the budget presumes a specific adoption methodology through voting. This procedure has not been provided for based on the recommendations of the Conference regarding the priority activities in the budget cycle and, overall, the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) for the biennium.

This is why we believe it would be reasonable to separate two aspects of the decision, one on the budget that needs to be approved for the ceiling of budget expenditure, and on programme priorities on the other hand. So, logically, by opening up the Report to the Conference with regards to decisions on budget expenditure, we hope that there will be a financial aspect of the issues and not a programmatic element. Thank you.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

In fact, I also attended the informal meetings of Independent Chairperson of the Council ICC), and whilst I appreciate all the effort made by the ICC to try and come to a consensus on this issue, there were various views expressed, but there was no agreement. There were colleagues who wanted to include the text on programme priorities in the resolution, and there were others who did not feel that was the way forward, and I was one of those, because the resolution on the budget has been a tradition ever since it started that it deals with the budget level and the budget. The programmatic issues can be either in the Conference Report, and that is how it always was. So, I do not think it would be fair to say that there was a consensus in the ICC meetings on this issue.

CHAIRPERSON

Paragraph 1. I recall there was an inquiry by Cameroon with regards to the Web Annex. I think it is already referenced in the heading. If you can scroll up, it is there. Cameroon, do you have any further questions on this?

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

No, I saw the footnote, but because I saw the footnote, that is why I requested that because it is already mentioned information notes one, two and three. But we did make reference to the Web Annexes. So, I think it is only fair to add that there because, if you look at the footnote, you have every single thing is mentioned, but not the Web Annexes.

CHAIRPERSON

We are okay with paragraph 1. We move to paragraph 2. Is Paragraph 2 fine for everyone?

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Subpárrafo (b) solamente queríamos solicitarle que cuando hace referencia al consejo, tal vez deberíamos hacer referencia a qué Consejo concretamente.

CHAIRPERSON

May I request colleagues at the back there, if you ask for the floor, raise it higher.

Paragraph 2, okay.

Paragraph 3.

Paragraph 4.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

This is an insertion that we are proposing in between paragraphs 3 and 4 that follows on from paragraph 3. I will read it at dictation speed. *“The Conference highlighted the benefits of organizing informal meetings with Members during the process of developing programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring, to inform, support and discuss progress made in the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget.”*”

By way of explanation, this was a topic that was discussed during the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) informal consultations and did feature in some of his draft text. We did have some discussion about it. I have not tasked it as a need to do something, but highlighting the benefits of for the future processes that follow. I do believe during some discussions we had an acknowledgement from Management that this could be something that we could incorporate as a beneficial element to the process going forward.

CHAIRPERSON

I see the room can support that insertion.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Presidente, era simplemente para apoyarlo, pero como ya lo ha dicho usted, queda dicho.

CHAIRPERSON

Paragraph 4. That is the chapeau paragraph 4 (a).

Paragraph 4, subparagraph (b), (c), (d). Both (d) and (e) was proposed by our Brazilian colleague.

Paragraph 4, subparagraph (e).

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

I have been trying to work with Brazil's text and have discussed this with Brazil. The issue of regional inclusiveness is one that is very important to my region, the Southwest Pacific. We have an alternate formulation which is a shorter version, so perhaps it could be put up as a bracketed alternate at the end of subparagraph (e). I will read it for you now. The text goes, *“Recognise the importance of diverse and regionally balanced perspectives in FAO's normative, policy, and scientific work, and the development of knowledge products and indicators, including the need for support through voluntary financial instruments.”*

By way of explanation, this is, I think, broadening the elements from Brazil's original text, which focuses very much on the academics and documents, etc. I have tried to take that to broaden it across all elements of FAO's work and particularly inserted the word *“voluntary financial instruments.”*

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

I am sympathetic about the proposal on subparagraphs (d) and (e), but I prefer to have it in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) – that is the best place, not in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and so on, because it should be related to something practical that is either an evaluation or a report which does not follow this path. Then now we recommend that it should be this way. This is not a report, it is a proposal for the next biennium and also for the next two biennium for the Medium Term Plan (MTP). So, I am really sympathetic, but I think it will fit well in the Programme Implementation Report. If that can satisfy Brazil, then we have time to look at it there. But, here, I am really confused about it being in the Report of the MTP and PWB.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Nosotros estamos cómodos con la propuesta de Brasil de los dos subpárrafos, pero también podemos convivir perfectamente con la sugerencia de Australia. Por lo que he visto, también Brasil podría hacerlo, por lo que creo que podríamos ahí respaldar ambas sugerencias. La originaria de Brasil en el caso del subpárrafo (d) y la propuesta mejorada o corregida de Australia.

En cuanto al lugar, la verdad es que, si pudiéramos mantenerlo aquí, a mí me parece más razonable, pero tratemos de ver la manera de que estén dentro del documento. Creo que eso es lo importante.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

First of all, I would like to thank Australia for the proposition and other Members who also contributed to this new suggestion. I think the new suggestion encapsulates all the concerns that we had here and in other discussion we had previously. I think we can, as Argentina, we can support the Australian proposal. I believe that the place should be here, if Cameroon can agree with that.

With your indulgence, Cameroon, I believe in that regard that the chapeau of the paragraph is very clear. It is paragraph 4, regarding the substance on the proposal in the Medium Term Plan/Programme of Work and Budget (MTP/PWB). So, in a way, it is not only the current situation of the past, but also for the future, for the implementation of the next Programme of Work and Budget.

In this paragraph 4, I believe that the suggestion made by Australia can fit well.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

My fear here is that we are opening a Pandora's box. You listened to our statement yesterday. There were so many items that we wanted to be included. So, if we want them to be included here, it would be endless. I strongly suggest that we can go along with what is on here if it is in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR), but not here, else then we can come back to our statement of yesterday and mention every single topic that we want to see addressed.

So, this is our commitment now. We appreciate this, fine, but not here. Programme Implementation Report or we have also the Programme Evaluation Report, where these are things that can fit there because they come from something that you have experienced, which has not been implemented and we want it as the recommendation to be implemented.

We are not happy we have it here. So, this is our, as Africa Group, because I consulted with some of my colleagues here before when this proposal was made, and we will not be happy or else we come back to all our proposals that were in our statement yesterday.

CHAIRPERSON

So, if I understand correctly, with regards to subparagraph (e), that Brazil has been flexible in accepting alternative language by Australia, but there is also a concern that this is not a good place to have it here. I am in your hands. Again, maybe I just pass the floor back to Brazil with regards to paragraph 4 subparagraph (e). Would you be okay if this can be taken up during the Programme Implementation Report (PIR), or you still insist to have it here?

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

For the timing, I consider that the best place is here. When we see the next proposition by Cameroon, we can examine the possibility to transfer it. But, right now, I prefer to keep it as it stands, according to the Australian proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I now propose the deletion of the original proposal, and then bracket the whole entire subparagraph (e) for the time being and we move on? Would that be okay?

Subparagraph (d) and (e).

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Nos referíamos a uno anterior. Ahora mismo estamos escuchando las propuestas del resto de los Miembros.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Perhaps as a suggestion of a middle ground, in subparagraph (d), we could stress the importance of the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). We certainly see and agree with the importance of bioeconomy and the rest of the paragraph, but perhaps instead of singling out one Programme Priority Area, we could all agree on stressing the importance of all of them. Would this be acceptable to the delegates? We also wanted to express our support for subparagraph (e) as it stands now with Australia's edits.

CHAIRPERSON

If Brazil does not have a quick response to this, as I propose, we move on to the next paragraph. Brazil can have some time to reflect the proposal by Canada.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

I am happy that Canada suggested this. If we can just put a full-stop after Programme Priority Areas, then we can join the consensus there, because it keeps everything open. "*Stressed the importance of the Programme Priority Areas,*" full-stop. Nothing else, as we want to send it to the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). If that is the case, then we can go along with also subparagraph (e) as it is. It could be workable. We can be flexible there, because this is very well-understood by everybody because that is the work of FAO. We were very uncomfortable in here to highlight only one area, where we know that we have highlighted so many areas in our statement yesterday.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Regarding the proposal made by Canada, it seems a little bit awkward here because, as it stands, the text right now, "*Stressed the importance of the Programme Priority Areas, bioeconomy,*" I do not understand what is the suggestion made by Canada in this regard. Because it seems that we are stressing the importance of all (Programme Priority Areas) PPAs. Then what happens with bioeconomy? Just a clarification on that, because it seems that the text is not very clear right now.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

I just wanted to clarify, we were suggesting to stress the importance of all the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), and striking out "bioeconomy," highlighting just one of the Programme Priority Areas. I have not thought of the language exactly, but the spirit of it was to stress the importance of all of them rather than singling out one priority area.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I have no problem in stressing all the programmes, but the idea is to retain "bioeconomy" as a separate idea, because here what we are talking about, and what we have also presented to other colleagues, is the idea to, of course, to try to work in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the Committee on Forestry (COFO), the current collaboration between both committees to work on this collaboration how to improve our knowledge, how to move forward regarding bioeconomy. FAO has already presented this idea of bioeconomy as part of the Strategic Framework, as part of the current and the future Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). So, the idea is not to create anything new, but to try to invite Members which belong to COFO and COAG to develop bioeconomy for our benefit, so that it benefits of our society.

I do not have any problems regarding stressing other or mentioning Programme Priority Areas as a whole, but the idea is very specific to foster bioeconomy among ourselves, among our debate here at FAO. It is nothing new, but it is to stress the importance and to reinforce our interests in the subject. So, I believe that COAG and COFO and both Chairpersons are in favour of that, and I believe that they support the idea of including a positive thing that is good for everyone.

It is a positive and constructive way to strengthen the work between and the collaboration between COAG and COFO. That is why I want to preserve. If you want to highlight other areas, we do not have any problem. But here is a very specific, very concrete and positive work that we believe that COAG and COFO together could work on.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I just want to align myself with Cameroon on this. I think that our colleague has made a really good point that this really does have the potential to open up a Pandora's box. I am sure we all have a lot of priorities we would like to see. We have raised those in the appropriate venues, like the Programme Committee, during the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) negotiations, and other things that will be moving forward. But this is not the place for that. So, we would support the proposal that Cameroon made to simply full-stop "*Stressed the importance of the Programme Priority Areas.*" Then we are flexible on subparagraph (e) as well, as proposed by our colleague from Australia.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Tratando de capturar los diferentes planteos de mis colegas, pensando que quizás empezar la frase con, "*Stress the importance of the Program Priority Areas*". Poniendo "*enfaticando la importancia de*" o "*tomando en consideración particularmente*" son expresiones que podrían tener un link entre la primera parte y la segunda parte.

A mí me parecen dos cosas. No comparto la posición de Estados Unidos para nada. Yo creo que sí es este el lugar, pero en el caso de que no hubiera consenso para colocarlo en este lugar y tomando en consideración que ya el colega de Camerún también manifestó que podría convivir con ello en otra parte del texto, yo creo que lo importante es que finalmente este texto sí esté expresado en el documento.

Repito, priorizo y acompaño la posición de Brasil, pero trataré de ver la manera de buscar que haya consenso para que esto esté incluido dentro del documento y creo que la manera de vincular la primera parte, "*Stress the importance of the Program Priority Areas*" es "*resaltando la importancia de*". Eso es lo que sería para mí el *link* entre las dos partes, pero busquemos la manera de tratar de incluir este texto en alguna parte del documento. Yo preferiría aquí, pero puedo tratar de ser flexible para tratar de encontrar el lugar exacto donde debería ir.

Ms Kwena KOMAPE (South Africa)

I just want to add my voice to this Session on the paragraph that we are discussing now and indicate that I would like to align myself with the statement that we should not be singling out programmes in this particular Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). I support my colleague from Cameroon, as he has stated on behalf of the Africa Group, that indeed we should look at a place where we can put it, but not in this particular Session of the of the discussions, maybe outside of the Programme of Work and Budget.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The UK does tend to agree with Cameroon that, in this particular overarching Report, where we are looking broadly at the Programme of Work and Budget, it is not the most appropriate place to include something that starts getting into the specific detail of what certain committees could do.

I think if we do that, we could end up, for example, talking also about the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX) or other bodies and so on. I think, as Cameroon said, there are places where this important issue could be taken forward further. That could be within the scope of the Programme Committee work, the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). There are various places where we could continue to have the conversation around this specific area along with other areas.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

The colleague from Cameroon proposed that we should insert, in the Item 18 of the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2020/21. This refers to the past. Here, we are mentioning positive things, common things that we all share interests in bioeconomy, the regional balance in the production of documents, and the idea is to highlight the importance of those subjects for the future, not for the past. So, I do not believe the Programme Implementation Report regarding the past, the last two years, 2020/21, is a suitable place for that.

Regarding the Programme Committee (PC), it is dealt in Commission One, and the Report of Commission One is done. So, we are not going to reopen that in another Commission. So, I believe a good way to move forward, is here, because it is a discussion that is going on. We are talking about

the future of the Organization, we are talking about the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) for the next biennium. So, the idea is to include here things that we believe that could move along.

Of course, maybe there are some other subjects that are important. I am open to hear, but I did not hear anyone saying that bioeconomy or to talk about bioeconomy or to talk about regional balance as something that nobody wants. If it is agreed, if there is a consensus that those subjects are important, I believe that those messages should be retained here and should be kept for the next biennial work.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

It is a very difficult situation because I have seen so many things that sometimes it is easy for me to pick up something from the past experience. No, the role of the Programme Implementation Report being presented here is to prepare for the future. That is the stage of planning, and we should all understand that here.

It is not that because we are relating the past that it is linked totally to the past. We see what has been done, if it has been done correctly and what we want to do for the future. That is the role of the Programme Implementation Report. First, to see whether the programme that we have planned was properly carried out, and then, second, to see if we can make adjustments for the future.

I say again that we have nothing against the proposal of Brazil, but we are against where to put it. It should be clear in everybody's mind, it is an element of the programme, because we have addressed in the Africa Group (ARG) statement, and South Africa just recalled it now, everything that we have addressed there that we want to be done for the December adjustment is there. We can equally put it here. That is why I talk of Pandora's box being opened, if we want to do that, and every region has that. Even in all the group of regions, there are other issues in their statement that we can take.

I am sorry, but I am not comfortable having it here in this Report. We seem to be bogged down on minor issues that nobody denies are important, but where to put them, that is the best thing for thought.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

The Ambassador from Cameroon made all of my points precisely, so I have nothing to add.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I will not go on this discussion right now. Maybe it is better, for the sake of time, to move for the next paragraph. Then we can reconvene and to discuss maybe informally those two propositions.

CHAIRPERSON

As I proposed earlier, let us move on to the next paragraph. It is now subparagraph (g). Subparagraph (h).

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

We have nothing to add on subparagraph (g), but we would like to add an additional paragraph on South–South Cooperation. It is taken from the last Council Report, *CL 172 Report*, paragraph 9. The reference is paragraph 9 subparagraph (f), and it would read, “*recognized the important and instrumental role of South–South and Triangular Cooperation in realising the 2030 Agenda, and encouraged FAO to invigorate and further enhance South–South and Triangular Cooperation.*”

In previous informal consultations that we had with the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), we had mentioned that this is an important aspect of the Programme of Work and Budget for developing countries. So, we would like to have this incorporated into the draft resolution.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

While I do not disagree with this, as a concept, this is precisely what we were discussing earlier. The moment we start adding priority issues that more rightfully belong in the Programme Committee and the Programme Implementation Report (PIR), I have about seven paragraphs that I will be adding to this, and I just want to make sure that people are aware that this is the Pandora's box that our Ambassador from Cameroon was discussing earlier. We all have priority issues that we think are

important, and we all have things that we would like to highlight. This is about the Programme of Work and Budget, and this is about making sure that FAO has the resources that it needs to be able to continue its work and not about highlighting specifics.

There are 20 Programme Priority Areas, we could start listing out every one of those rather than picking one or two that we think is important. There are lots of instruments of cooperation that can promote the 2030 Agenda, and we can lay out all of those if we would like to. There are also things that are more controversial that are priorities for the United States and an overwhelming majority of Council Members, as shown by the decisions of the last Council. I am happy to propose to put those in as well, but I do not think that they are going to get us anywhere.

So, I just want to throw that out there that we need to be very cautious about what we are adding here because every time we add a priority, we are opening the door for others to add a priority as well.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Nos parece muy razonable la propuesta de Estados Unidos a quien se lo agradecemos y lo apoyamos.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

A nosotros no nos parece inconveniente la propuesta de Indonesia. De hecho, para los países en desarrollo el tema de la cooperación sur-sur y triangular es muy importante. Por lo tanto, si hubiera consenso estaríamos cómodos con que esté incluido aquí pero tomando en consideración las expresiones de Estados Unidos y de España en nombre de la Unión Europea (UE), sería importante que esta posición que estamos escuchando aquí sea también en todo el contexto de la Conferencia. O sea que no tengamos ningún tipo de inclusión de ningún tipo de sugerencias nuevas que no estén dentro de lo que ya está discutido, así mantenemos el mismo esquema de funcionamiento. Yo creo que, por un lado, hemos escuchado que hay propuestas que se plantearon durante las discusiones informales con el Presidente Independiente del Consejo y por otro lado, cuando se mencionan algunas de ellas decimos que no deberían incluirse porque sería abrir la caja de Pandora.

No me preocupa, finalmente, soy flexible a cualquier alternativa. Lo único que digo es que hay que ser coherentes en todo y tratemos de mantener la misma línea de pensamiento para que podamos entendernos entre nosotros.

Por lo tanto, repito, soy flexible incluso con la propuesta de Indonesia. No me siento incómodo con ella, pero vamos a ver si tiene o no tiene el consenso entre los Miembros. Si fuera así, estaríamos super cómodos con ello.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Yes, I fully agree with Argentina. We have no problem with the insertion of, or the proposal made here, because in practical terms we are not talking about anything new, they are concepts, principles that we always emphasize. But the proposal made to insert here South–South and Triangular Cooperation, the idea is not to do that, the idea is just to mention priorities, subjects that are very important for the Membership for developing countries. The idea is to incorporate principles, subjects or ideas, proposals that are priority for us. The idea is to highlight important subjects that matter for developing countries.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I think we do understand the importance of highlighting priorities, of course, for all Members. Those priorities, however, are set out in detail and highlighted in the documents that we have before us that sit under this discussion, namely the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) itself, which sets out the priorities that we agree on, that we want to highlight, and the work that we are going to fund to deliver against those priorities. I do think that here at this high-level conversation that is summarising our Report on that detailed PWB document, it is beholden on us to keep that at that high level and avoid picking out individual things from that document that are priorities.

I think we have all agreed on the importance of South–South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), just as, for example, we have agreed on the importance of FAO's work on One Health or antimicrobial resistance or a whole host of other areas that we could include here, but we are not proposing that we

do include because they are included elsewhere, and we do not think that we want to add to this and make it a much lengthier kind of document when the objective of this is to look at how the Conference is going to agree the way forward on the Programme of Work and Budget.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

As we mentioned, this South–South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is very important for Indonesia and for other developing countries. Now, we understand that we do not want to open a Pandora's box, but this is a true and very important priority for us. If I may call your attention that all the other subparagraphs in this paragraph are taken from the same document, which is the *CL172/REP*, paragraph 9, its subparagraphs. Most of those paragraphs are from that specific paragraph.

I do not think there is an issue; there should not be an issue on adding this paragraph there. However, we are flexible, and we are showing our flexibility, but we prefer to have it here, but we are flexible to put it also in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR), if that is also possible. So, we would prefer it to be here, but we are flexible to have it mentioned in the PIR as well.

CHAIRPERSON

May I know if there is strong opposition to Indonesia's proposal?

Can we rally around?

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I have no opposition to this as a proposal, but if we are expanding paragraph 4 out to include priorities of individual countries or groups, then we will need some time during lunch to come up with our priorities from both our group and our individual country to add to the paragraph 4 as well.

So, I think if that is where we are moving with paragraph 4, which it seems to be with the addition of now three additional paragraphs, laying out specific priorities, we are going to need some time to come up with the specific priorities we would like to highlight as well.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

We would like to really appreciate the flexibility of Indonesia here, in suggesting that they would be ready to have this reflected and deepened further even in the context of the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). I think that is a very good way forward. I think the PIR, as Cameroon and others have said, is an important Report that gives us the opportunity to reflect on delivery and that also makes recommendations for moving forward. That is the space for looking at how FAO is performing in this really important area and where we could do better.

CHAIRPERSON

Indonesia, you are reflecting – are you insisting this to be here or we can go long without here? I just want to make sure that I got it correctly.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

I mean, we are flexible; we would prefer it to be here, but if the new additions of subparagraphs (e) and (d) are still there, we would like to have it here also.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, this will be square bracketed. We move on to the next subparagraph, (h). Subparagraph (i).

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

As Japan stressed yesterday in its statement, enhancing transparency of all FAO's efforts is an essential factor to fully implement the Mid Term Plan (MTP) with confidence, and Japan respects that the Secretariat and our colleagues have already agreed acceptance of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspection. In this regard, Japan proposes adding these words after "*functions, including through steady implementation of JIU inspection*".

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I just want to make sure I am not being accused of inconsistency but, again, I think if we are going to start to highlight inspections, we should probably highlight every specific inspection that we want to have the implementations done. I am beginning to think more and more that perhaps paragraph 4 itself is the problem and not the individual subparagraphs of paragraph 4. Why are we pulling out specific things? That said, I am not sure that we will rally around the consensus to drop paragraph 4 completely, which I think would probably solve a lot of these problems, but just to bracket and be consistent that if we are going to continue to add individual things in here, that we will have several to add as well.

Mr Su GUO (China)

I think we have already opened a Pandora's box, because we keep adding more items to this draft and we agree that every country has a specific interest, but I quite agree with what Cameroon and the United States have proposed, that for this time I think we should keep it simple.

In general, it will be easy for us to reach the consensus, because while we are sitting here, we have discussed the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and Medium Term Plan (MTP), and just stressed the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) listed in this better framework is okay, and that includes all the interests of all countries. If we want to find the single ones, we agree, but to keep adding, it is endless. We have very strict time, so I think this needs to make it as simple, easy, to just keep paragraph 4 away or just to make it simple, to list the general idea about we focus on PPAs is okay.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

I am happy to see there is a reference to internal control. May I suggest that we add a few words where it says, "*emphasized the importance of oversight and an adequate system of internal control*" because all the time I have been drawing attention to the fact that there were times in the past because of these cuts in budget, that the internal control system suffered, so we have to refer to the adequacy of the internal control system. So, could we just add these words, "*an adequate system of internal control*" instead of just internal control?

Secondly, Chairperson, I agree with what the United States said about inserting individual inspections. The wording which has been suggested for the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspections is almost giving the JIU inspections a blanket approval, but each JIU Report has to be reviewed, and Members have to see which recommendations are acceptable and which are not.

I have a problem with the way the wording has been put.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

Well, on many fronts we agree with the position that has just been expressed by the esteemed representative of Pakistan. Unfortunately, Japan's suggestion poses more questions than provides answers. If we are talking about the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspections, we are probably talking about Management and administration review.

But, nevertheless, we are not talking about the results of the inspections because that has not yet been completed, and as the representative of Pakistan responded quietly, that the Management should take up this information from the recommendations and not respond to them. In other words, to start executing the recommendations. We do not need this at this point. The decisions on recommendations are the responsibility of the Management, so we would favour for the text to be lightened and not have additional elements that would create more issues of dispute and raise more questions than answers.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We also think the United States did the work for us. We are not happy to source specific proposals here. I said something at the very beginning, a general comment that I made, and we tend not to be following that. This is a high-level meeting of Ministers. Some of the nitty-gritty in which we are going, some will not be willing to get into that, and we should consider that.

It is not a technical Committee, it is not the Council – so, please let us keep things really high level, it is better for everybody. And the suggestion of Japan is already included in oversight because it is not every Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) recommendation that is relevant for FAO. Those Reports are so big and concern almost every single organization of the UN system, so I prefer not to have that inclusion here, because if that is the case, we will be again, opening a Pandora's Box. But I agree with what Pakistan said that, well, it is qualifying the kind of system we need to have.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I am sorry for bothering our colleagues but Japan, especially the Embassy of Japan in Italy, has elaborated the Secretariat proposal on the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and contributed to discussions in the Financial Committee and the Council so far and broadly accepted. So, this is Japan's comment – only one comment. So again, enhancing transparency of all FAO's effort is not specific issues but overarching issues. So, it would be appreciated if Members could accept Japan's proposal.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Quizás para salir de este momento en el que nos encontramos, proponemos una propuesta alternativa que es en el subpárrafo (i) hasta “*control and support functions*”, suprimir toda la parte escrita en rojo y sustituirá por “*external reviews*”, de manera que no especifiquemos y no hagamos de esto un árbol de navidad y pueda ser aceptable, entiendo, por la mayoría de los Miembros.

CHAIRPERSON

Can you repeat the last point of the intervention?

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Sí, por supuesto. Lo que queríamos decir es que en el subpárrafo (i) dejarlo todo como está en negro y después como están escribiendo ahora mismo los servicios administrativos “*including external reviews*” punto y eliminamos los últimos corchetes desde “*including through study implementation of JIU inspections, support functions and external reviews*”. Esa sería una propuesta por si puede resultar aceptable para la membresía.

Ms Isabelle FRAGNIÈRE VAN HOUT (Switzerland)

We have been listening very carefully to the different positions here. A few interesting suggestions have been made, and while we do not have any problem, and could even support some of the additions or modifications that have been made, Indonesia made an interesting comment that a large part of these paragraphs that we are discussing now, actually come from the Council Resolution at its 172nd Session.

So, I am wondering if a slightly left field suggestion would be taking into account all the brackets that we've added now, to simply take note of the relevant paragraphs in the 172nd Council decision where a lot of these points have been made, and some of the additions that have been suggested come from sort of avoid what many have mentioned, trying to bring in new specific priorities. But we can show flexibility.

Mr Su GUO (China)

I just want to repeat that we agree with what the United States said, we should keep consistency here. And also, I understand what Switzerland has said, the majority of this part has to draw from the 172nd Session of the Council (CL172), so what do we discuss here? We do not focus on a specific aspects of the content. We should make clear first from what, based on what standard you pick up this content and put it here, which will make clear first of this.

If you want to make it consistent, you just pick up all the pieces, do some copy and paste work to borrow from all the content from CL172 because we have so discussed here. If you just want to single out anything, I think it is not fair to some countries. Because every country has an interest. You cannot keep adding items here or new items here.

I just wanted to reiterate that we have constrained time – we need to conclude to find consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) levels. This is a product of this Commission.

Ms Wannika WUTTHI (Thailand)

I listened carefully and I agree that we are almost at the end of the point, we are almost there, and I respect all suggestions from the Members, that we have so many priorities here and it is worth to list in the document. But I also agree that we do not have to put everything here. I think that we will support the proposal made by Spain, by Cameroon and the US.

On the external review, instead of making a specific reference to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspection, for this draft we prefer to keep the draft conclusions as simple and as streamlined as possible. We would recommend to avoid opening of the Pandora's box, this is our position.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Japan respects the United States, China and other colleagues to make the draft document simple as much as possible. Also thanks Spain for giving an alternative. So, Japan accepts including external review, not originally Japan's proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Japan for your flexibility. And with that, we are not sure if including external reviews can really support.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I will just repeat that while as a concept that paragraph is okay, at this point I am not comfortable with accepting any part of paragraph 4 until all of paragraph 4 has been either accepted or deleted. So, I feel like up to this point, I need to bracket each individual part of paragraph 4 because paragraph 4 as a whole is not something that I can currently accept. I am not going to do piece by piece on the paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues, I have not heard so far the support for opening Pandora's Box. Almost everyone is not in favour of opening Pandora's Box. But, at the same time, we are seeing this is happening. So, my appeal to all of you is let us be consistent, as simple as possible. I cannot agree more with the colleague from Cameroon – we have to maintain this high-level meeting, Commission II of the Conference, and I do not necessarily think this is where we would really discuss very technical matters.

I think we have to really re-look at what we are currently proposing and considering thoroughly the Secretariat's proposals, which we think is the best way forward. But that said, we could have left behind some important points or important priorities, but we really appeal to your flexibility. If they are not reflected here, they can be reflected elsewhere.

The plan is Commission II can continue the discussion of Item 20 from 14:00 to 17:00 hours. We stop now, and we come back for continuing discussions on Item 20, and then we continue on with Items 18 and 19 thereafter, from 17:00 to 19:30 hours.

With that, I encourage colleagues to reconcile and to have real negotiations in the margin, the corridor of Commission II.

The meeting rose at 12:16 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 16

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.16



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

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

T

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-third Session
Quarante-troisième session
43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023
Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023
Rome, 1-7 de julio de 2023

THIRD MEETING OF COMMISSION II
TROISIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
TERCERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II

4 July 2023

The Second Meeting was opened at 14:13 hours
Mr Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La deuxième séance est ouverte à 14 h 13
sous la présidence de M. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la segunda reunión a las 14.13
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Presidente de la Comisión II

Portions marked as [XX] were inaudible due to technical reasons. Please submit all corrections
to: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Les parties signalées par [XX], pour des raisons techniques, étaient inaudibles. Veuillez communiquer
toute correction à: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Las partes marcadas como [XX] fueron inaudibles debido a razones técnicas. Por favor, envíe todas
las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Item 20. Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (Draft Resolution on budget level) (continued)

Point 20. Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2024-2025 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget) (suite)

Tema 20. Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2024-25 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto) (continuación)

(C 2023/3; C 2023/3 WA11; C 2023/3 WA12; C 2023/3 Information Notes 1-3; C 2023/LIM/11)

CHAIRPERSON

Commission II, let us continue our work, and let us continue where we left off.

Paragraph 4, continuing paragraph 4 subparagraph (j).

Subparagraph (k).

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

Australia's proposal for what is now subparagraph (k) is to simply insert the words “*by management*”, so that the sentence would read, “*requested that opportunities for savings and efficiency measures continue to be identified by management.*” I think if we are requesting someone to do something, we need to be quite specific.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

It is not about the paragraph that you mentioned Chairperson, it is about the whole paragraph 4. I believe that we heard that some delegations indicated that we cannot reach an agreement, that there is too much confusion and that the paragraph is becoming a Christmas tree.

So, if you cannot agree on a possible language, I believe, and I join myself to the proposal made before, to insert the whole paragraph 4 into brackets and delete the whole content of the paragraph. I believe that a straightforward paragraph or decision is better than just a few mentions to something and not to other important suggestions made before. So, in that case, my delegation asks that the whole paragraph 4 be placed into brackets.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

As we said yesterday, we are really doing our utmost to try to join consensus here in the context of, certainly a national context where we are having to make significant cuts.

This point that is reflected in paragraph 4 subparagraph (k) is of particular importance, and I think if we do look at the opportunity of maybe deleting most of paragraph 4, I think this will need to be reflected somewhere. We have had long conversations yesterday that really joined together, I thought in consensus, around the importance of delivering greater effectiveness and efficiency.

On the wording that we have in front of us, I think we would like to make a couple of suggestions just to try to strengthen a little. So we would say, requested that savings and efficiency measures be identified, so deleting the word “*opportunities for*” and “*continue to*” just to abbreviate a little, and then it would continue, and we would add at the end of that, where we would talk about that being reported back in the mechanisms we have, we would add at the end, “*in the context of a longer-term action plan to deliver greater efficiencies.*”

And the reason for that is simply that, obviously, when you are planning budgeting and you are planning efficiencies, that is clearly going to go beyond the biennial period that we are talking about here. Sometimes you make investments now that will deliver efficiencies in a biennium beyond the one that we are discussing.

So, what we want to see is FAO having a broader view of actions to be taken where we can improve efficiencies and look at delivering more effectively in country for greater results and impact.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We are open to discuss the issue of efficiency savings, and we are happy and we can support this addition in the context of a longer term action plan to deliver greater efficiencies because that is what it is indeed. We would like to lend our support to that vision, if that may help us to move quickly now.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I agree with this. I agree with what Brazil said, that what we had discussed before about removing most of paragraph 4. I think that this subparagraph (k), could easily be a stand alone paragraph, but it is exactly what we are supposed to be here doing today, which is talking about the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

I think that it fits without it being a priority in the way that some of the other things in the paragraph. I actually was going to request that it be pulled out of this paragraph in the first place when we got to it, because I think that it is separate from the other points in this paragraph. So, I think kind of a combination, I would agree with the combination of what has been said before me, the combination of what Brazil proposed with this subparagraph (k) as a standalone paragraph in this conclusions.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I have made a request, and I have not seen in the screen the suggestion we made, so I ask your indulgence to instruct the Secretary to put the whole paragraph 4 in, beginning from “*Regarding,*” until the end of the paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to Switzerland, may I suggest, of course the whole paragraph 4 now is square bracketed. There are also suggestions to have subparagraph (k) to be a standalone paragraph. So, my suggestion is to copy and paste the whole subparagraph (k) into another paragraph. So that would be paragraph 5, but it is still square bracketed at this moment. Okay. Any quick reaction?

Mr Alwin KOPSE (Switzerland)

Indeed, we will support having subparagraph (k) as a standalone subparagraph, and I just wanted to make the proposal that we actually would do that. We have a few comments on that paragraph. I think it is important to identify who should identify these savings, and we would certainly prefer to have an active language. So “*the Conference requests management to identify and to provide information through the establishment of a Reporting mechanism.*”

I think we always try to look for active language. In paragraph 5 for example, “*we urge Member nations*”, so we should be clear, that would then read “*requests management to identify*” and then we do not need that, so that is kind of a grammar issue. Then we agree with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland that it is important to have a long-term action plan or financial plan. I also think there it is important to be specific as to who should draw up that action plan.

It might be a new activity, so the Conference would request what we just said, request management to identify and to provide information and to request management to develop a long-term financial plan that addresses greater efficiencies. And yesterday we also talked about the balance between assessed and voluntary contributions.

So it would be there exactly, “*requests management to provide or to develop*” where you have the cursor, exactly, “*and requests management to develop a longer term,*” then we would prefer instead of “*action plan*”, we would prefer the term “*financial plan*”, “*to address greater efficiencies*”, so instead of “*deliver to address*” and then after “*efficiency*” add “*and the balance between assessed and voluntary contributions.*”

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Hearing the statements and inputs made by delegations this afternoon, we would like to make a proposal following up from what Brazil had said and also what the United States of America just said a few minutes ago, regarding deleting paragraph 4, and we have a proposal for putting something in place, and if this goes through then we will take away obviously our previous addition on *South-South Cooperation*, and it would read, so it would read, “*the Conference took note of the relevant*

conclusions and recommendations of this 172nd Session of the FAO Council on the Medium Term Plan 2022-2025 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024 and 2025.”

We are flexible on the verb here. It can be “*take note*” or “*endorsed*” so then to accommodate the request of the United States of America to separate subparagraph (k), we can go along with having that as, that would be a paragraph 4 bis, I think, so the subparagraph (k) would be a paragraph 4 bis.

CHAIRPERSON

Indonesia has just provided alternative paragraphs for paragraph 4, which is alternate 4, but at the same time we are still looking at this paragraph on efficiency saving.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Of course, we are happy to look at the new proposal by Indonesia, which sounds good because it is high-level, that is what we want here. Now talking about this paragraph, “*requested management identify efficiency savings and efficiency measures and the information of these savings efficiency be provided through the established Reporting mechanisms*”, we would like to add a couple of words here, probably more than that.

After “*established Reporting mechanisms*” that include, do you want me to read everything? “*That include the Adjustment to the Programme of Work and Budget to be presented in the December Council, and that include the implementation*” and the rest follows, that is what we wanted to add. So, we are sure that these measures are at least the short-term measures and the long-term measures, so that is our idea,

CHAIRPERSON

We are seeing that there is a support to have a separate paragraph for originally subparagraph (j). At the same time, we square bracket the whole paragraph 4 at the same time. And having this paragraph stand alone, and I see there is a lot of contributions to this particular paragraph. If there is no more on this, I want to continue.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Parece que el orden alfabético en inglés no nos ayuda porque estamos muy lejos de su mesa. Querriamos, en cualquier caso, destacar la importancia que para la Unión Europea y sus 27 Estados Miembros tiene el párrafo (k) y le agradecemos específicamente la propuesta de hacer un párrafo independiente. Nos parece francamente útil.

Por otro lado, nos parece muy bien también y queremos apoyar los comentarios hechos anteriormente por el Reino Unido, por Suiza y queremos agradecer la flexibilidad de Indonesia que ha hecho una propuesta muy interesante que, a nuestro juicio, nos permitiría alcanzar el consenso que todos estamos buscando.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I believe that I did not make myself clear. When I refer to paragraph 4, I mention the whole paragraph including the paragraph that has been transformed into a new paragraph. So, in this case, because we saw it as a package, a whole package, paragraph 4 with all its elements included. So, in that case, I request that this whole paragraph, this new whole paragraph, be considered part of paragraph 4 and be put also into brackets.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We would like to now have a new paragraph 7, instead of “*in addition the Conference,*” we would rather put that subparagraph (k), we transfer it under there as the first bullet Item (a), that is requested management and so on, we put it there as the new (a) of paragraph 7. We remove “*in addition*” so that as we say, it should be a standalone paragraph on its own, and that is where we tend to agree. So, we bring down the low order subparagraph (k) into a new (a).

CHAIRPERSON

I think that is very thoughtful. That is it, we are already moving into paragraph 7.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Presidente, solo hago una referencia cuando volvamos de nuevo al cuatro, pero quiero dejarlo claro ahora. Estuve tratando de pensar en todo lo que dijeron mis colegas durante la mañana y cómo pensar en reducir para tratar de que sea más fácil la búsqueda del consenso dentro del párrafo cuatro. Yo creo que una alternativa razonable es tratar de utilizar algo que ya fue acordado en la última conferencia de la FAO. Tema que fue acordado por todos los Miembros, por los Ministros como suele decir mi querido colega de Camerún, por lo tanto no reflejaría la particularidad de ningún país en particular o de ninguna región en particular, sino lo acordado por los Ministros en la última Conferencia.

Solo lo menciono ahora. Cuando volvamos al cuatro voy a ir específicamente con texto, pero basado en lo acordado en la Conferencia anterior. Cosa que por ahí podamos evitar tener que entrar a discutir mucho de los párrafos que están incluidos en esta propuesta y podemos seguir con lo mencionado por mis queridos colegas en los párrafos que continúan, Presidente, si usted está de acuerdo.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I have made a request. I have not seen that on the screen. I suggested because we understand that the whole paragraph 4 was a package. In that sense, this last letter should be placed into brackets, okay? I do not know if we have moved from paragraph 6 to paragraph 7, but it does not matter where it goes. I believe that we should deal with the whole paragraph as a whole. Yes, it does not matter if you move from one paragraph to another, the whole concept should be put into brackets for the time being.

Sr. Jorge Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Mi delegación está totalmente de acuerdo con lo propuesto por la Delegación de Brasil de eliminar por completo el párrafo cuatro, sin embargo, me gustaría ahora que mi colega de Argentina hiciera una nueva propuesta, escuchémosla para ver si podemos sustituirla y puede haber consenso en eso antes de seguir pasando a otros numerales. Esa es mi propuesta.

CHAIRPERSON

Earlier we also received the alternative proposal by Indonesia, and we know that Argentina is working something on this, but while waiting for that, I think let us continue on to the subsequent paragraph. It is square-bracketed, Brazil, as for now, the whole paragraph. We are on subparagraph (b)?

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

If we are on subparagraph (b), we would like to make a small addition. I think it is referenced from other FAO documents. We would like to have an addition after “*in full*”. It would read: “*in accordance with the FAO Financial Regulations.*”

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Sobre el subpárrafo (b), paso al inglés si me permiten. “*FAO urges Member Nations to make payments of assessed contributions in time and in full in accordance with the FAO finance regulations.*” Y nos gustaría añadir al final, ‘*and without conditions*’. Es decir, sin condiciones. As it is done at the UN General Assembly.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Con respecto a la propuesta de la Unión Europea, me gustaría saber qué dicen los textos básicos de la FAO porque no sé si nos estamos yendo más allá de lo que los propios textos básicos determinan y creo que, en ese sentido, deberíamos someternos a lo que los textos básicos determinan. Entonces, la verdad no lo recuerdo de memoria y normalmente vengo con los textos básicos siempre conmigo, pero esta vez no los tengo. No es que quiera tener una oposición directa a lo que están diciendo. Simplemente quiero verificar si estamos yendo más allá de lo que los propios textos básicos determinan. Cuando podamos verificar eso, ahí podremos responder si estamos de acuerdo o no.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

On the same lines of Argentina, I believe that if you put on the positive side, I believe that we could have an agreement here. If you mention the Basic Texts here, because otherwise you are not going to

ask anything different from the Basic Texts. So instead of saying, “*and without conditions*,” which seems a little bit imperative or without much clarity, “*according to FAO Financial Regulations and the Basic Texts*’, with that, including the Constitution, which is the main regulation for us, I believe that we could move along. After “*Financial Regulations and the Basic Texts*.’

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Just same long lines as Brazil and Argentina. We would just like to ask where this “*without condition*” is, where is the reference, just a question on that, but if it is as what was proposed by Brazil, we can go along with it.

Sr. Luis Geronimo REYES VERDE (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of)

Acompañamos la propuesta de Argentina y Brasil, lo último dicho por Indonesia y entender que sin condiciones es sin sanciones, sin medidas coercitivas unilaterales, Significa eso.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Anyway, this is very minor. It is true that we agree totally that the reference to “*without condition*” is not customary here at FAO, so we are a little bit sceptical about including it here. But I was wondering if the financial regulation is not part of the Basic Texts. So that is a tautology if you, because we are in the financial matters here, so we deal with the financial regulation, which are part of the Basic Texts of FAO, from my understanding, I may be wrong, but I stand to be corrected. But instead of making it too long by adding other elements, we put a period after “*Financial Regulations*”, that is our suggestion.

Sra. Claudia GONZÁLEZ TOLEDO (Cuba)

En la misma línea de los que me antecedieron, Argentina, Indonesia, Venezuela, Brasil, no entendemos realmente qué significa sin condiciones y preferiríamos que se hiciera la referencia a los reglamentos financieros o a los textos básicos. Ahí podemos aceptar cualquiera de los dos, pero conforme a los textos fundamentales de la Organización.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Vaya por delante en aras del consenso y a la luz de lo que están comentando algunos de nuestros compañeros que somos flexibles en esta cuestión. En cualquier caso y para compartir la información con todos nosotros, esta referencia procede de la 77.ª Sesión de la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas, de octubre del año pasado. Es el párrafo 222. Ahí se hace referencia a ello. Pero, en cualquier caso, insisto en nuestra flexibilidad.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

From the standpoint of the Russian Federation, the Financial Regulations provide comprehensive information about the payment of the contributions and the use of the text of the Financial Regulations concerning the procedure of payment.

In other words, payment in full and on time, provides information that is sufficiently clear for all Members so that they can then properly fulfil their obligations, and from our perspective, any additional layers in this paragraph would lead us in the wrong direction. So, the Russian Federation supports using the language of the Financial Regulations, which implies the payment of assessed contributions on time and in full.

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues, we need to move more quickly now. May I suggest that because Spain is already being flexible, we can remove the square bracket and “*without conditions*”, and now that leaves us with “*in accordance with FAO Financial Regulations*” and some Members want it instead of “*Financial Regulations*” have it instead “*Basic Texts*.” So if there is no strong opposition for having “*Financial Regulations*” here, let us accept this as is.

Of course, I personally think that it should be “*Basic Texts*” instead of “*Financial Regulations*”, but for the sake of compromise and moving forward quickly, let us accept this if there is no strong

objection. No? Thank you so much. Let us move onto the next one, subparagraph (c). subparagraph (d). Paragraph 8. And paragraph 9 and let us now move on to the heart of our discussion today, the Draft Resolution.

So Draft Resolution, I do not intend to read it out. You have before you the Draft Resolution. Do we have consensus on the Draft Resolution? Can all of us be on board?

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Por parte de la Unión Europea y de los 27 Estados Miembros y reconociendo el apoyo que le dimos a la propuesta realizada por Reino Unido de llegar a un 5,1% de aumento, queríamos hacerle una propuesta.

Siguiendo el Informe de la Conferencia del año 2011 en la cual hubo un incremento presupuestario, en ese Informe de la Conferencia se añadieron un recorte al aumento presupuestario mediante una línea adicional en el presupuesto que indicaba ahorros por eficiencia por un valor que correspondía en ese caso. En este caso, y si las cuentas no las hemos hecho incorrectamente, nuestra propuesta sería añadir una línea en el presupuesto con valor negativo —es decir, entre paréntesis— la cual dijera en inglés: “*further efficiency gains*” con un valor negativo de USD 4 540 400, lo cual llevaría a que el resultado final de aumento presupuestario supondría un 5,1%.

Para completar este texto, se podría añadir un párrafo similar al antiguo subpárrafo (k) en el que simplemente una parte de él sería: “*La conferencia solicita que haya nuevos ahorros por eficiencia para ser identificados por el Management*”, en línea con lo dicho en el antiguo subpárrafo (k). ¿No sé si ha quedado claro?

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

What Spain has just said, it happened twice in 2011 and 2013. In 2013 for example, everybody was tired because it was 04:00 hours, that this negative value of USD 22 million let us say, was inserted, to come back to the level of the previous biennium. It was an artificial addition.

And again, because it was not part of any chapter, so it was an artificial addition, and the Management had it difficult to implement that artificial addition. I can read you the Report of the Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15, which reads, “*The Council appreciated that the required budgeted savings of USD 22 million had been identified in line with the guidance of the Conference for the need to fully implement the programme of work in a cost-effective manner and looked forward to being informed in due course of the efficiency savings within these total required budgetary savings that had been diagnosed but not yet implemented for a total of USD 2.7 million.*”

So even Management had difficulty to identify those because it was very artificial, really. So, we are here again, trying to bring up artificial, let us put it that way, way of doing things, but I would have rather preferred that if there is something that we have to cut, it should be included in a chapter for the budget. These artificial things that keep coming up, are really difficult in terms of accountability. You are putting a budgetary provision, and I can assure you that it was very difficult in 2013 to approve that, but it is because everybody was tired.

We wanted to go home and come back at 08:00 hours to come and adopt the Report, that we accepted it to be included. So, I wanted to draw the attention of the Members on this aspect, because it has happened, and how difficult it is to implement it, especially at this point. So let us look at it critically. We are not against “*asking Management to look for efficiency savings*” we are totally for that, but let us not use artificial measures in accounting to achieve that.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I am a little confused as to where we are right now in this discussion, because it seems like the conclusions are important in order to get us to a point where we can make a decision on the numbers in the Resolution, and I think right now there are so many questions, at least still in my mind, about where we are on the conclusions, whether or not we accept paragraph whatever or whatever.

There is so much that is bracketed that for me it is hard to have a discussion about the numbers when we do not have the setup done yet. So, I would propose that we go back, finish the conclusions, which

maybe can get us to a point where we can find consensus on the numbers. Because if we start into a conversation about the numbers now, without having an agreement on the text from before, we are doing it in a bit of a vacuum, as to not agreeing on the priorities in the discussion from previously.

So, I guess unless someone wants to explain to me why I am wrong, and I would be happy to hear that as well, but I am very confused as to kind of jumping straight into this while still not agreeing on the other language, which obviously is very important to some Members of this Conference.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Primero de todo, nos parece que es una propuesta interesante por parte de Estados Unidos el de terminar la parte del texto antes de continuar con las cifras, pero queríamos aprovechar esta intervención para explicar que precisamente la idea de añadir lo que sería después de donde pone capítulo 13 una línea adicional que diga: *'further efficiency gains'* con el valor negativo de USD 4 540 400.

La idea es que de ahora hasta el 174.º Consejo —si no me equivoco—, del mes de diciembre, el Management tendrá tiempo para identificar, según su mandato, dónde se pueden hacer estos ahorros. Es algo que entendemos que no se debe hacer una micro gestión desde la Conferencia, sino que sea el propio Management quien trabaje sobre ello.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I thank Spain for the proposition, but in reality, I did not get the point here because there is no rationality beyond that. We are not talking about specific topics that should be saved, let us say, so the idea here, as I heard, is to just introduce some kind of reduction and then to achieve a 5.1 increase in the budget. It does not seem a very good idea to my understanding. We are still convinced that after 12 years, FAO needs more than ever, some kind of replenishment of its budget. In that case, we are still convinced that 5.6 is the best solution for this Organization right now.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

Je souhaitais appuyer la proposition de mon collègue espagnol qui a émis, effectivement, une idée importante et une proposition importante sur la table, qui est celle qui a été faite en 2011, de justement pouvoir obtenir un consensus sur un chiffre, tout en permettant à la Direction générale de la FAO de voir comment appliquer les mesures d'*efficiency savings* qui sont proposées. Donc, elle va être encore discutée, comme l'a proposé aussi mon collègue espagnol, nous allons peut-être réaborder la première partie des discussions, mais en tout cas, c'est un élément de réflexion important qui nous semble avoir été mis sur la table.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je crois qu'au niveau où nous en sommes, nous devons, au vu des défis auxquels notre Organisation est appelée à faire face, prendre ce qui a marché et copier les réussites. Si je m'en tiens à ce qu'a dit le Cameroun, lui qui a l'expérience un peu de la maison, qui est la mémoire de la maison dans cette salle, si on s'en tient à ce qu'il a dit, et que cette mesure qui a été prise a été difficilement mise en œuvre.

Donc, on a pu faire une évaluation et dire que cette mesure qui a été prise en 2013 n'a pas marché. Pourquoi revenir sur ce qui n'a pas marché ? C'est la question que je me pose. Comment nous pouvons déjà, sans être financier, préjugé des économies d'efficacités que nous pouvons faire ? Je ne sais pas si en matière de planification, est-ce qu'on peut déjà préjuger des montants des mesures d'efficacités que nous allons mettre en œuvre pour dire que c'est à tel montant ou bien, c'est carrément dire que le budget, nous allons l'arrêter, parce qu'on estime que le budget nous allons l'arrêter à tel montant, parce que nous estimons que cet argent va servir à l'Organisation pour réaliser son plan de travail.

C'est un peu la difficulté où je n'arrive pas à comprendre. Je ne suis pas expert en finance, mais je pense qu'un budget ne se conçoit pas comme ça. C'est vrai que nous sommes tous d'accord pour qu'on réalise l'efficacité au niveau de la gestion. Mais on ne peut pas préjuger des montants. Alors, l'autre aspect, depuis que nous avons commencé à discuter de ce montant, la Direction a fait un travail qui a été justifié sur des bases qui ont été mises à notre disposition. Personne n'a contredit ce que la

Direction a fait comme proposition. Nous n'avons pas contredit. On a reconnu que l'Organisation a perdu son pouvoir d'achat.

Nous avons reconnu l'efficacité au niveau du plan opérationnel. Et que tous les continents aujourd'hui, dans notre situation de la réalisation de l'objectif de développement durable (ODD) I et II, nous sommes en train de perdre le combat. Alors, on préjuge encore des mesures pour dire que nous devons réaliser des économies à tel niveau. Je ne sais pas si en matière budgétaire, ça peut marcher. Nous le faisons peut-être sans savoir où cela peut nous conduire.

Donc, c'est un peu la difficulté dans laquelle nous nous trouvons. Monsieur le Président, je le répète, nous sommes tout à fait mal à l'aise lorsque dans les années passées, on était à 6.30 millions de personnes qui souffraient de la faim, et qu'aujourd'hui, nous atteignons un milliard de personnes qui souffrent de la faim, qu'on soit là à faire des ajustements, parce que nous pensons que cela ne nous arrange pas. La situation est difficile partout, mais nous avons en face de nous une catastrophe qui s'annonce. Si aujourd'hui, les personnes qui souffrent de la faim, nous ne pouvons pas agir avec efficacité pour que ces personnes – là ne tombent pas dans une situation désespérée, qu'allons-nous faire ? Que va devenir notre Organisation ?

Remettons-nous en cause, parce que souvent, je vous le dis, moi, je viens du terrain, souvent je me dis, je fais le lien entre ce que je fais ici et les petits producteurs qui sont chez moi sur le terrain, je me dis: 'En quoi les discussions, tout ce que nous faisons ici, bénéficient à ces petits producteurs ?' A un moment, on fait une évaluation, et on se dit, est-ce que réellement, cela profite à ces petits producteurs ? Voilà où nous en sommes.

Je sais que la situation économique est difficile, mais regardons, ce n'est pas seulement nous qui sommes dans cette salle, nous sommes confortablement assis avec les climatiseurs et tout. On vit bien ici, avec les cravates, mais ces petits producteurs qui travaillent sous le soleil, sous la pluie, et qui manipulent les produits agrochimiques, au péril de leur vie pour nous nourrir, pensons quand même à eux. C'est un peu ce que je tenais à dire.

Vraiment, Monsieur le Président, pour me résumer, nous sommes tout à fait inconfortables pour pouvoir dire que nous sommes d'accord pour que la FAO réalise l'efficacité dans la gestion des ressources, mais on ne peut pas préjuger d'un montant.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo he tratado de escuchar toda la sesión que hubo ayer y la de hoy a la mañana y la sensación que tengo es que todos estamos de acuerdo que la Administración tiene que tratar de hacer el trabajo lo más eficientemente posible y llevar adelante la mayor cantidad de ahorros posibles. Yo creo que ahí estamos todos de acuerdo.

Pero también hubo otro acuerdo, por lo menos es lo que yo interpreté, es que ninguno está de acuerdo con promover hacer micro management desde este lugar, desde la Conferencia. Por lo tanto, si uno tuviera que producir una intersección entre el consenso sobre la necesidad de ahorros y de ser más eficientes y de no hacer micro administración; la convergencia de eso es marcar un mensaje claro a la Administración de que mejore lo máximo posible la eficiencia y los ahorros, pero el límite es no necesariamente determinar cómo o de qué manera o cuál es el monto específico. Por lo tanto, me parece que el punto de intersección es mandar un mensaje claro a la Administración sobre lo que los Miembros quieren, pero al mismo tiempo no hacer micro management.

Y la sensación que tengo, con mucho respeto a la propuesta que hizo España, es que entrar en este nivel de datos específicos es casi, desde mi perspectiva, entrar en un tema de micro administración. Por lo cual, sugiero ser muy enfático en el mensaje estratégico sin necesidad de ir a números específicos que podrían entrar en el escenario de la micro administración. Después podemos discutir cuál es el monto que los Miembros están dispuestos a aceptar de presupuesto, pero me parece que este es un punto de principios.

Mr Luís COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

First of all, I would like to say that we are in your hands sir, but we have a proposal from United States of America to finish first let us say the first part of the Report on the Programme of Work and Budget

(PWB) and then going into the numbers, and I think that it would be nice to have some clarity on how to proceed.

Our second point on this matter on efficiency savings, I would like to firstly recall what has been said by the Ambassador of Argentina this morning, with the difficulties we all have in explaining to our governments how to move from Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG), which for Portugal is also our general line for approaching all the multilateral organizations.

And of course the United Nations system, and we have to explain and we already do it, that is why that from our side as Portugal and also from the European Union, we have a lot of difficulties regarding the international financial context where we are, it is very difficult to explain to our people how we should do, and we recognize all the arguments we are listening, starting from the ones listening right now from our colleague from Congo, about the situation where we are.

Of course, we are all in agreement on that, but what we are discussing here is also saying something to the Organization to do their best, and we are absolutely sure that the Organization is doing their best for containing the costs, that is what we are discussing. But in this line, and in order to bring in our view, again with your indulgence, some clarity on this debate, I would like to recall what is the definition of efficiency savings we all agree here at FAO, especially at the Council 110 in 1995, and I will quote, "*efficiency savings is reductions in the cost of inputs without material negative impacts upon the outputs.*" So, this is what we are talking about here about efficiency savings.

Recalling where we can do efficiency savings, of course, it is throughout all the budget appropriations, but we can go, for example, for the functional part of the PWB, which is, in our view, from Chapter 7 to Chapter 10, and we can focus these efficiency savings according to the definition we just read and go for this functional part. And moreover, as Spain makes very clear, what we are proposing to the Administration, to the Management, is please help us join the collective effort to support the Organization and identify 10 percent of the increase of the budget, as was yesterday's proposal by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and it is our reference basis for achieving the number that is put forward by Spain.

And, please, what we are saying to the Administration, I repeat, is identifying a way of helping us to explain what way we are doing here and what to approach the next two years. I think that going to the operational or to the functional part of the budget, and identifying such a level of savings is for one side, a signal of collective effort to face the dramatic financial situation where most of us are, and also give a signal on the way forward in the next biennium.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We will be happy to get into the narrative on top. All the lines which are there, we will be happy to start with that before coming to the figure. But I agree that this is the essential part of our work here, to try to agree on a figure.

Now, after listening to Portugal, I agree perfectly that the definition that he read of efficiency savings. Yes, this is exactly what we want. But there is one thing of getting the efficiency savings, and the use of the efficiency savings. And the intention here is certainly, when we go back to the narratives, to say what is going to be the use of the efficiency savings that the Management will be proposing to the Members. And this is something that will be discussed in subsequent Governing Bodies meetings.

We cannot hear the highest level of the governing body of FAO, the highest level trying to discuss such things. This is not the way. And then I can be sure that when we will go to the other organs of the Organization to discuss the achieved efficiency savings, we will know where to direct, and we can give guidance to the Management on where to direct those efficiency savings.

The issue here is let us get a figure, and then we will push the Management to achieve a certain level of efficiency savings, and we will know, when they are reporting to us, to guide them on what will be the use of that efficiency saving. Again, I say the artificial use of what we achieved in 2011 and 2013, it was really, really artificial, and we should not continue with this. And it has not happened since then because people understood that it was not good for the Management perspective.

So, if we can agree on the figure now, without mentioning that figure in any of the Chapters, because we are not equipped to go into the Chapters and say, remove this amount, remove this amount. Under which grounds? It is for the Conference a very, very difficult exercise.

I do not want us to move into that direction. It will be difficult for us now, if we go to that direction, to agree because everybody has his... You see the discussion that we had on priorities. Everybody has his priorities and then, no, remove 5 000 here, add there. No, it would be very difficult. So please, let us not engage into that path. It is a very, very difficult one.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I apologize for taking the floor again. This is difficult for all of us, I think, and you hear that from around the room. For those of us that have a long-standing policy of zero nominal growth, for us to make a decision to support something as big as a 5.6 percent increase is a big deal, and I think it is a difficult decision for a lot of us. These numbers are hard for us, specifically as the United States, the largest contributor. These are large numbers when we start talking about percentages. But in the end, they are small numbers compared to our overall contributions to the UN agencies.

So, I think putting it into that context, I think what I hear from a lot of Members here around the room, is the importance of looking for efficiency and efficiency savings. While also maintaining the ability of the appropriate Committees and Council, and those of us as Members to be able to provide the appropriate oversight to those efficiency savings.

I also hear what my colleague from Cameroon is saying, that this is not the place to be doing those details. But we can put it exactly into that place, we can put it to Finance Committee (FC), we can put it to the Council, we can put it exactly to those who should be making these decisions. And so, with that, with your permission Chairperson, right now we have a very confusing document in the first part. I would like to make an overarching proposal for the first document for our conclusions, if I could.

You do not have to put it up on the screen, I will throw it out there. I think it will be understandable to everyone without seeing it, because I think seeing it is just going to make it more confusing with all the brackets. But I would propose the following: we accept the addition from Indonesia, with the change to say “*reaffirmed*” instead of “*took note of*”. I think we are a high-level body, and we should be reaffirming and pushing that forward.

We delete all of what was originally paragraph 4, as proposed by Brazil, and then we include a paragraph on efficiency savings, which is obviously important to all of us, but that also includes in there, through the established Reporting Mechanisms, something along the lines of, “, *including through a Report of the Finance Committee and its next Session*”, and the language that was added in there about the Council in December 2023. So, I think that gives us some steppingstones as we move forward.

This paragraph here that is “*requested Management identify*”, sure, that is fine “*through established Reporting mechanisms, comma, including in a Report to the Finance Committee in its next Session and including adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) to be presented to the Council in its December 2023*”, what we have up there but just adding the Finance Committee as another step that gives us as Members the oversight that we need.

Maybe it allows some people to be a little more flexible in terms of the numbers, knowing that we will see these numbers and see what the efficiency savings are, with plenty of time to still make some other decisions in here, if we need to. I wonder if that could possibly get us to where we need to be, to have a good discussion amongst ourselves on the numbers in the resolutions.

CHAIRPERSON

Already, when I first opened the discussion for the resolutions, and having heard interventions from Spain on behalf of the 27 Members, and the United States of America, I am already seeing that it is not the time now for. I mean, we cannot reach consensus as of now for the budget level.

I will try again, as proposed by United States of America. We will revisit the whole conclusion, in particular with paragraph 4, and let us tidy it up, and then we will move on to the budget level, if that works for everyone.

Now, I do not think there is an issue with paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, but we have here 3 (d) and 4. I can also differ on paragraph 3 subparagraph (d), but I want to go quickly to 4 first.

So, this is alternative propositions originating by Indonesia. This will replace the original paragraph 4 by the Secretariat. Of course, we single out the paragraph on efficiency savings, having a separate paragraph. So, now I open again the floor paragraph 4, the original proposal from Indonesia.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (ARGENTINA)

Había dicho al principio que tenía una propuesta, pero en los tiempos de debate fui conversando con varios colegas y mi intención es siempre tratar de ayudar para ver si podemos facilitar el consenso y me parece que la propuesta de Indonesia es superadora. Creo que tomaría de la propuesta de Estados Unidos que, en lugar de decir “*The Conference took note*”, la idea es “*Reaffirm*”, que me parece más fuerte, más clara.

Por otro lado, sacaría la palabra: “*the relevant conclusions*” y dejaría “*the conclusions and recommendations*”, porque relevant podría dar lugar de que debamos tener una discusión sobre qué son las relevant y yo creo que lo que estamos reafirmando son las conclusiones del Consejo.

Pero, en términos generales, creo, Presidente, que con la colaboración de los colegas estamos muy cerca de poder salir juntos por consenso de esta situación.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

I should have got in earlier because Argentina has made my point as well. We support the re-wording to draft paragraph 4 as it currently stands to include the word “*reaffirmed*”, and to remove the word “*relevant*” because we do talk about the conclusions of the 172nd Session of the Council on the Medium Term Plan (reviewed) that is already specific enough, and I thank Indonesia for their proposal, and this is of course paired with removing what was the original paragraph 4. This is the alternate.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Thank you Argentina, Australia, and the United States of America for supporting our proposed paragraph. We can go along and thank you for the amendments to make this a stronger paragraph, thank you.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We too support that. Thank you.

Mr Su GUO (China)

Thanks to Indonesia’s contribution to propose a new paragraph, and China will go along with this.

CHAIRPERSON

It seems that we are good. With that, we are going to remove the original subparagraph (a), retaining the specific paragraphs on efficiency savings, to clean this up.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

I just want to add what I had suggested before: “*the Conference requested Management identify savings in efficiency measures and information*” How can we say this “*and efficiency measures and that the information on these savings and efficiencies be provided through the established reporting mechanisms, comma, including in a Report to the Finance Committee at its next session and presenting adjustments to the PWB to the Council in December 2023*”. And the rest seems fine.

But I think what I said before, by adding “*The Finance Committee in here*”, I think we provide a serious level of Member oversight, and an ability to continue to push for efficiency savings. If the Finance Committee is not seeing what we would like to see during the next Session, we can push for

more before the Council Session in December as well. So, it gives us a step-by-step approach to be able to really push Management as needed but also to get the information from Management on what is possible and what is not possible, as we continue to move forward on these budget numbers.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We understand perfectly the wish of the United States of America to add the Finance Committee here, which is good. Let us know that the Finance Committee does not report to the Conference and that it is the Council that reports to the Conference. So, if we want to see the Finance Committee here, then the best way to put it is “*presenting adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) to the Council in December 2023 through the Finance Committee*”, so we are sure that that is the process; the Conference is instructing the Council. Because the Finance Committee on its own cannot.

CHAIRPERSON

United States of America agrees with you.

Any other contributions?

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Yes, the idea seems good, but we have to maintain some parallels between this proposition here and then the rest of the whole package, which means the draft resolution. So, yes, we have an understanding that the idea of financial savings is good to be on board, to maintain on board, but at the same time it is important to maintain the focus on the proposition made by the Director-General on 5.6 percent.

So, we kicked into practice this new paragraph 5, which seems very reasonable, in a way that efficiency savings is good, should be reflected in our decision, should be taken step-by-step, that is how I see here, because it is going to be revised or reviewed by the Financial Committee and so on.

But at the same time, we have to maintain the resolution on proposal by the Director-General intact, as it stands right now. Because I see it as a package: efficiency savings plus the proposal made by the Director-General.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Perhaps, we could be a little bit specific here; “*the Conference requested Management identify savings and efficiency measures on the proposed Director-General PWB 2024-2025*” So, that is what I say, “*on the Director-General’s Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) proposal*”. I think that will be helpful to cater for what Brazil was just saying now, probably, because he said everything should tie together.

CHAIRPERSON

If this is okay, I will remove the square bracket of the recent proposal by Cameroon.

Will that be okay?

Can we agree to the current paragraph 5?

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

Nous n'avons pas d'opposition au principe de ce qui vient d'être proposé. Nous voulons juste être sûrs que la proposition que mon collègue espagnol a mise sur la table tout à l'heure est toujours dans la résolution budgétaire, parce que pour nous, ces mesures d'efficacités, elles doivent se traduire concrètement dans la résolution budgétaire, si tel n'est pas le cas, je ne suis pas sûr que nous soyons en mesure d'accepter.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

Mine is a minor adjustment to what is proposed here. At the moment we say, “*including and presenting adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB)*.” I think that should be “*including and presenting proposed adjustments to the PWB*”, at that stage. As they go through Finance Committee and to Council, they are only proposals.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we have cleaned this up. Let us continue. Now paragraph 6, subparagraph (a). This is deleted, right? Subparagraph (a), I think this is already clean; (a) clean, (b) clean. Paragraph 7 is also clean, and 8 clean. So now, let us go back to the Resolution.

For clarity purposes we will go quickly. You can scroll down and have a look at the paragraphs again. 1, 2, 3. Okay, this is where we have paragraph 3 subparagraph (b). Now, I recall 3 (b) was a proposal from Australia. Can we go along with this new proposal from Australia? We can, right? Okay, let's clean this up. Paragraph 4.

Mr Su GUO (China)

For paragraph 4, we appreciate that there are some benefits of organizing formal meetings with Members during the process of developing programming but, actually, during informal consultations, many Members realized there is a specific programme procedure of designing Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) in the Basic Texts. So, I think for paragraph 4 we should add something, for example, "*while respecting the procedure in the Basic Texts*".

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

If I may, I would like to look at paragraph 5 and our proposal would be to return to the text here the word "*relevant*" before "*conclusions*", for it to be "*relevant conclusions*". Unless I am mistaken, the Ambassador from Argentina suggested striking out that word, but having referred to the recommendations that the Council gave on the Item of the Agenda, which was Medium Term Plan (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB), this Item included also provisions that pertained to holding consultations on the elaboration of a ceiling for the budget.

So, for the current consultation, we should like to propose some clarification, which is relevant, which would pertain to exclusively programme elements that are set out in subparagraphs (a) to (k).

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Russian Federation. Can we rally around that?

Mr Su GUO (China)

For paragraph 4, I find the exact expression in the Basic Text actually is "*in accordance with the Schedule for Governing Body Input and Oversight under the Reformed Programming, comma, Budgeting and Results-Based Monitoring Systems*".

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Le agradezco a mi colega de la Federación Rusa la intervención. Tiene razón sobre que el primer ítem de ese apartado del Consejo se refiere a las consultas informales, pero todo el resto, en principio, deberían de estar de acuerdo, por lo cual yo sugiero, para no poner *relevant* que podría dar lugar a que algunas sí, y algunas no, identificar simplemente los romanitos de cada uno del párrafo específico, obviamente exceptuando aquel que, correctamente, el Delegado de la Federación Rusa expresó, que no es pertinente, no es relevante, pero no dejar *relevant* como algo general que podría dar lugar a cierta subjetividad. Si hay algo que sería mejor es tener certidumbre y, entonces, si mi colega de la Federación Rusa estaría de acuerdo con esto, podríamos conseguir una manera elegante de estar de acuerdo todos.

Continues in English

We can include the specific Items that we "*reaffirm*", excluding which is the only Item that our colleague from the Russian Federation expressed, that it was not appropriate for it to be "*reaffirm*" here. So, what I mean is that we prefer not to include the word "*relevant*" because it can be understood as something subjective or not very clear. So, to create certainties, I prefer to include all the items and, of course, the numbers of every item that are included in this part of the Council that we considered that can be reaffirmed here. Or, excluding the subparagraph (a), which is the only one that the Russian Federation expressed their concern on.

There are many, many items that are in this paragraph. The only item that is under discussion is subparagraph (a). I am saying to put that with something that we can say, “*excluding point (a)*”, in order not to put ‘*relevant*’ because “*relevant*” can be understood in a different way from our colleagues.

CHAIRPERSON

If I can go back quickly, before I give the floor to Brazil, to Argentina. So, the proposal was only to explicitly mention of excluding paragraph 9 subparagraph (a)?

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

But if we are okay with that, then we need to exclude “*relevant*” from this proposal.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

On the same line as Argentina, we believe that the inclusion of “*relevant*” seems a little bit awkward. For us, if you are saying that the conclusions are recommendations of the Council on the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PW), that is what we are discussing here on Item 20. I do not see any reason to select or to put here any kind of recommendation to select one from another. So, I believe that all conclusions and recommendations on this matter are important. I have to check out what is the idea to exclude paragraph 9 subparagraph (a). Can it be explained?

I do not see any reason to exclude the whole package that came from the Council but, anyhow, I will not block anything. But I believe that the whole package which came from the Council on this matter should be retained.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

I would like to thank the esteemed Representatives of Argentina and Brazil for their contribution to the discussion. I was referring not only to subparagraphs (e) or (p) but (l), (m) and (n). But, given what Brazil has said, if we can do without this level of detail, I am prepared to withdraw my earlier proposal and to agree to the initial wording of paragraph 5 without the words that have just been deleted.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

I am just coming back to paragraph 42, which is still in red at the moment, reflecting on the proposal from my colleagues from China. As I read it now, as drafted, it says “*the Conference highlighted the benefits of organizing informal meetings, ..., in accordance with the schedule of the Governing Bodies*”. Now, there is no reference to informal meetings with a schedule. So, the proposal I put forward is replacing the words “*in accordance with*” and replacing that with “*while recognizing the schedule*”, which basically is not looking to replace the schedule, but to supplement where needed. I think you captured it.

CHAIRPERSON

China, are you fine with the proposal?

Thanks for your flexibility.

Now we have a clean paragraph 4, it is no longer in red. 5, 6.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Muy brevemente, en nombre de la Unión Europea y sus 27 Estados Miembros queremos decir sencillamente que consideramos que lo que discutimos ahora y aprobemos en este párrafo 6 no prejuzga las cifras que posteriormente trataremos en la resolución, por tanto, no consideramos que se esté hablando de un paquete único. Posteriormente veremos las cifras.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

In that case, I prefer to keep this paragraph 6 in brackets.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

Maybe I was mistaken, but I do not think that is what the representative from the Spanish Delegation, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States, was saying, if that is correct. They were just saying that they wanted to make sure there was an understanding amongst all of us that this does not prejudice our further discussions in the future, which I think is very clear. So, I think this can stay unbracketed and we can move forward with agreement on this. From my understanding – is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON

Spain, thumbs up.

So, Brazil, are you okay if we remove the bracket or do you still want to have the bracket there?

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

Efectivamente, tal y como ha expresado nuestro compañero de Estados Unidos, nuestra única intención con esta observación es que tuviéramos claro que nuestra forma de entender el proceso de negociación que estamos llevando es que ahora mismo estamos negociando estas conclusiones y el texto que conlleva con las prioridades y todo el trabajo que estamos haciendo.

Esto no significa que estemos presuponiendo las cifras de la resolución. Cuando lleguemos a discutir la resolución, en ese momento trataremos las cifras concretas, con lo cual el párrafo tal y como va, para nosotros es correcto.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Presidente, yo creo que está todo claro sobre el principio general que siempre aplicamos que nada está acordado hasta que todo está acordado. Por lo tanto, en definitiva, estamos en pleno proceso y el ejercicio no terminó, pero en definitiva nada de lo que hemos discutido está absolutamente acordado si todo no está acordado. Obviamente, siempre sobre la base de la buena fe que todos tenemos en este trabajo de negociación.

Solo intentamos evitar volver para atrás, pero en este caso puntual, creo que Brasil fue muy claro. Este contenido está vinculado a la propuesta original del Director-General. O sea, hay un Miembro que está planteando de una manera muy clara esto, entonces, simplemente en esa filosofía, esté o no esté entre paréntesis, nada está acordado hasta que todo esté acordado.

Thank you, Argentina. Brazil, if you can show flexibility, we will remove the bracket as of now. Of course, nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Yes, but in this case, I prefer to. It is just a matter of time for us. I believe that we are all comfortable with the proposal made by the Director-General, so, we are just waiting for the end of our discussions right now to remove this bracket.

I am very comfortable with the paragraph, and I believe that at the end we are going to reach a consensus.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for being optimistic. I think we should go to the budget level now. I think we are done as of now with the summary of Conclusions. We are not done yet. Paragraph 7, subparagraph (a). I think we have cleaned this already, but we can have a second look. 7 (b). 7 (c). 8. 9.

Now let us go to the Draft Resolution. Can I ask again the room, do we have a consensus on the budget level as proposed by the Director-General for Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (PWB)? Is there any strong objection or reservation? There is no objection, it is now concluded.

Colleagues, I do not know how to say thanks. I truly appreciate this discussion of Item 20, and the compromises, the flexibilities, the contributions that all of you have shown, and some of the magic formulations by colleagues, which I very much appreciated.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Creo que es importante también reconocer a usted la capacidad de poder haber llevado esto adelante, no poniendo nunca incómodo a ningún país, tratando de entender los tiempos de cada uno y eso es su mérito y el trabajo de la Secretaría. Así que, permítame también, reconocérselo.

Mr Su GUO (China)

I would like to join Argentina in the thanks to the Chairperson's efficient work in leading us to reach consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 (PWB). It is very hard work, and we congratulate you.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

Just speaking on behalf of the United States of America and its 50 Member States, I wanted to add to the congratulations for the Chairperson. You have done a good job in a very difficult situation, and I think with a lot of us that disagree on a lot of things, but we were able to find a way forward.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We said it from the outset that we are here. The Africa Group came here with an open spirit with the intention to support you, and with the intention to listen to everybody so that we can reach an agreement on this budget level. We have achieved that, thanks to you, Chairperson, because of your patience, and it will not go up to 14:00 hours.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Indonesia and its 17 000 islands would like to also thank you for the efficient work that we have done today.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Sumando todos los Estados, islas y provincias y regiones, creo que el consenso va a ser aún mayor. Pero, en cualquier caso, muchísimas gracias, Presidente, por su trabajo. Y gracias al conjunto de Miembros de esta reunión por su flexibilidad y su voluntad de llegar a un acuerdo.

M. Alwin KOPSE (Switzerland)

On behalf of Switzerland and its 26 Cantons, very much appreciated the work that you have carried out, the Secretariat, also all the Members. We are very happy with the resolution we have just adopted. May I just kindly remind to hopefully remove the brackets around paragraph 6 please?

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

Let me join colleagues in echoing our appreciation to you on behalf of Australia and its millions of kangaroos, koalas, flies and everything else. What I would like to say, I guess, this has been a difficult negotiation to get to, but we do have an outcome, and I think we should take a step back to think about what this delivers – a budget for FAO to deliver to millions of people, farmers, smallholders, etc., that rely on their work.

I think we should recognize the work that we have done today. And we still have work to do going forward, but we have made an achievement.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I would like to thank you personally for your persistence and work. I would like also to thank the Secretariat for all the work created before the Management for the proposal, and Brazil is very grateful for this. We believe that once again, after 12 years, we deserve something extra in FAO's work to move forward, and I would like to echo Switzerland in asking for your indulgence to remove the brackets on paragraph 6.

Ms Wannika WUTTHI (Thailand)

Thailand with its 77 provinces would like to express the gratitude to you, and congratulations for your leadership, and I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), Chairperson, Mr Hans Hoogeveen, for all the efforts made and your patience in facilitating the negotiations and driving us to the conclusion on the budget level.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je tiens d'abord à vous féliciter pour la conduite des travaux. Je tiens aussi à remercier tous les Membres qui ont fait preuve de beaucoup de flexibilité. Je crois que cela a été difficile, mais nous n'avons pas travaillé pour rien, mais nous avons travaillé pour ces petits producteurs qui sont sur le terrain. Je crois qu'on a relayé leurs voix et nous avons vraiment fait preuve de sympathie envers ces personnes, parce que c'est eux qui seront honorés à travers le travail que nous faisons.

Monsieur le Président, je vous avais dit que je pose toujours la question, quel est le lien entre ce que nous faisons ici et les petits producteurs qui sont sur le terrain. Je pense qu'on a entendu cette voix, et que nous devons davantage penser à eux, ceux qui sont sur le terrain, qui comptent sur nous, qui comptent sur la FAO pour pouvoir soulager leur peine.

En tout cas, une fois de plus, merci pour cet esprit de compréhension.

CHAIRPERSON

Colleagues, you deserve a break, and you have between now until 17:00.

This Commission is going to conclude Items 18 and 19, starting at 17:00.

The meeting was suspended from 16:29 to 17:04 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 29 à 17 h 04

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.29 a las 17.04

Item 18. Programme Implementation Report 2020-21**Point 18. Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2020-2021****Tema 18. Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2020-21****CHAIRPERSON**

Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, friends, good evening to all of you and welcome to Commission II. I am pleased to open the third meeting of Commission II.

I would first like to confirm that we have finalized the nominations for the Members of the Drafting Committee. I proudly announce the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee has been confirmed as Ms Emma Hatcher of Australia, with the Members of the Committee that I had announced on Monday, namely, Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Portugal, South Sudan, Spain, United States of America.

May I take that the Commission agrees on the proposed Membership and Chairperson of the Drafting Committee? It is so decided.

We now move to the Items of the Agenda that have already been considered through the Written Correspondence, Procedures and for which Members' submissions and responses from the Secretariat have been made available through the Conference website. All discussions on these Items will therefore be limited to review on the draft conclusions. These are Item 18, *Programme Implementation Report 2020-21* and Item 19, *Programme Evaluation Report (PIR) 2023*.

We will now start with Item 18, *Programme Implementation Report 2020-21*. Please ensure that you have documents, document C 2023/8 and *Annexes 1 through 9*, and document C 2023/LIM/2 in front of you.

Introduction to Item 18: Programme Implementation Report 2020-21

Ms Beth Crawford, Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget (OSP)

The Programme Implementation Report (PIR) is FAO's main accountability document. It provides qualitative and quantitative information on results achieved by the Organization over the previous biennium, in supporting Members in progressing towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for all sources of funds. It also describes the creation of an enabling environment to ensure inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency; and details the biennial financial

performance under all sources of funds. Document C 2023/8, *Programme Implementation Report 2020- 21*, informs on the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21 and subsequent adjustments in its main section and nine Annexes.

The main document is shorter and more focused than previous versions. It highlights FAO's key programmatic results supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), showcasing results achieved in implementing the Strategic Programmes, in terms of our aspiration to realize the *four betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life*.

The document describes FAO's role in addressing the main challenges and opportunities that unfolded during the biennium, including the unprecedented events triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing socioeconomic impacts; the outbreaks of transboundary pests and zoonotic diseases; the climate crisis and its impact on ecosystems and natural resources; the repositioning of the UN development system; and the UN Food Systems Summit 2021. Focused on its goal of attaining zero hunger, the Organization rose to the exceptional challenges, proving its flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness to rapidly changing contexts. FAO reprogrammed activities and redirected resources to address shifting priorities and ensured business continuity throughout the pandemic lockdowns.

The PIR 2020-21 reports on key results in applying an agrifood-systems approach to drive sustainable agricultural and rural development. It highlights achievements in promoting inclusion and targeting investments to implement policy changes for sustainable agricultural production; access to safe, nutritious and healthy diets; reduced food loss and waste; open and well-functioning markets and value chains; strengthened livelihoods and resilience; and measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation. It also describes how FAO responded to Members' needs for global public goods in food and agriculture, such as evidence for decision-making and leveraging technical expertise, leadership and convening power, including through intergovernmental fora and the creation of global networks such as the World Food Forum.

Additionally, the document offers illustrative examples of innovative, tangible results at national, regional and global levels and highlights results achieved through key organizational initiatives, including the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and the flagship Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

The PIR 2020-21 also reports on improvements to the enabling environment: the Director-General's broad programme of deep transformation strengthened internal governance and created a people-centred organizational culture, boosting FAO's capacity to serve its Members. The document also highlights the Organization's results in upscaling new partnerships and cooperative mechanisms, in particular with the private sector, as well as the continued commitment to inclusive approaches that leave no one behind, the dedicated attention accorded to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and the focus on technological and other innovations.

Annex 1 reports on Output, Outcome and Impact, through SDG indicators and additional indicators, within the framework of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21, as well as on the Key Performance Indicators for assessing the enabling environment and operational achievements.

In its final section, the PIR 2020-21 summarizes how FAO managed resources, with complete information on the use and mobilization of funds provided in Annexes 2 and 3. In 2020-21, the Organization spent 99.6 percent of the net appropriation, or just over USD 1 billion. Extra-budgetary expenditures reached USD 2.2 billion, accounting for 68 percent of total expenditures. USD 2.7 billion was mobilized for current and future work; an 11 percent increase compared to the last biennium, exceeding the target of USD 1.7 billion – an all-time high that is on track to be further surpassed in 2022- 23. FAO supported Members in designing investment projects to be financed by international financial institutions (IFIs) for a total of USD 13.8 billion and, through the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), catalysed USD 1.7 billion in financing.

The Conference is requested to endorse the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21, providing such guidance as it deems appropriate.

Comments from Members

Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

NORWAY

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 15:30

This report provides interesting insight to FAO activities in 2020-21. We note that the document aligns with the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the *four betters*, but not with the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-2021, in which the reported activities are presented. Thus, this is not a report of results achieved in accordance with the results framework for the reporting period, but rather a description of activities relevant to *the four betters*.

Norway therefore requests a brief explanation from the Secretariat as to why the report does not align with the MTP 2018-21.

Moreover, the document presents what has been done or is being done by FAO, but it does not fully address achievements or failures in an analytical manner. Some lessons learnt are listed, but the analysis behind this is not clear, and should be given more attention by FAO in coming Conferences. Nonetheless, we note that one lesson learnt is the need for more unearmarked funding.

Norway, as one of the few donors contributing with unearmarked voluntary funding, urges FAO to make stronger efforts in making flexible contributions more attractive to Members.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 17:17

The Russian Federation does not object to the approval of the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21. We acknowledge that it was reviewed in detail at the 170th Session of the FAO Council (June 2022). The results achieved by the Organization, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, were unanimously commended. We simultaneously note the importance of timely and full payment of assessed contributions for the implementation of the work programme. We support a detailed analysis of the relevance of contributions earmarked for the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-31.

UNITED KINGDOM

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 18:11

The United Kingdom (UK) thanks FAO for the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2020-21, a critical document for accountability.

We very much support commitments to continue to strengthen FAO and make the Organization ever-more agile, participative, transparent, efficient and fit-for-purpose.

We recognise the challenges of the reporting period, particularly of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, this further emphasised the importance of FAO ensuring the availability of quality data and analyses to inform decisionmaking. We appreciate FAO's work outlined in the report on monitoring the impact of COVID-19, and rapid data collection based on the food insecurity experience scale (FIES) that allowed the provision of information on the impact of the pandemic in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021.

Results

In terms of results, their measurement and management, we underline the importance of integrating country-level planning, reflecting the fact that progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) needs to be achieved at country level, based on national priorities. In this light, we support the efforts highlighted by FAO to improve the effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and to align TCP programme delivery with Country Programming Frameworks. We also support efforts to strengthen the Decentralized Offices, and we encourage FAO to continue strengthening partnerships to enhance capacity, including in areas such as risk management.

We recognise that FAO's results framework maps onto the SDGs, linked to FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 that is based on the SDG targets and indicators. We would like to hear whether and how FAO is experiencing the benefits of this in terms of measurement and reporting across the Organization at country, regional and global levels – and how this is facilitating reporting with partners.

At the same time, it is also important for Members to have clear reporting on what FAO will achieve with the resources it receives, and we hope that the results framework for the next 2024-25 biennium can include targets and milestones for FAO's planned deliverables.

Without specific targets, it is very difficult to measure and assess how FAO is performing and to manage for results, shifting resources, for example, to areas where FAO is encountering challenges and may be off-track in reaching the objectives and targets it has set itself, or reflecting on areas where FAO may be surpassing targets. We support FAO's continued effort outlined in the Report to improve monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of delivery of its outputs and outcomes across the Strategic Objectives.

Funding resources

We congratulate FAO for catalysing an all-time high in resource mobilisation, increasing extra-budgetary spending by 12 percent compared to 2018-19, with USD 2.7 billion mobilised in 2020-21 and extra-budgetary expenditures of USD 2.2 billion — 68 percent of total expenditures. We note that this is on track to be further surpassed in 2022-23 and will likely further increase in the next 2024-25 biennium.

With such increased extra-budgetary resources, we call on FAO, in liaison with Members, to initiate a review of FAO's financial and administrative structure to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose and in line with the Organisation's evolving funding structure. We would also like to consider the implications for FAO's results reporting and how the Governing Bodies may need to review their agenda setting and ways of working to ensure that they reflect this shift and are able to fulfil their role in providing oversight and strategic guidance for the whole of FAO's work, as reflected in the integrated Programme of Work and Budget.

FAO and normative work, data, One Health, and implementation of Strategies

With respect to Strategic Objective 6, we recognize and appreciate the contribution of FAO in leveraging its normative work and technical expertise by providing quality statistics for evidence-based decision making, incorporating nutrition into Country Programming Frameworks, and integrating and promoting food and agricultural perspectives in the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.

In particular, the UK commends the provision of information and data, including through the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), which contributes significantly to coordinated efforts to maintain open, transparent and well-functioning markets and supply chains, while helping policy makers to enhance food security and nutrition outcomes. We also commend FAO for its increased focus on One Health in close collaboration with the other Quadripartite organisations, including in relation to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases. In this regard, we urge ongoing collaboration and improved harmonisation of efforts across all four organisations.

Finally, we encourage FAO in the implementation of its endorsed science and climate strategies, to expedite concrete actions to disseminate available research, science, innovation, and technology, and promote knowledge transfer, trade and investments in agrifood systems to enable their transformation to become more productive, efficient, inclusive, resilient, equitable and sustainable.

CANADA

Submitted Tuesday 13 June 2023, 10:21

Canada supports the approval by the 43rd Session of the Conference of the Programme Implementation Report 2020- 21, as endorsed by the 170th Session of the FAO Council.

Canada takes this opportunity to reiterate the following points:

- Canada commends the work of FAO for the 2020-21 biennium and underlines its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- We welcome the lessons learned identified within the Report, including the vital role of data, science, technology, innovation and digitalization.
- We agree that continued close coordination and alignment with the rest of the UN system is imperative.
- Canada also supports the importance of open, transparent and well-functioning global commodity markets and value chains for food security and nutrition and reduced inequalities in access to food.
- Finally, we echo that policy coherence and multi-level food governance mechanisms are crucial for effective agrifood systems approaches.

Regarding the Annexes to C 2023/8:

- Canada welcomes that FAO has implemented almost all of the minimum standards for gender mainstreaming over the 2020-21 biennium. We note that FAO will continue to work towards increasing the share of projects which promote gender equality as a key objective.
- Canada recalls the importance of timely implementation of FAO's language policy and multilingualism, especially for the publication of the Governing and Statutory Bodies documents. We commend the outstanding work done to ensure interpretation of Governing Body sessions.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Thursday 15 June 2023, 19:35

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 43rd Session of the Conference.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, and Türkiye align themselves with this statement. We welcome the new format of the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21, which provides a shorter, more readable document than its previous editions.

Overall, the report provides a great deal of information about FAO's work at global and national level, and we would like to highlight the following elements.

We welcome FAO's commitment to ensure close coordination and alignment with the rest of the United Nations system, in particular in the context of the repositioning of the UN development system and look forward to strengthening this commitment in the coming years, for a swift implementation.

We commend the positive work achieved by FAO in implementing the Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, in the biennium 2020-2021, as described in Annex 6 to the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21.

We welcome the progress towards gender balance among FAO staff but note that additional efforts are needed, especially at Director level and above.

We encourage Management to continue working on providing all Members with enhanced transparency, more information and enhanced accountability.

With these comments, we endorse the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21.

***Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría***

FAO thanks Members for their careful review of the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2020-21. Compared to previous PIR documents, the PIR 2020-21 is shorter and more focused. The main narrative illustrates how FAO leveraged synergies and complementarities among the five Strategic

Objectives of the Strategic Framework 2012-21, in support of accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It highlights key programmatic and operational achievements, showcasing integrated approaches for connecting the Strategic Programmes to overcome siloes and lead to critical results, effectively supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and realizing the *four betters*. The main narrative also describes critical achievements in terms of internal governance, operating modalities and management of resources.

The Annexes complete the information provided in the main narrative. Annexes 1 and 4 ensure full accountability for reporting on Output, Outcome, SDG and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the results and performance frameworks laid out in the Medium Term Plan 2018- 21; Annexes 2 and 3 provide a full account of financial performance; and the other Annexes provide detailed information on specific thematic issues.

Marking the closure of one programming cycle and the beginning of another, the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21 embraces initial changes to be further implemented going forward. These include a streamlined presentation and a focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Medium Term Plan 2022-25 are anchored in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a performance framework that leverages and places focus on targets and indicators associated with the internationally-agreed SDGs.

This approach guides the Organization's focus towards higher-level outcomes and impacts, ensures there is a clear line of sight to the SDGs for all of FAO's work, and provides a common language across FAO and with Members and other partners for articulating results and targets and finding common ground, in line with the recommendations of the 2019 Evaluation of FAO's strategic results framework (PC 127/2). Importantly, it enables full integration in the corporate results hierarchy of outputs defined at the appropriate levels (national, regional and global), by creating flexibility in the programmatic structure for setting context-relevant goals, recognizing, especially, that progress on the SDGs will be achieved at country level based on national priorities.

FAO's work at country level is framed by discussions with national governments in the context of UN common programming processes. The resulting programme of cooperation is reflected in the FAO Country Programming Framework and is fully integrated into the Organization's Programme of Work, thus providing an invaluable "bottom up" view of needs. The past practice of defining outputs and pre-set targets for delivery at country level is discontinued to allow for full participation in country level processes and programming responsive to, and in line with, specific national needs and priorities. Moreover, integrating country-level programming reinforces FAO's results-based management and accountability systems which leverages the SDG framework.

FAO welcomes Members' appreciation for the results achieved by the Organization in 2020-21. In a biennium characterized by exceptional circumstances, the Organization successfully implemented the programme of work mandated by the FAO Conference and Council through the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2020-21 and subsequent adjustments. The quality of data and statistics provided by FAO has been highlighted in Members' comments. FAO supports decision-making based on scientific evidence, informing targeted intervention and policy responses to emerging challenges and providing policymakers and investors with guidance for managing trade-offs. The Organization developed a roadmap for further modernizing and delivering its statistical programme and is fully engaged with the UN-wide Road Map for Innovating UN Data and Statistics and the Secretary-General's UN Data Strategy.

The results were made possible thanks to both assessed and voluntary contributions provided by Members and partners. Management welcomes Members' comments on the lessons learned regarding the need for timely and unearmarked funding. Flexible funds are essential to the Organization for responding to the most pressing global challenges in a cost-effective, efficient and timely manner without spreading resources too thin, as they enable directing funding when and where it is needed most.

CHAIRPERSON

I now ask the Secretariat to share my conclusion for Item 18 on the screen and I will read them out.

1. The Conference:

- a) endorsed the findings of the Report of the 170th Session of the Council on the Programme Implementation Report 2020-21.
- b) commended the Organization for the results achieved in implementing the Programme of Work 2020--21 within the challenging contexts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its important contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- c) appreciated FAO's commitment to ensuring close coordination and alignment with the rest of the United Nations systems, in particular in the context of repositioning of the UN development system (UNDS).
- d) highlighted the importance of FAO's work on providing data statistics and scientific evidence to inform decision making and encouraged FAO in the implementation of the strategies on Climate Change and Science and Innovation.
- e) commended the record levels of resource mobilization reported for 2020-21 at USD 2.7 billion, noting that these were forecasted to increase again in 2020-23 biennium and encouraged continued review of the implications to ensure that structures and processes remain fit for purpose.
- f) highlighted the value to the Organization of unearmarked and lightly earmarked voluntary funding and encouraged FAO to continue exploring different funding modalities to attract more flexibility voluntary contributions.
- g) endorsed the *Programme Implementation Report 2020-21*.

I now give the floor to the Delegations who would like to make any comments on the Draft Conclusions.

Let us review the Draft Conclusion paragraph by paragraph, starting with paragraph 1. Next, subparagraph (a) and subparagraph (b).

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

I have not started my work in the Drafting Committee yet, but I do believe we need a comma after the word pandemic. Otherwise, it suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic was an important contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (c). Subparagraph (d). Subparagraph (e). Subparagraph (f). Subparagraph (g).

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

We are almost there, finishing. Now, there was a suggestion previously. Unfortunately, our colleague from Brazil is not around. I do not know if he will really be interested in seeing what he suggested in the previous Session to be included in this Report. I do not know. So, I am not speaking on his behalf because they are not available, but I just want to flag that because I am the one who suggested that it should be just here.

Ms Chiara SEGRADO (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Sorry, you went a little bit fast for me, and I did just want to make a suggestion for subparagraph (e), if that is okay. You are scrolling down a bit too far. So, the second part of that sentence, where we were talking in the first part about the increased levels of voluntary contributions, which is great, and I am not sure we are reviewing that. So rather than saying, "*encourage continued review*", I think we would like to say something like, "*encouraged FAO to initiate a review of the implications to ensure...*", and then it would continue as it is.

Mr Alwin KOPSE (Switzerland)

Just indeed, it went very quickly. In subparagraph (d), we would like to add the Strategy on Mainstreaming of Biodiversity in Agricultural Sectors. I trust that the Secretariat will find the correct name of the strategy.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Echamos en falta una referencia a las cuestiones relacionadas con el equilibrio de género en el personal de FAO. Si me permiten puedo, incluso, sugerir una frase. Permítanme hacerlo en inglés, en lugar de en español.

Y diría en un párrafo distinto: *“We welcome the progress towards gender balance among FAO staff, but note that additional efforts are needed, especially at Director level and above”*.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

I suggested something, but the Secretary did not capture that. If we can go back and bring what we parked in the previous Session here, that could play the trick. And then it should be in subparagraph (d) or just after subparagraph (d).

CHAIRPERSON

Do we have the pleasure to propose a new proposed formulations by Brazil?

Can we rally around these two in Sessions?

This is a bit altered already from the original formulation from Brazil. If you look at the Programme Priority Areas, it was not there earlier and some insertions and some modification. So really in your hand whether or not, we should revert to the original proposal of Brazil here or we can live with the current altered proposals of Brazil.

Mr Paul WELCHER (United States of America)

I, sort of, failed to see the point of what we are trying to do here. I think we are wise to not add extraneous materials into the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) discussion, and I am not sure why we would try to open a can of worms that we were not able to resolve in the afternoon in the evening Session, especially since the Member who originally proposed these items is not clamouring for their addition as well.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Chairperson, I am not very strong about it. I just wanted to be consistent with myself because I made a suggestion that it should be included in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). That is all. So, if Members feel that it is not needed, for me, I am fine. We do not have a strong view on that.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Una sugerencia para el subpárrafo (e), (b), (e) bis 2. Nosotros añadiríamos al inicio del mismo, y paso al inglés. *“Encourage FAO to use the best science and evidence available”*.

Ms Jenny Louise REID (New Zealand)

From New Zealand’s point of view, we would like to support the intervention from our colleague from the United States of America, in that bringing these paragraphs in may not be a particularly helpful thing to be doing. If they are going to stay, and we continue to discuss them, we have some problems with the first one and we pick out the points that were raised this morning that there were many priority areas if we go start bringing them out.

So, if we are going to keep this paragraph in, we would please request that it stops after, *“stressed the importance of the Programme Priority Areas.”* Stop, and delete the rest of the sentence.

Mr Su GUO (China)

First of all, I would like to echo what the United States of America and New Zealand said. I do not think it is a strong necessity with all the things in this text. And if there is a must to leave this, at least, in bis2, we do not want to use the word “best” exactly. It is too absolute expression. There is no best.

It is good or relatively speaking. There is no absolutely best. So, if we have to do this, we can change it to, “*the good science and evidence based, it is not best.*”

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

If we are going to open the Christmas tree, we would like to also bring in back our proposal on South-South and Triangular Cooperation. However, seeing that if the room is open to this, we would like to add that. However, we are flexible, and we can either go along with other additions or we can just go without having the addition of these two paragraphs.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

Like others have raised, I think we are now at risk of the reopening of the Pandora’s box, and I very much respect Cameroon for being true to what they said earlier about perhaps there was a better placement for the text that Brazil was trying to get into the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) discussion.

However, I do recall Brazil saying, perhaps it is not really relevant in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) discussion because it was backward-looking and they were wanting to be forward-looking. As Brazil is not here to promote what they are looking for, I think we should abandon this effort and stick to the text that we have already got.

Sr. Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We are flexible here. Perhaps on subparagraph (e) bis, we can keep “*stressed the importance of the Programme Priority Areas, including South–South Cooperation and as appropriate bioeconomy*”, as a way forward. Still, we are flexible.

Then, on paragraph 2 bis, I did not see all the text on the screen. Still, there is a mention of FAO developing indicators and our understanding is that the indicators are negotiated and developed by the Statistical Commission of the UN. It is not up to FAO to develop indicators. In any case, they can propose and then the indicators are adapted in New York. For us, it would be important just to delete that part or even delete all the paragraph.

Mr Alwin KOPSE (Switzerland)

As others, we would strongly prefer not to include those two paragraphs as it is maybe not a Pandora box but a Christmas tree, but it might become a Pandora’s box because we do not think that South-South Cooperation is a Programme Priority Area (PPA), so we would need to delete that South–South and including before a South–South Cooperation. And bioeconomy, I do not think that is a concept that is defined in the Programme Priority Areas either. So, we strongly would prefer to delete those two paragraphs.

CHAIRPERSON

My apologies, Brazil. I think I need to put you in spotlight. We were discussing already the proposed conclusion for Item 18 and Cameroon has proposed to place your earlier proposals – these two paragraphs here. And some Members expressing concern that this will reopen the Pandora’s box. So do you have strong position to have them here reflected or we can make do without.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

We did not expect that this subject would come back, and we did not ask for that. So, I am not going to propose anything; wanted something different. We believed that we have an agreement on that but anyhow, life must go on. So, I do not believe that helps.

Sr. Luis Geronimo REYES VERDE (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of)

Quisiera una aclaratoria. Entiendo que un poco estamos tomando párrafos ya aprobados del Informe de 170.º período del Consejo. Si va a ser así, que es parte de lo que he visto comparando los textos, faltaría entonces incluir la parte del multilingüismo, que es el apartado, por ejemplo, que para nosotros es importante. El apartado de ese Informe del 170. período del Consejo cuando hace referencia a la evaluación. También, por ejemplo, la Unión Europea habló del tema de género, pero hay un párrafo

que hace completamente la mención de género, que es el subpárrafo (b). Entonces, tal vez no parafrasear lo que está ya escrito, sino tomarlo textualmente como está.

CHAIRPERSON

If I got you correctly, you do not have a specific proposition, but you are proposing that we paraphrase the paragraph on gender balance.

Sr. Luis Geronimo REYES VERDE (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of)

La propuesta sería, Presidente, que se están tomando los párrafos del Informe del 170.º período del Consejo. Si se están tomando los párrafos, unos párrafos sí y otros no, hay unos párrafos, por ejemplo, el del multilingüismo, y le señalo que es el subpárrafo (e) del Informe, específicamente cuando se habla de la Implementación del Programa (PIR) 2020-2021, párrafo 10, subpárrafo (d).

Y también está el subpárrafo (e), que hace mención al tema de género. Si se están poniendo de la misma forma por qué no incluir estos párrafos en este Informe. Esa es mi propuesta, ¿por qué no incluirlo? Incluir el subpárrafo (b) y el subpárrafo (d) del Informe del 170.º período del Consejo.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Just a little bit of tweaking of subparagraph (d) bis. We have no objection for this paragraph. However, we can use the one that was in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) that was agreed in the Council in 2021. And it would say, “*Welcomed continued progress in achieving equitable gender and geographical representation of FAO staff.*”

Here, maybe I would ask a recommendation from the Management. If it is a Director, maybe we can say, FAO leadership and staff. I do not know what the usual phrase is. So, it would read, “*Welcome continued progress in achieving equitable gender and geographical representation of FAO leadership and staff.*” Perhaps that could work and that is taken from reference of the Council Report and that is from paragraph 59(f).

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je remercie le Venezuela pour sa proposition pertinente que nous soutenons. Nous vous prions de bien vouloir tenir compte de cette proposition.

CHAIRPERSON

For subparagraph (d) bis, now we have two formulations. The early one was from Spain. That is why I am going back to Spain.

Can we go along with the proposal from Indonesia?

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Por alusiones, necesitamos un poco más de tiempo porque, como bien sabe, no es solo España la que habla sino otros 27. Déjenos unos minutos y volveremos con usted.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Sorry, that was for before. But the wording is, “*A continued progress in achieving gender and geographical representation*”. So, there is a missing word. Again, that is taken from document C 2021/REP. That is paragraph 59 subparagraph (f).

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

I would like to propose something based on the mention made by Indonesia on South–South Cooperation. I think the text I would propose is coming from the last Council and it is not controversial. And also, if the Secretariat can accompany me, I will dictate the paragraph. So, it is “*Recognized the importance and instrumental role of South–South and Triangular Cooperation in realizing the 2030 Agenda*”. Well, the Report is CL-172/REP paragraph 9 subparagraph (f). I hope this could be accepted by all colleagues.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Estamos de acuerdo en el texto tal y como está. Permítame pasar al inglés. “*Welcome continued progress in achieving equitable gender and geographical representation of FAO leadership and staff*”, y a partir de ahí, decir: “*And noted that additional efforts were needed towards gender balance*”. Es decir, eliminar lo que viene en los corchetes, “*towards gender balance*”. Esperemos que esto ayude al acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

Indonesia, you are fine with this?

Perfect. So, we forgot the Argentina proposals.

Mr Paul WELCHER (United States of America)

I wonder if this might make more sense in the next Agenda Item. I noticed Argentina pulled this language from, I believe, the last Council Report. An item talking about the Medium Term Plan (MTP) of 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25. But these precedes those items mainly because we are talking about the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) from 2020 to 2021 and during that time when the Council discussed that Report, this language does not appear there. It seems we had to pull recent language from a more previous period.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Still South–South Cooperation did not start yesterday, and it is a cross-cutting element to develop, especially concerning developing countries, and I think this is not impacted on any priority areas and it still is included. I would like to hear from other colleagues, but as I mentioned, we are flexible.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

As I understand, we are looking at the Draft Conclusions on the basis of a written correspondence procedure. That written correspondence procedure was implemented *in lieu* of a discussion on the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). I therefore urge Members to think back to the Programme Implementation Report and the feedback that has been provided in the Written Correspondence Procedure and try to contain their comments and the conclusions to that process. Notwithstanding the importance, and I do not deny the importance of the elements that are bringing in here. I am just starting to see less linkages with the Programme and Implementation Report. That is what is before us.

CHAIRPERSON

This is very much the proposed conclusion based on the written correspondence.

Mr Su GUO (China)

I am just a little bit confused about subparagraph (d) *bis* because I read what is stratified in achieving equitable gender and a geographical representation of FAO leadership and staff. But the second half noticed additional efforts were needed, especially at the D level and above. Actually, the colleague from Spain specified the gender efforts needed at the D above level. So, if you can just a little bit... Because if you note that additional efforts were needed, it seems that both geographical representation and gender are needed. So, I think this made it clear if you can change the combination.

Also, for the proposal by Argentina. I think we discussed the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) of the 2020-21 working plan. Actually, as said by Argentina, the South–South and Triangular Cooperation is not a new thing. It is there for a long time. It is reflected in the Implementation Report. So, I think we should keep this.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Chairperson, I think the argument that we gave earlier is that some of the suggestions that we are making in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) should be forward-looking. And if we have the benefit of having discussed something after we have discussed the Programme Implementation Report in the Council, if we have the benefit of some suggestions that may be helpful, I think we should not refuse to add them here. That is why I said it is probably late 2020-21 but after that, we have discussed issues that are of importance to the Membership, including the discussion on the

South–South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC). So, we will indulge or request all Members to consider accepting this since it is not really a major issue, but which is good for FAO and the entire Membership.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

In the spirit of what Australia mentioned in terms of when we are reviewing the Report and its *Annexes*, and also in the spirit of what Cameroon said in terms of being forward-looking, when we looked at *Annex 5* to the Report, Canada noted this in our written correspondence procedure that out of 15 minimum standards of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality, only one was not implemented.

So, I would like to suggest that we add one more bullet or paragraph right after the subparagraph (d) bis, the first one, and it would read, and I am using some of the language from the abstract of the Council that was shared with us. So “*Encouraged FAO to continue strengthening its policies to promote a gender-sensitive approach and noted that FAO will continue to work towards increasing the share of projects which promote gender equality as a key objective or as a main objective*”.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

I would like to start first with the subparagraph (d) bis 3. There are so many *bis* now, with the proposal of Argentina. Of course, we would like to support this, and we would like to also point out that South–South and Triangle Cooperation (SSTC) are mentioned in the *Programme Implementation Report* and FAO actually signed their first during this timeframe, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Triangle Cooperation.

And also, even in the 2021 Conference Report in the section on *Programme Implementation Report*, South-South and Triangular Cooperation was mentioned in it, it is in paragraph 59, subparagraph (e). As for subparagraph (d) bis2, we would like to ask, where is the reference of this edition? Because I cannot find it in the Council Report or the Conference Report. And then perhaps after you informed us, we can discuss it more.

Mr Su GUO (China)

For subparagraph (d) bis, I would just want to add after “*at Director level and above*”, “*to strengthen gender equality*”. Just to clarify, this is for gender issues.

CHAIRPERSON

Are we having Christmas tree here? Sorry, but I have to do this. I have to go back to Canada to probably respond briefly to Indonesia.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

So, the reference, so it is a combination. That paragraph that I proposed is a combination. So, the first part of it is from the document that was shared. It is the extract from the Report of the 170th Session of the Council, paragraph 10, subparagraph (e). So that is where the “*Encouraged FAO to continue strengthening its policies to promote a gender-sensitive approach*” comes from.

And then the second part was in addition to addressing the fact that... sorry, I am just opening here. To the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) and *Annex 5*. It was an *Annex 5* to the document that was mentioned. It is the progress on FAO gender policy minimum standards and there are 15 minimum standards of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and only one of them is not implemented. And so, the second part of the paragraph was to address that.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

So, if my understanding, this is not from the Programme Implementation Report (PIR), and we are discussing that in that context. So, we would prefer not to have this as an addition because it is not something that we are talking about or taken from the Programme Implementation Report (PIR).

Mr Paul WELCHER (United States of America)

I would like to thank my Indonesian colleagues for pointing out that South–South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) are included in the Conference Item that last discussed the Programme

Implementation Report (PIR) from 2019-2021. I would propose using that language as in that Conference Report there, instead of the Argentina language, because that would be germane to the topic that we are discussing, rather than pulling from a Council discussion on a different topic. If it is possible, I will read that language at dictation speed. *“Noted with satisfaction, the priority given by the Organization to the use of partnerships to leverage its comparative advantages, including through South–South and Triangular Cooperation.”*

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We would like to thank the United States of America for this constructive approach and for showing this greater flexibility, and of course, we can go along with this text.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to go back to the gender-related paragraph. Canada, are you flexible doing away with your proposal, considering that this is something out of the Programme Implementation Report (PIR)?

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Well, it is included in the Council extract when the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) was reviewed. *Annex 5*, for us, is also a part of the Programme Implementation Report. Perhaps, maybe there is a way to include a mention of gender equality programming as part of the previous bullet point. I have not been able to figure that out. And then we could do away with having a separate bullet point with what I had proposed.

CHAIRPERSON

Maybe you can work out some language and rally around the earlier paragraph. And for the time being, we will remove your current proposal. Will that be okay? Does it give you some time?

Paragraph 1 subparagraph (a), (b).

Subparagraph (c), (d). I think Switzerland was referring to this and we have checked. This is the actual reference. Can we clear subparagraph (d) for the time being?

Can we agree to subparagraph (d) *bis*? Maybe Canada needs more time to look at it. Subparagraph (d) *bis*3, I think we are okay with this already. Subparagraph (e).

Mr Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

¿Podría subir al subpárrafo (d), si es tan amable?

Nos faltaría una referencia dentro del subpárrafo (g) para el sector privado, por favor. Creo que nos estamos saltando eso. *“Climate Change on Science and Innovation and on Mainstream Biodiversity across Agricultural Sector”*. Antes de *“and, for Private Sector Strategy.”* Me parece que el nombre oficial es *“Private Sector Strategy Engagement”*.

Continues in English

If we have this written that way, maybe we should say, *“and the implementation of the Strategies on Climate Change, on Science and Innovation and on Private Sector Engagement”*. Because these are the three strategies, if I am not wrong. Maybe you can correct me.

CHAIRPERSON

We are looking at subparagraph (d).

Mr Su GUO (China)

I think there should be no *“for”* before *The “Private Sector Engagement.”* I think the strategy is *“on Climate Change, Science and Innovation, Private Sector Engagement and Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors”*, I think the *“on”* should be deleted.

CHAIRPERSON

After having a clean text, we have a cleaner one. I think this is clean. Subparagraph (e)?

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je voulais seulement vous rappeler le paragraphe 10 (d), que le Venezuela a soulevé sur le cadre stratégique sur le multilinguisme de la 170^{ème} Session.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me read out subparagraph (d) *bis* 4. “Welcomed FAO’s enhanced attention to multilingualism. Looked forward to continuing its efforts in the current biennium and to receiving further information on the implementation of the strategic policy framework for multilingualism at a future session.” Can we rally around this paragraph proposed by Venezuela and supported by Congo? I see no objection. I think we have a clean subparagraph (d) *bis* 4.

Ms Emma HATCHER (Australia)

I think the leading text for this is that “*Conference welcomed FAO’s enhanced attention*”, when we get to “*looked forward to continuing its effort*,” it sounds like it refers to Conference, so I think it should be “*looked forward to FAO continuing its effort*”, otherwise it is a little bit confusing.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (e) is clean now.

Subparagraph (f)? and Subparagraph (g)? Thank you.

Now let us go back to, if Canada is ready to re-look at the paragraph on engender.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Perhaps maybe then I would suggest that we use the same paragraph that was in the extract from the Report of the 170th Session of the Council, which starts the same way, but it says, “*Encouraged FAO to continue strengthening its policies to promote a gender-sensitive approach, to boost equal opportunities and participation, including at senior management level, given that women are the most vulnerable staff assets according to FAO relevant statistics, and are underrepresented at senior levels.*” So again, this is coming from the Council Report on the Programme Implementation Report; it is an extract, and I was wondering if this would be acceptable to replace the other two paragraphs, if this would be acceptable to Spain and other Delegates?

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

We would prefer the first one because it has a geographical representation.

Mr Paul WELCHER (United States of America)

Perhaps a simple proposal was could we just end the Canadian proposal after the word “*participation*”, that way we do not have the double talk about senior management levels. I think if we end the sentence at “*participation*” we cover the main meat of the Canadian proposal.

Ms Erma RHEINDRAYANI (Indonesia)

Perhaps showing flexibility, we can combine the two. So after “*strengthen gender equality*”, “*encouraged FAO to continue its policies to promote gender-sensitive approach to boost equal opportunities and participation*”. So, it is not two different paragraphs but just one paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Can Canada and the United States of America be okay? It seems that we have a clean text now. One last round very quickly. Subparagraph 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (d *bis*) it is now (e). This will be cleaned by the Drafting Committee. Subparagraph (d) *bis* 3, this will be renumbered. Continue on. Subparagraph (d) *bis* 4, subparagraph (e), subparagraph (f), and subparagraph (g).

Item 18 is adopted.

Thank you.

Item 19. Programme Evaluation Report 2023
Point 19. Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 2023
Tema 19. Informe sobre la evaluación del programa en 2023

CHAIRPERSON

We will now quickly move on to Item 19, *Programme Evaluation Report 2023*. Please ensure that you have document C 2023/4 in front of you.

Introduction to Item 19: Programme Evaluation Report 2023

Ms Clemencia Cosentino, Director, FAO Office of Evaluation

I am pleased to present the *Programme Evaluation Report 2023*. This Report provides a descriptive analysis of the 103 evaluations and three syntheses of evaluations conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) in 2021-2022. These include 74 project and programme evaluations in 53 countries, 21 regional and country-level evaluations, and eight thematic evaluations that were mostly global. Through these efforts, OED covered all regions in which FAO operates, nearly USD 2 billion of FAO's portfolio of work, and the breadth of the Organization's areas of work, ranging from food security and climate resilience through sustainable agricultural production and value chains to natural resource management.

The analysis shows strong performance by FAO initiatives. FAO projects collaborated with the private sector and Rome-based Agencies, both of which enhanced implementation of interventions. These were often well-designed, contextualized to meet local needs, adapted to the local context and successful in targeting and involving women. Evaluations also helped identify areas for improvement in the coming years. Two stand out as recurring areas of focus. Improving procurement processes is a critical stepping stone to improving efficiency of operations. Similarly, strengthened monitoring systems are needed to promote results measurement, adaptive management and improved programming. To this end, OED will continue to support FAO Management and Members by providing robust evidence for decision-making.

FAO Office of Evaluation in the next biennium

The unprecedented events of the last few years – escalating conflicts, COVID-19, climate change and rising costs – underscore the vital role of FAO in leading international efforts to combat hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. FAO's rapidly evolving response to these challenges, and in particular the formulation of a new FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, placed new demands on OED during the biennium. So did the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited our ability to conduct field work and reach stakeholders. Realizing this is the "new normal", OED is embracing these challenges as an opportunity to transform itself.

OED has developed a new Strategy (2023-2025) endorsed by the 172nd Session of the FAO Council (CL 172/REP). This Strategy focuses on strengthening OED capacity to conduct high-quality evaluations and measure the impact of FAO's work, while continuing to ensure accountability.

We look forward to continuing to work with FAO Management, Members and colleagues, inside and outside of FAO, to eradicate hunger, eliminate poverty and sustainably manage and utilize natural resources.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

NORWAY

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 15:30

The report provides insight into FAO's experiences and reflections from various angles in several programmatic, administrative, oversight, financial and other areas from the 2021-22 biennium, and Norway finds it useful for those who are financing or launching programmes of a similar kind.

Norway commends FAO for the transparency demonstrated, sharing a critical report and receiving suggestions for improvements of FAO operations. This strengthens the credibility of the report. Norway would have appreciated a more analytical approach, based on what has been achieved and not achieved. Such analysis would have created a better basis for lessons learnt and recommendations for the future, which is not presented in this document.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 17:17

The Russian Federation takes note of the Programme Evaluation Report 2023. We note that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the FAO Office of Evaluation has managed to conduct a total of 103 evaluations in 2021-2022, covering, among others, projects and programmes in 53 countries. We note strengthened partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders in host states, thereby ensuring that assistance is in line with national priorities. We underscore progress in building engagement with the private sector, including through involvement with local partners as “service providers”. Against this backdrop, we would like to highlight the limited progress in cooperation between the Rome-based Agencies in terms of reducing overlap, duplicated efforts and competition. We draw attention to the disparate opinions among the Rome-based Agencies’ leadership.

AUSTRALIA

Submitted Monday 12 June 2023, 18:02

Australia welcomes the Programme Evaluation Report 2023 and commends the body of work done in a period hampered by ongoing challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic. We note key findings from the Report that highlight the relevance of partnerships and UN collaboration at country level; the need to encourage unearmarked funding for greater flexibility and responsiveness; and the need for fit-for-purpose monitoring and evaluation systems. We note the Multi-Country Programme Evaluation in the Pacific identified a need to be more inclusive of relevant stakeholders and focus on beneficiaries as agents of transformational change, and we encourage FAO to focus on these aspects in programme design and implementation.

We encourage FAO to use its comparative advantage and leverage issues such as water for agriculture and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as topics of critical and strategic importance, as recognised in the Report. Similarly, a strengthened focus on gender disaggregated analyses and interventions, as well as on the use of data and technology, can positively impact programme delivery.

We recognise the desire to modernise and make the Office of Evaluation more fit-for-purpose, which we strongly support. The interim evaluation strategy must lead to effective and targeted evaluations that can support the continued improvement and efficacy of FAO’s programmes and initiatives, as well as internal processes. In particular, the proposed development of an evaluation policy to guide evaluations across the Organization, and revision of the criteria for evaluation intake and prioritisation, will be invaluable tools for increased coherence and efficiency.

Australia looks forward to following the process of the Evaluation of FAO’s Evaluation function, including a concise set of recommendations that can be wholly embraced by the Organization.

CANADA

Submitted Tuesday 13 June 2023, 10:21

Canada welcomes the appointment of the new Director of the Office of Evaluation, Ms Clemencia Cosentino. The work of the Office of Evaluation is essential to inform the decision-making of Members. We recognize the challenge of conducting evaluations during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

We note with concern that evaluations consistently find monitoring and evaluations as “unfit to measure results systematically and comprehensively, and [are] not used for adaptive management or improved designs and programming”.

We appreciate the strategy over the next two years focusing on building capacity to conduct rigorous evaluations in order to address existing weaknesses.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Thursday 15 June 2023, 19:35

I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States regarding the abovementioned agenda item for the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Serbia and Türkiye align themselves with this statement.

The European Union and its 27 Member States commend FAO's independent Office of Evaluation work, which is essential to the assessment of FAO's work at the national, regional and global levels.

We welcome the report, which summarises the main findings of the evaluations conducted in 2021 and 2022. We particularly welcome the inclusion of findings which highlight both areas of success and areas in need of improvement, and we would like to highlight the following elements:

On the Joint Evaluation of the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), it is encouraging to learn that the collaboration enhanced the sharing of knowledge, lessons and good practices. However, it was also found that limited progress was achieved on reducing overlap, duplication and competition. It is important to us that the RBAs continue to work with these issues to ensure better delivery.

The EU and its 27 Member States agree with the conclusion in the report that comprehensive solutions through programmatic and long-term intervention approaches are key to achieving target outcomes for fulfilling FAO's mandate.

On the Follow-up Report on the Evaluation of FAO's support to climate action (Sustainable Development Goal –SDG 13) and the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change (2017), we appreciate the increased recognition of the importance of adapting food systems to climate change and underline the need for food systems to also contribute to climate change mitigation. We encourage FAO to continue its advocacy efforts in this regard. In this context, we also look forward to the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and its Action Plan.

We look forward to more visibility in FAO's strategic document of work on modernization and rehabilitation of irrigated agriculture schemes. The evaluation of FAO's contribution to SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation for all found that integrating water resources management more firmly into the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and activities concerned with agricultural development, ecosystems management, rural livelihoods and climate change was deemed fundamental to their success.

Regarding the Follow-up Report on the Evaluation of FAO's role and work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), we request that FAO strengthen its efforts towards achieving the objectives of the Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025, in order to further promote the responsible use of antimicrobial agents and to enable the adoption of good practices. We also noted the findings on the importance of even distribution of resources across Programmatic Priority Areas, including from voluntary contributions, as well as the importance of timely response in emergency programmes, and the role that decentralizing procurement can play in this regard, while strengthening local value chains.

We look forward to the implementation of the Interim Strategy of the Office of Evaluation (OED) and we support the Programme Committee's invitation to the OED to consider expanding its mission statement to include the use of evidence and evidence-based knowledge in decision-making. We also want to stress the importance of data privacy and data protection in evaluation, as well as the independence of the evaluation function.

We would like to conclude by reiterating our full support for the work of the FAO Office of Evaluation and stressing the importance of continuing to identify lessons to be learned from FAO's work, both positive and negative, so as to deliver better results. In this regard, the upcoming external evaluations and assessments of FAO by the Joint Inspection Unit and the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) will provide further opportunities to identify areas for improvement and better delivery.

JAPAN

Submitted Friday 16 June 2023, 13:02

Japan appreciates that FAO focuses on the “Partnership” and “Data, technology, and innovation” and the findings from the Evaluation of FAO’s programme of work.

Japan gives priority to the utilization of neutral and objective data which is managed by international organizations, and the promotion of technology and innovation for the purpose of constructing resilient food systems and ensuring global food security, which is referred to in the outcomes of G7 Hiroshima Summit. Japan expects FAO to take the role of enhancing transparency of agricultural markets by strengthening the function of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) and promoting efforts to increase the predictability of future food risks.

In addition, Japan also expects to see efforts of FAO to develop information to serve as a hub for promoting innovation based on the needs of developing countries, including support for startups.

FAO is expected to promote private sector partnerships in order to make FAO’s efforts more effective. One of the efforts is to clarify the concrete role and utilization of the “Informal Private Sector Advisory Group” launched in 2023.

Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría

The Office of Evaluation (OED) thanks Members for their kind words and appreciates the recognition of the usefulness of our evaluations¹.

CHAIRPERSON

I now ask the Secretariat to share my conclusion for Item 19 on the screen and I will read them out.

1. The Conference
 - a) welcomed the Programme Evaluation Report 2023, including the main findings emerging from the project, programme, country and thematic evaluations of development in emergency and resilience evaluations completed during the period 2021-22.
 - b) Commended the FAO Office of Evaluation for the volume of work completed during the biennium despite the challenges faced, including COVID-19 pandemic.
 - c) Appreciated the findings and lessons learned from the evaluation that would enable FAO to deliver better results.
 - d) Highlighted the observations and recommendations arising from the evaluation of FAO’s program of work, including on the importance of building an inclusive partnership; giving higher prioritization to areas of recognized FAO technical expertise such as water for agriculture and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and encouraging unearmarked or lightly earmarked voluntary contributions to finance innovations in underfunded and emerging areas in FAO.
 - e) Welcomed the evaluation strategy for the next two years with its focus on increasing Office of Evaluation (OED) effectiveness and efficiency, building capacity to conduct rigorous evaluations, and generating robust evidence that is useful to FAO and its stakeholders.

I now give the floor to the delegation who would like to make any comments on the draft conclusions. Let us now review the draft conclusions paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph 1 (a), Paragraph 1 (b), paragraph 1 (c), paragraph 1 (d).

¹ More information is available on OED’s website (www.fao.org/evaluation), where the [Programme Evaluation Report 2023](#) is posted.

Sr. Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We support the overall spirit of the paragraph, but on “*FAO technical expertise such as water for agriculture,*” it should be “*sustainable use of water for agriculture,*” not just “*water*”. Because FAO is the custodian of indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 6 on Water Stress and Water Efficiency, if colleagues can accompany this proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we rally around these proposed insertions by Argentina?

I see no objections.

Subparagraph (e), no objection.

Item 19 is now concluded.

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

There is something that I wanted to add, if I may, to complete it. So, it is another subparagraph (f), the subparagraph (f) “Highlighted the importance of the independence of Evaluation and need for appropriate resources to carry on its work.” So, this is something that I thought I wanted to put out at the end of the entire Report. If that can be supported, I hope it will be.

CHAIRPERSON

Any reaction? Can we leave the proposed insertion by Cameroon?

His Excellency Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

No, I think there is a word missing. I wanted to say “*the Independent Office*”.

CHAIRPERSON

No objection. Item 19 is now adopted.

Colleagues, with that, we have concluded our consideration on the Items on the Agenda of Commission II. We have accomplished our task. The Drafting Committee will meet from 14:00 to 16:30 hours in the Lebanon Room, and the timing will be confirmed in the Journal of the Conference. As per the Timetable, we will consider the adoption of the Report of Commission II on Thursday afternoon from 14:00 hours to 16:30 hours in the Red Room here. If this is acceptable, then I look forward to seeing you all on Thursday, 6 July 2023.

The meeting of Commission II is now adjourned.

The meeting rose at 18:57 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 57

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.57



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

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

T

CONFERENCE CONFERENCE CONFERENCIA

Forty-third Session
Quarante-troisième session
43.º período de sesiones

Rome, 1-7 July 2023
Rome, 1-7 juillet 2023
Rome, 1-7 de julio de 2023

FOURTH MEETING OF COMMISSION II
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
CUARTA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II

6 July 2023

The Fourth Meeting was opened at 14:10 hours
Mr Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La quatrième séance est ouverte à 14 h 10
sous la présidence de M. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la cuarta reunión a las 14.10
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Wahab,
Presidente de la Comisión II

Portions marked as [XX] were inaudible due to technical reasons. Please submit all corrections
to: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Les parties signalées par [XX], pour des raisons techniques, étaient inaudibles. Veuillez communiquer
toute correction à: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Las partes marcadas como [XX] fueron inaudibles debido a razones técnicas. Por favor, envíe todas
las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF COMMISSION II
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE LA COMMISSION II
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME DE LA COMISIÓN II**

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues and friends, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure and honour to speak to you on behalf of Commission II for this introduction of this Report.

I will now give the floor to Ms Emma Hatcher, the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to Report on the proceedings and preparation of the Report of Commission II that is before us today.

CHAIRPERSON OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE OF COMMISSION II

Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to Mr Abdul Rahman who was the Chairperson of Commission II, for his leadership and being able to very ably guide us through the discussions that we had in the Commission. Indeed, the work of the Drafting Committee for Commission II was very much facilitated by the inclusive way that the Chairperson guided the draft language of the Report with all Members of Commission II.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Members of the Drafting Committee, which comprised Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Portugal, South Sudan, Spain, and the United States of America. I very much appreciated the positive spirit in which we collectively engaged in our work yesterday – perhaps not in the record 70 minutes of Commission I, but we did focus on efficiency.

Further, I would like to thank the Secretariat for their guidance and professionalism throughout the operation of Commission II and its Drafting Committee, and the important work of the interpreters and technicians.

Based on these efforts, the Drafting Committee think that the Draft Report is an accurate reflection of the discussions in Commission II, and it is presented for your adoption in Document C2023/II/REP.

CHAIRPERSON

After reflecting on the work of the Drafting Committee, I recommend to Commission II to adopt the Report of Commission II *en bloc*.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Before closing the meeting of Commission II, let me say a few words of thanks. I would like to firstly thank the Vice-Chairperson of Commission II, my friend Ms Ratchanok Sangpengchana from Thailand, and I would like to also thank the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, Ms Emma Hatcher of Australia, and I extend my thanks to all Members of the Drafting Committee in finalizing the Report of the Commission.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all distinguished delegates, esteemed colleagues and friends for your invaluable support and contributions, passion, compromises and flexibility leading to the success of our task.

To the team of the Secretariat, Mr David McSherry, Ms Mahrukh Sarwar, Mr Beth Crawford, the messengers, the interpreter team and the audio-visual team, my Asian Group family, my colleague Ms Siti Normaznie Abdul Muttalib – thank you for your support.

To the Independent Chairperson of the Council hTeam, I thank you for your meaningful consultations, and efforts leading up to the Conference. With this, I close this meeting of Commission II and I thank you so much for your participation.

I recognize there is a request for the floor from Japan.

Mr Tsutomu KOYAMA (Japan)

Japan has already agreed with the draft, but in order to record in the Verbatim, Japan would like to express our statement.

At first, Japan would like to express our gratitude to the Drafting Committee Members and Chairperson, to sum up a concise draft like this, but Japan expressed our view in the last Session of Commission II, *“enhancing transparency of FAO’s governance is essential to implement all FAO’s efforts with confidence”*.

Paragraph 5 of Item 20 in this draft refers to the conclusion and recommendation of the 170th Session of the Council, which emphasized the importance of oversight internal control and support functions in paragraph 9 (h), *“under the recognition that this internal control includes improving FAO governance, including implementation of a Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) inspection”*, Japan agrees with this draft.

The meeting rose at 14.15 hours

La séance est levée à 14 h 15

Se levanta la sesión a las 14.15