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COUNCIL

Hundred Forty-ninth Session

Rome, 16 - 20 June 2014

Report of the Joint Meeting of the 115th Session of the Programme Committee and 154th Session of the Finance Committee (28 May 2014)

Executive Summary

The Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees brings to the attention of the Council its findings and recommendations on:

- a) Programme Implementation Report 2012-13 (paras. 2-3)
- b) Progress on the Medium Term Plan 2014-17: results framework, regional priorities and budgetary adjustments from work planning and efficiencies (para. 4)

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Joint Meeting.

Queries on the content of this document may be addressed to:

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**REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE
HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE
AND HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE FINANCE
COMMITTEE**

Rome, 28 May 2014

INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint Meeting submitted its Report to the Council.
2. In addition to the Chairperson, Mr Mougui Médi (Cameroon), and Her Excellency Cecilia Nordin van Gansberghe (Sweden), Chairperson of the Programme Committee, the following representatives of Members were present:

Mr R. Ayazi (Afghanistan)	Mr A. Traoré (Guinea)
Ms K. Boubekour (Algeria) ¹	Mr V. Sharan (India)
Mr G.O. Infante (Argentina)	Mr H. Yamada (Japan)
Mr M. Worrell (Australia)	Ms E.M. José Rodríguez Sifuentes (Mexico)
Ms N. Feistritz (Austria)	Mr M. Lemghari (Morocco)
Mr O. Vieira (Brazil)	Mr R. Rajasekar (New Zealand)
Mr E. Robinson (Canada)	Mr K. Mehboob (Pakistan)
Mr Jingyuan Xia (China)	Mr V. V. Kuznetsov (Russian Federation) ²
Mr J.A. Carranza (Ecuador)	Ms A. Malik Osman (Sudan)
Mr A.G. Aseffa (Ethiopia)	Ms C.E. Grieder (Switzerland)
Mr K. Mohamed El Taweel (Egypt)	Ms N. Brown (USA)
Mr G.F. Cramer (Germany)	Mr H. Shoja'aadin (Yemen) ³

Introduction

1. The Director-General engaged the Joint Meeting on matters of overarching importance to the Organization, including the enhanced trust between Members and Management; the positive impact of transformational changes introduced in 2012-13 and the imperative of accelerating programmatic implementation this biennium; the continued challenges deriving from the negative effect of the downward budgetary trend over the years; the importance of engagement by Members with the United Nations General Assembly and the International Civil Service Commission in order to achieve meaningful containment of staff costs; the need for reviewing the country coverage and modalities of FAO's decentralized office network in order to support optimally the evolving needs of member countries; and the importance of strengthening South-South Cooperation.

Programme Implementation Report 2012-13⁴

2. The Joint Meeting welcomed the Programme Implementation Report as a comprehensive and informative presentation of achievements and financial performance during 2012-13, as well as for lessons learned for the current and future biennia. The Joint Meeting:
 - a) appreciated the format and presentation of the document, noting that future versions would improve with introduction of the new results-based monitoring and reporting framework;

¹ Ms K. Boubekour attended the Joint Meeting as silent observer

² Mr V. Navara attended part of the Joint Meeting.

³ Mr H. Shoja'aadin attended the Joint Meeting as silent observer

⁴ C 2015/8

- b) expressed overall satisfaction at the implementation of the programme of work in 2012-13;
 - c) noted the major policy achievements of 2012-13 relating to the UN Post-2015 Agenda and the Zero Hunger Initiative *inter alia* as aspirational drivers for the current and future work of the Organization;
 - d) welcomed the unprecedented efficiencies and savings achieved in the 2012-13 biennium, recognized the challenge of finding such high level of savings in future without containing staff costs, and encouraged the engagement of FAO Members with the United Nations General Assembly and the International Civil Service Commission in this regard;
 - e) was satisfied that the transformational changes of 2012-13 represented a major achievement for FAO, and underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the reviewed Strategic Framework;
 - f) welcomed the decentralization efforts undertaken in 2012-13, and stressed the need for further analysis and action in future, in particular a review of the country coverage and modalities of FAO's decentralized offices network in order to support optimally the evolving needs of member countries; as well as continued strengthening of monitoring, internal control and accountability *inter alia* through the GRMS;
 - g) noted the general progress on language balance in FAO's products, and urged continued efforts especially in those languages where the progress has been insufficient;
 - h) highlighted the importance of expanding South-South Cooperation activities;
 - i) highlighted the importance of including information on partnerships with civil society and the private sector while looking forward to the annual report on the implementation of the two strategies on partnerships to be presented at the autumn Joint Meeting; and
 - j) encouraged the use of innovative funding modalities in order to broaden the base for mobilization of extrabudgetary resources.
3. The Joint Meeting endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2012-13 for transmission to the Council.

Progress on the Medium Term Plan 2014-17: results framework, regional priorities and budgetary adjustments from work planning and efficiencies⁵

4. The Joint Meeting welcomed the progress on the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2014-17, and supported the views and recommendations arising from the discussions held separately in the Programme Committee and Finance Committee in their respective areas of mandate. The Joint Meeting:
- a) underlined the importance of the results framework for monitoring and reporting on implementation of the MTP, while noting the dynamic and evolutionary nature of the indicators, baselines and targets;
 - b) noted the inter-relation between the programmatic consolidation arising from work planning observed by the Programme Committee and the forecasted chapter distributions of the 2014-15 budgetary appropriation endorsed by the Finance Committee, and recommended that lessons learned from the planning exercise be taken into account in preparing more accurate budget allocations in the next PWB in order to avoid significant transfers shortly after its final approval;
 - c) welcomed the identification of regional priorities and the endorsement of 15 regional initiatives by the 2014 Regional Conferences contributing to the achievement of the Strategic Objectives;

⁵ PC 115/2 – FC 154/9

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- d) supported the observations on decentralization made by the 2014 Regional Conferences, and the steps taken, progress made and further proposals to improve the structure and functioning of the decentralized offices network; and
 - e) encouraged the use of innovative funding modalities in order to broaden the base for mobilization of extrabudgetary resources, and noted the importance of the strategic use of Technical Cooperation Programme resources in this regard.

Update on the independent review of governance reforms

5. The Joint Meeting received an update on the ongoing independent review of governance reforms and was informed that a draft report would be submitted to Management in September and looked forward to discussing it at its next Joint Meeting in autumn 2014.

Any other business

6. There was no discussion under this item.