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Report of the

**THIRTEENTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
FOR EUROPE**

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Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

*FAO Member Nations in the European Region (as at 8 October 1982)*

Albania	Greece	Poland
Austria	Hungary	Portugal
Belgium	Iceland	Romania
Bulgaria	Ireland	Spain
Cyprus	Israel	Sweden
Czechoslovakia	Italy	Switzerland
Denmark	Luxembourg	Turkey
Finland	Malta	United Kingdom
France	Netherlands	Yugoslavia
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Norway	

*Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe*

First	—	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1949
Second	—	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1960
Third	—	Rome, Italy, 8-13 October 1962
Fourth	—	Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964
Fifth	—	Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966
Sixth	—	St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968
Seventh	—	Budapest, Hungary, 21-25 September 1970
Eighth	—	Munich, Germany, Fed. Rep. of, 18-23 September 1972
Ninth	—	Lausanne, Switzerland, 7-12 October 1974
Tenth	—	Bucharest, Romania, 20-25 September 1976
Eleventh	—	Lisbon, Portugal, 2-7 October 1978
Twelfth	—	Athens, Greece, 22-27 September 1980
Thirteenth	—	Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982

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Roma, 1983



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## INTRODUCTION

### Organization of the Conference

1. The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, organized in cooperation with the UN Economic Commission for Europe, was held in Sofia, Bulgaria, at the Ludmila Jivkova National Palace of Culture, from 4 to 8 October 1982, at the kind invitation of the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

2. Delegations from the following twenty-five Member Nations of the European region participated in the Conference:

Austria	Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Portugal
Belgium	Greece	Romania
Bulgaria	Hungary	Spain
Cyprus	Iceland	Sweden
Czechoslovakia	Israel	Switzerland
Denmark	Netherlands	Turkey
Finland	Norway	United Kingdom
France	Poland	Yugoslavia

3. In addition, a Member Nation of another region sent an observer:

the United States of America

4. The following Members of the United Nations, which do not belong to FAO but are members of the Economic Commission for Europe, participated in the meeting as observers:

German Democratic Republic  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

5. In addition to the Economic Commission for Europe (EEC) the Conference was also attended by representatives of the following United Nations organizations and bodies:

World Food Programme (WFP)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

6. Observers of the following inter-governmental organizations attended the Conference:

European Economic Community (ECE)  
Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)  
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)  
International Office of Epizootics (IOE)

7. The following non-governmental organizations sent observers to the Conference:

International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)  
International Union of Family Organizations (IOFO)  
Trade Unions International of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers (TUIAFPW)

8. The list of participants is contained in Appendix B.

### Opening Ceremony

9. In welcoming the President of the Council of Ministers of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr Grisha Filipov, for the official inauguration of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, the Director-General of FAO, Mr Edouard Saouma welcomed also delegates and observers. He thanked the Government of Bulgaria for having invited the Conference to Sofia and expressed his gratitude for its generous hospitality. He said that the Conference was taking place at a difficult time for international relations, of which the gravity of food and agricultural problems was a critical aspect. He noted that Bulgaria has been able to establish a modern agro-food sector and would have an important role to play in the improvement of the international food situation. Mr Saouma felt that the presence of the Prime Minister was an eloquent token of Bulgaria's interest in the action of FAO.

10. The Prime Minister of Bulgaria expressed recognition of the courageous initiatives of the Director-General to fulfil FAO's ideals. He pointed out the acuteness of food problems, which are one of the gravest challenges for humanity today. This paradoxical situation, in this century of scientific and technical progress, was to be attributed especially to the fact that vast resources were being devoted to weaponry and thereby being withheld from development operations. Hunger, he said, is not inevitable; the earth can feed all its inhabitants. To do this, we should promote science and technology, train personnel and set up effective agricultural policies attacking hunger at its very roots. Bulgaria, for its part, has transformed a backward agriculture into a dynamic agro-food sector in three decades. It is prepared, as in the past, to cooperate with the developing countries and to share its experience with them. In concluding, the Prime Minister declared that FAO had a major role to play in the future and that Bulgaria would continue to give the Organization its support and cooperation.

11. In thanking the Prime Minister, the Director-General stated that he shared his views concerning the relations between improvement of the world food situation and the search for peace. He said he was convinced that the success achieved by Bulgaria in the food and agricultural sector would be very valuable for the work of the Conference.

#### Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

12. The Conference unanimously elected Mr Alexander Petkov, Minister of Agriculture of Bulgaria and President of the National Agricultural Industrial Union as Chairman.

13. Mr Petkov thanked the Conference for having elected him to the Chairmanship and asked for nominations to be submitted for the election of the Vice-Chairmen.

14. The following were unanimously elected as Vice-Chairmen:

Mr F.J. Specks, Deputy Director General, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forests, Federal Republic of Germany;

Mr A. Nikkola, Chairman of the Finnish National FAO Committee;  
Mr. E. Yiotas, Vice-Minister of Agriculture of Greece.

15. Because the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen were obliged to be absent from the sessions on 6 October, it was necessary to elect a fourth Vice-Chairman. Mr. T. Glacier, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to FAO, was elected Vice-Chairman.

#### Statement of the Chairman

16. The Minister of Agriculture of Bulgaria greeted the national delegations and the organizations represented at the Conference. He said that the present time was a crucial period for development and that the fight against hunger and malnutrition was a moral obligation. He expressed his satisfaction at the confidence shown to his country in convening the Regional Conference in Sofia and exhorted all the countries of the region to stand firmly beside FAO in its efforts to promote agricultural development.

17. In Bulgaria, agriculture has been completely reorganized on the basis of a new agrarian policy. It was now characterized by concentration in large-scale enterprises, especially agro-industrial complexes, and by highly intensified production. Nevertheless, resources could be mobilized even more and production should be increased considerably, including that for the development of exports.

18. The Minister said that his country was working in bilateral and multilateral cooperation with European and non-European countries and was prepared to seek exchanges of experience with other countries in order to improve the international distribution of work. In this context, he said, cooperation with FAO would receive special attention.

#### Adoption of the Agenda

19. The Conference adopted the Agenda which is reproduced in Appendix A.



SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Statement by the Director-General

20. The Director-General expressed his anxiety over the present atmosphere of international economic relations and the progressive deterioration of the food situation in many low-income countries. He emphasized the interdependence linking the developed and the developing countries. Therefore, he said, European agricultural problems could not be considered separately from the world agricultural and food situation.

21. Overall, the latter is satisfactory at present, thanks to the good harvests obtained in 1981 and expected in 1982. These excellent harvests will permit the replenishment of reserve stocks. However, they still remain dangerously inadequate in the developing countries. Surpluses in some regions of the world will not prevent hunger in others. Twenty-two countries are suffering from acute food shortage. About ten million refugees need aid for their daily subsistence. In many low-income countries, especially in Africa, per capita food supplies are diminishing. The grain imports of developing countries have reached the staggering figure of 100 million tons.

22. Moreover the development prospects of the Third World are seriously handicapped by many factors such as the chronic instability of markets and the current low levels of basic commodity prices, the rise of protectionist tendencies, and an excessive debt load endangering investment programmes. The Director-General asserted that we shall overcome the present crisis only by expanding trade in general.

23. The aid of the developed countries to agriculture in the Third World has been declining without letup in real terms since 1979; the resources of agencies such as AID, UNDP, IFAD, have been reduced by some 25-30 percent and those of the WFP are diminishing from year to year despite a constant increase of requirements. The Director-General therefore pleaded with the European countries for more aid to agricultural development in the Third World. He appealed especially to both traditional and potential donor countries to contribute generously to WFP's regular resources as well as to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR). He also suggested that the present abundant supplies be employed to achieve a decisive breakthrough in the field of world food security. He informed the Conference that he had proposed that the Committee on World Food Security at its next session review the concept of food security itself, its various components and the ways and means of establishing an effective and viable system.

24. FAO's action in Europe, as elsewhere in the world, should be of a practical nature geared to action, as it is in the case of many activities mentioned as examples. In the first place, the European cooperative networks for agricultural research have succeeded in promoting cooperation in the region and arousing interest among institutions and countries outside of it. They should continue to adapt their programmes to changing needs in a concern to promote the transfer of technology not only among developed countries but also between them and the developing countries.

25. As for the European Cooperative Network on Rural Energy, which held its first consultation in May 1982, it has chosen the lines of research which it considered appropriate. However, some countries have only paid their first contribution to the trust fund so far. The third example is the European Rural Employment and Development Programme which will contain concrete activities such as exchange of experiences through seminars, international courses for training of women in farm management, and pluri-active rural development field projects.

26. The Director-General also drew the attention of the delegates to the organization by FAO of the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development. It is planned to hold this Conference in the spring of 1984.

27. In concluding, the Director-General stated that FAO's programme in Europe would continue to the extent of the available resources. He expressed his satisfaction with the role the European Region is playing in the Organization, financing nearly half its regular budget and constituting the principal source of trust funds.

28. The complete text of the statement of the Director-General is reproduced in Appendix D.

Statement by the Representative of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe

29. The Representative of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe reminded the participants that the ECE is a framework for permanent cooperation on economic, technological and environmental matters. He expressed his conviction that the continuing close cooperation between FAO and ECE will be of benefit to the countries of the region and beyond it. The activities of the Committee on Agricultural Problems and the Committee on Timber of the ECE are already generally being executed in close collaboration with FAO. Almost all the working bodies have become joint entities as have most of the symposia and seminars. In regard to energy, which is one of the priority issues of the ECE Programme of Work, the Commission at its last annual session adopted a decision which, among other things, called for the preparation of a special meeting on new and renewable sources of energy. The Deputy Executive Secretary reaffirmed that the ECE was willing to cooperate with FAO's European Cooperative Network and Rural Energy. Concerning questions of rural employment and pluri-activity, he considered it desirable that FAO's work in this field should cover both the family type of holding and large holdings so as to meet the interest of all the countries of the region.

30. The complete text of the statement of the Representative of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe is reproduced in Appendix E.

Statement by the Acting Executive Director of the World Food Programme

31. The Acting Deputy Director of WFP presented the main lines of the Programme. In 1981, the bulk of its assistance was directed to low-income countries and 80% of its commitments concerned agricultural and rural development projects. Over 80% of the emergency allocations approved by the Director-General of FAO, on the recommendation of the Executive Director, were reserved for refugees. During recent years the contributions of the European countries to the Programme have come in the form of voluntary pledges to its regular resources, in contributions to the Food Aid Convention, and through the International Emergency Food Reserve. In the past five years, cereal food aid has shown a declining trend. The allocations for 1982/83 have now been estimated at 8.4 million tons, far below the 10 million ton target established at the World Food Conference. The Acting Deputy Director stressed the importance for WFP of attaining the resource targets established both for the current period and the 1983/84 biennium, thereby joining in the appeal launched by the Director-General on behalf of adding further resources to the regular funds of the Programme and to the International Emergency Food Reserve.

Country Statements and General Debate on the Food and Agricultural Situation in Europe

32. In their statements many delegations referred to the speech of the Director-General. As regards the world food situation they fully shared his views and expressed their anxiety over the aggravation of the food deficit in many low-income developing countries. The Conference expressed its full support to the Director-General in his initiatives to have agriculture receive the top priority it requires and to promote the development of production and food-sufficiency in the deficit countries.

33. The Conference called on the developed countries to increase their assistance to the agricultural sector so as to raise the production capacity of the developing countries and enable them to provide an adequate diet for their populations. It was recalled that, according to the FAO Study "Agriculture: Toward 2000", the agricultural production of the developing countries would have to be doubled between now and the end of the century if the increase in demand were to be met. The Conference acknowledged that "it is the responsibility of the developed countries and other countries able to do so, to assist the developing countries both financially and technically. At the technical level a series of measures were mentioned, such as exchange of experiences, transfer of technology, supply of inputs, and education and training programmes.

34. It was pointed out that in many cases the long-term agricultural development of the developing countries demanded far-reaching economic and social reforms, including the application of appropriate agrarian reform. It was recognized that, in the meantime, food aid must continue to play a major role both to meet emergency situations and as investment in development projects.

35. Many delegations expressed their anxiety over the deterioration of the present atmosphere of international economic relations and were disturbed at the persistence and magnitude of the current economic crisis, characterized by recession or stagnation, unemployment, the high level of interest rates and inflation, monetary instability and trade balance deficits. These difficulties have been intensified by the chronic instabilities of markets and more and more harsh protectionist pressures. This alarming scene has serious consequences for agriculture and the living conditions of farmers, especially in the developing countries. Moreover, a number of delegations emphasized that a close relationship exists between agricultural development and the preservation of detente.

36. Most of the delegations reported on the food and agricultural situation in their respective countries and on recent developments of government policies. Several of them supplied statistical data on the recent results obtained in the agricultural and food sector.

37. Generally speaking, European agriculture has continued to make progress in productivity and efficiency and to increase its output, while at the same time endeavouring to adjust to the changing economic and trade conditions which prevail both at the national and the international level.

38. A number of delegations stated that their governments intended first of all to increase agricultural production selectively in order to adjust it to the internal demand. The rational utilization of resources and production inputs was a decisive requirement to that end.

39. A guaranteed supply of high-quality food products was considered a priority; each country must ensure its own food security first of all. Some European countries now aimed at raising the extent of their self-sufficiency of basic commodities, since there were still situations in Europe where the population did not have an adequate diet either quantitatively or qualitatively.

40. Some countries have had as their objective a notable increase of their production in order also to develop their exports which could considerably help either to restore their trade balance or reduce its deficit. Others said that their countries would continue to be mainly importers of agricultural products coming for the most part from developing countries. The wish to be able to export food products to deficit countries and to contribute to the improvement of world food security was also mentioned as a factor that could encourage countries to maintain or increase their production capacities.

41. Some delegations nevertheless pointed out that the main problem was no longer to increase production but rather, in many cases, to prevent surpluses through better management and national organization of markets.

42. Several countries whose trade balance has sharply declined expressed their desire to limit their imports, especially of cattle feeds which in the past few years have sometimes been a heavy burden on their agro-food trade balance.

43. The difficulties hindering foreign trade of agricultural products were mentioned, particularly the uncertainty stemming from some trade or cooperation agreements and their application. According to some delegations, trade barriers, especially between Western and Eastern Europe, have obstructed the development of trade and sound international division of labour. The promotion of world food security depends on access of the developing countries' agricultural products to markets.

44. Some delegations remarked that in a number of the more developed countries, agricultural production will continue to expand more rapidly than the internal market. This means that the practice of export subsidies is likely to be maintained. This practice has put the developing countries in a position of unfair competition and has prevented their access to international agricultural markets. New market systems or arrangements must be set up in order to reduce surpluses; however, better control of agricultural stocks should not diminish the resources available for food aid.

45. A number of countries have set up financial co-responsibility mechanisms designed to decrease surpluses, especially of milk products.

46. During recent years, the capital costs and input prices - especially energy costs and interest rates - have undergone a considerable increase. Consequently, countries have been determined to control the evolution of production costs, for example through better knowledge of intermediary consumption prices. Some of them have expressed their concern to decrease their dependence on outside sources for production inputs and to rely more on their internal resources.
47. One of the fundamental objectives of agricultural policies has been to raise the living standards of the agricultural population and reduce its disparities with other sectors of the economy. The price of foods, however, must remain reasonable for the consumer.
48. In several countries, especially some southern countries, the problem of agricultural holdings structures remains fundamental.
49. The share of the agricultural labour force in the total active population has tended to decrease in the long term, but this tendency has often been slowed down due to economic stagnancy and employment problems. Nevertheless, in many regions agriculture and forestry have remained a sizable employment sector. Despite the slowdown of the rural exodus, the maintenance of farmers and population in some areas, particularly in deprived areas, has continued to be a major concern. Several countries mentioned measures specifically designed to encourage young people to remain or to become established in agriculture.
50. In most European countries, pluri-activity has become an economic and social reality of major importance. Its main function has been to provide jobs and complementary incomes and thereby help to maintain the rural population. In some countries special programmes have been designed to reduce the disadvantages of small holdings and evaluate the implications of pluri-activity and part-time agriculture in the use of resources.
51. The countries of Eastern Europe, where socialised agriculture predominates, explained the guidelines and methods of their development of the agricultural and food sector. That development was based, first of all, on their agricultural policy and benefited, among other things, by the introduction on a large-scale of modern management methods and integrated production systems. Cooperation between socialist countries has played an outstanding role. Cooperation with the countries of Western Europe has also been very valuable and fits directly into the application of the Final Article of the Helsinki Treaty on security and cooperation in Europe. In some countries of Eastern Europe the activity of large-scale and of family holdings have been successfully combined.
52. Some of the speakers drew attention to the need to reconcile the adjustment and modernization of the agricultural sector, on the one hand, and protection of the environment and conservation of resources, especially of soil and water, on the other. It was noted that a programme existed to combat desertification of some Mediterranean regions.
53. The Conference noted that the Permanent Commission on Agriculture of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance has included in its programme of work for 1980-85 studies on the use of new energy sources and that a conference will shortly be organized on ways of reducing energy costs in agriculture. The Conference also took note that the OECD was organizing a symposium, planned for November 1982, on utilization of the biomass. The collaboration between FAO and OECD concerning work on energy is extremely positive. The Commission on Agriculture of the OECD will hold a meeting at the Minister level in December 1982.
54. The Conference invited the European countries to celebrate World Food Day on 16 October 1982.

FAO Programme in the Region:

FAO Activities in Europe and Programme of Work for 1982-83

55. The Conference expressed appreciation of the activities conducted during the past two years in spite of very scarce resources, and also with the FAO programme of work in Europe for the 1982-83 biennium as presented in document ERC/82/3. It expressed satisfaction with the way the recommendations of the preceding Regional Conference have been implemented, especially in regard to the European Cooperative Research Networks, energy and agricultural manpower. It noted that a number of FAO programmes in Europe were also of great interest to the developing countries.

56. Several delegations stressed the need to maintain an adequate level of activity in the region, and felt that the present level of resources for European activities in the Regular Programme should be maintained. These activities could mobilize other human and financial resources of member countries; moreover, the activities conducted in Europe are already largely based on the resources of national institutions.

57. One delegation remarked that one could imagine a reasonable increase of the Secretariat's capabilities for European activities and, at the same time, a shift of emphasis which would allow developing countries to benefit even more from the results of those activities.

58. Some delegations insisted, however, that it was FAO's duty to grant top priority to programmes for Africa, Asia and Latin America, and that the valuable task of promoting cooperation in the European agricultural sector should be continued. This could be done even with small resources.

59. Within the overall Regular Programme for the European region, it would be advisable to study in depth the respective share of programmes of a technical character on one hand, and economic and social programmes on the other, in order to ensure balanced development between both groups. The Secretariat was asked to evaluate, as in the past, the way in which resources have been distributed between the two categories of programmes. Economic and social aspects were acquiring more importance although they were as yet mostly unrecognized. They should receive more attention in the future.

60. The Conference proposed therefore that the next session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) in 1984 select the issue of employment and rural development as its main theme. This theme would be defined by the Executive Committee of the ECA, in cooperation with the Secretariat, for final decision by the Director-General. The integration within the same programme of several issues such as pluri-activity, participation of women in agricultural and rural development, and field projects, would make it possible to study them from the standpoint of their interdependence.

61. It was suggested that FAO should grant higher priority in Europe to resource conservation programmes, a crucial issue for both the developed and the developing countries.

62. The Conference expressed its satisfaction with the close cooperation existing between the European Commission on Agriculture and the European Forestry Commission on the one hand, and the Committee on Agricultural Problems and the Timber Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe on the other. This cooperation has been shown particularly in the two Joint FAO/ECE Working Parties, respectively on Farm Mechanization and on Agrarian Structure and Farm Rationalization. The Conference hoped that this cooperation would continue to be as close as possible.

63. The Conference endorsed the recommendation on a European programme on Pluri-Activity and Rural Employment adopted by the ECA at its Twenty-third Session of June 1982. The recommendation contemplated four sectors of activity:

- (i) exchange of information and experiences;
- (ii) ad hoc specific bi-multilateral technical cooperation operations;
- (iii) rural pluri-activity field projects;
- (iv) work of the Working Party on Woman and the Farm Family in Rural Development in the field of pluri-activity.

This programme will be executed within the limits of the resources of the Regional Office for Europe and depending on adequate means of financing which may be obtained from outside sources.

64. The delegation of Switzerland confirmed its invitation to organize a seminar on pluri-activity and rural development in its country in September 1983, which would allow exchange of experiences and a study of practical achievements in the field.

65. Some countries expressed their interest in executing local pluri-activity development projects of a pilot type. Preliminary proposals were currently being formulated, including some for projects emphasizing the role of women in pluri-activity.

66. It was pointed out that these field projects should be organized and financed by the interested countries themselves; FAO's role should be mainly to make governments responsive to concrete pluri-active rural development policy actions.

67. Several countries announced their willingness to participate in bi/multilateral technical cooperation operations. An agreement in principle to that end has already been established between Switzerland and Portugal.

68. The Conference endorsed the recommendation on the promotion of woman and the farm family in rural development adopted at the First Session of the Working Party on Woman and the Farm Family in Rural Development. The Conference expressed its gratitude to the French delegation for having convened the Session in Brest in September 1982 and firmly supported the future activities of this Working Party. The above-mentioned recommendation provided for:

- (i) the preparation and evaluation of representative profiles of farm women holding positions of responsibility;
- (ii) organization of international courses for training women in management;
- (iii) preparation of pluri-activity rural development field programmes specifically taking account of the role of women;
- (iv) a study of problems of farm women in southern countries.

69. This recommendation will be implemented within the limits of the human and financial resources available in the member countries.

70. The delegation of Yugoslavia reminded the Conference that it had invited the Working Party to hold a technical consultation in its country in June 1983 on the topic: "The Role of Women in Rural Pluri-Activity". Experts from developing countries will be invited to participate in the consultation.

71. The delegation of Israel invited the Working Party to hold its second session in its country in 1984. It recalled that this invitation had been extended during the session of the ECA in Rome in June 1982, and at the time of the First Session of the Working Party on Women and the Farm Family, held in France in September 1982.

72. Stressing the importance of the role of women in the agricultural activity and rural life of its country, the Bulgarian delegation also invited the Group for 1984.

73. The delegation of Spain invited the Group for its third session. The delegation of Denmark also invited it for one of its forthcoming sessions.

74. The Conference thanked the above-mentioned countries for these invitations. They will be forwarded to the Director-General who will make the necessary decisions at an early date.

75. Concerning the European Cooperative Research Networks between national institutes, the Conference expressed its satisfaction with the high quality of the work conducted and the positive results obtained so far. It said that it attached the greatest importance to this type of activities which are an outstanding example of regional cooperation. However, the effectiveness of this cooperation can be increased even further by strengthening coordination between the participating institutes. In all cases the structure of ESCORENA should continue to be simple and flexible.

76. Referring to the conclusions of the Sixth Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) (1981), several delegations pointed out that the networks could serve as models for other regions. The work of the networks should promote transfer of technology and constitute a mechanism for cooperation between developing countries. In extending the networks to the latter, the experience accumulated in the European countries can be applied to programmes - which may be undertaken jointly in the future - conducted in the developing countries.

77. In regard to field programmes for 1982-83, the Conference remarked that the share of agricultural programmes in projects receiving UNDP assistance had been steadily diminishing. It noted that for the UNDP Third Programme Cycle (1982-86) only four of the cooperation projects appearing in the list of proposals approved by the preceding Regional Conference were to be executed.

78. The view was expressed that the time had probably come for a reduction in UNDP aid to European activities and that efforts should be concentrated on assistance to other regions. Several delegations considered, on the other hand, that the needs of the recipient countries of the region must not be minimized. They expressed the hope that FAO's field programmes would be continued.

#### New and Renewable Sources of Energy for Agriculture and Rural Development

79. The Conference was informed briefly of FAO's priorities in the field of rural energy as they emerged from the recent Regional Conferences for Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and Africa. These Conferences stressed the need (1) to provide the rural sector with larger quantities of commercial energy while at the same time using appropriate methods designed for rational utilization of agricultural inputs; (2) to develop new and renewable sources of energy through simple techniques suited to the socio-economic conditions of the developing countries, relying mainly on the establishment of regional networks.

80. The Conference expressed its satisfaction with the establishment of the European Cooperative Network on Rural Energy Development at the time of the Inter-governmental Consultation organized by FAO and held in Paris in October 1981.

81. The Conference approved the Network's structure, programme and organization and its budget for the 1982-83 biennium as they were adopted at the first Consultation in May 1982.

82. The Network was to be characterised by great flexibility and adaptability of operation for the participation of institutes, the appointment of co-ordinators and choice of research topics. It was to be developed progressively in the light of the results obtained so as to facilitate the solution of problems of coordination and organization.

83. In regard to the budget, a number of countries wished further explanation on how the trust fund would finance the development of the programmes of work and the operations planned for them after approval of their scientific protocols. This would cover, among other things, the preparation and organization of meetings at the level of the sub-networks and network elements, coordination missions and the execution of ad hoc studies on specific subjects. It was essential in all cases for the coordinators to have the resources necessary to accomplish their tasks.

84. In view of the delays which have occurred in payment of contributions, the Secretariat has had to address a reminder to the participating countries confirming the payment procedures. In this regard, two countries announced that they would shortly pay their contribution for 1982.

85. At the time of the Conference twenty-one countries were participating in the networks. The United Kingdom could not yet officially confirm its membership but it informed the Conference that it was setting up a team of specialists in order to ensure that its participation would be as broad and fruitful as possible. It would inform the Secretariat in due course. The Federal Republic of Germany reported the difficulties which it was encountering in assuring its participation in the networks due to the magnitude of the tasks of international cooperation in which the Federal research institutes were already engaged. It would continue, however, to give positive consideration to the possibilities of collaboration through the activities of other research institutes, and would keep the Secretariat informed of the efforts undertaken for this purpose.

86. The interested countries confirmed that they were willing, as far as possible, to coordinate the sub-networks and Network elements in accordance with the list prepared by the Secretariat and distributed during the session.

87. The Conference congratulated the Secretariat on the quality of the audio-visual document illustrating the various national experiences presented during the session and on the speed with which it had been prepared. This document had been put together from the data and materials supplied by the institutes of 17 countries, drawing on about 300 projects currently in execution. The Representative of the OECD hoped that this montage could be presented at the time of his Organization's forthcoming symposium on utilization of the biomass.

88. Several countries said that in their opinion the Network should go beyond the stage of exchange of information and experiences setting up joint activities geared to action, including pilot projects in different countries. In this context a number of participants confirmed their desire to participate in the UNDP regional project on integrated energy systems particularly in the context of sub-network IV concerning such systems.

89. The importance of widespread, frequent and speedy dissemination of results was stressed. It was proposed, specifically, that the documents concerning the Network be communicated to all FAO Member Nations and not only to European countries. In future, the Network will be a mechanism for transfer of technology to benefit the developing countries. The majority of the participants emphasized the role which the European Network should play in this respect.

90. The work of the Network would be coordinated with that of the competent international organizations, including the ECE/UN, EEC, CMEA and the OECD. It was to be hoped that the Joint FAO/ECE Working Group on Farm Mechanization would collaborate in this task.

Report on the Preparation of the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development

91. The Conference considered this item of the Agenda on the basis of document ERC/82/5 and of the additional information provided by the Secretariat on the discussions already held on the same subject by the Regional Conferences of FAO for Asia and the Pacific, for Latin America and for Africa. The Conference expressed its strong support for the convening by the Director-General of the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, and the delegates pledged the full cooperation of their countries in the preparations for, and the holding of, the Conference in two phases: technical one in October 1983 and a high-level policy one in May 1984.

92. The Conference considered that the World Fisheries Conference was both timely and necessary in view of the fundamental changes in the regime of the oceans concerning fisheries, as embodied in the Convention on the Law of the Sea adopted on 30 April 1982. In this respect several delegations noted that in some cases it was becoming urgent to take measures to avoid overfishing, over-capitalization and the concomitant social and economic problems. At the same time, the Conference emphasized that the World Fisheries Conference should not only play an important role in the practical implementation of the new regime, but also cover the problems and prospects of inland fisheries and aquaculture in fresh, brackish and sea waters. A number of delegations stressed the opportunities existing to increase the yield from inland fisheries and aquaculture in the region. It was suggested that inland fisheries and aquaculture should be the object of separate papers and separate sessions at the Conference.

93. The Conference endorsed the broad objectives of the World Fisheries Conference as outlined in document ERC/82/5. It agreed that the major ones should include the formulation of strategies and programmes to achieve optimum utilization of fishery resources, the attainment of higher economic, social and nutritional benefits from rationally managed fisheries and the promotion of the self-reliance of developing countries. In this connection it stressed the need for international cooperation between developed and developing countries and also between the developing countries themselves.

94. The Conference reviewed the question of the items and issues which should be taken up by the World Fisheries Conference. On the one hand, it noted that it would be advisable to consider fisheries management and development in an integrated manner from harvesting through processing and marketing to distribution, bearing in mind the possible contribution of fish and fishery products to national self-sufficiency in food and world food security. On the other hand, it felt that it would also be necessary to be selective and to concentrate on major issues so as to achieve practical results. In this connection it was noted that the work of the Conference would be facilitated by the convening, in the first part of 1983, of expert consultations on a number of priority issues. The Conference also agreed that the World Fisheries Conference should in no way provide a forum to reopen discussions already held at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Nor should the World Fisheries Conference be involved directly in the negotiation of bilateral agreements or the allocation of catch quotas in specific sea areas.



95. As at the Regional Conferences for other continents, the Conference recognized that the identification of subjects which should be considered on a priority basis would constitute a framework for the drawing up of an agenda for the World Fisheries Conference. It took note of the information given by the Secretariat concerning the subjects already mentioned by the other regional conferences.

- (a) adoption or adjustment of national policies and of principles and techniques of management, including regulation of fishing effort and formulation of development strategies to take full account of the extension of national jurisdiction over marine fisheries;
- (b) problems and prospects of inland fisheries and aquaculture in fresh, brackish and sea water;
- (c) improvement of socio-economic conditions of small-scale fisheries and resolution of possible conflicts between small-scale fisheries and industrial or semi-industrial fisheries;
- (d) fishery monitoring, control and surveillance;
- (e) conditions of access to the living resources of exclusive economic zones and role of joint ventures and bilateral agreements;
- (f) protection of the marine environment and control of pollution affecting fisheries;
- (g) impact of energy issues on the fishery sector;
- (h) reduction of post-harvest losses;
- (i) establishment or improvement of internal marketing and distribution systems;
- (j) development and rationalization of trade in fish and fishery products and increased participation of developing countries in such trade;
- (k) special needs and problems of small developing island states;
- (l) promotion of cooperation in the fisheries sector between developed and developing countries and between developing countries, and fostering of collaboration among countries in the same sub-region or region in the field of research, management, control and surveillance, particularly with respect to shared stocks; and
- (m) harmonization of the activities of international governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with fisheries.

96. The Conference shared the view of the Director-General that while the World Fisheries Conference would provide a unique forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience, it should lead to practical and concrete outcomes. To this end, the World Fisheries Conference might perhaps formulate a fishery management and development strategy at the national, sub-regional, regional and world levels, as well as elaborate an extensive training programme aimed at promoting the self-reliance of developing countries. Several delegations indicated that they had a direct interest in assisting developing countries in the fisheries sector.

97. The Conference noted with appreciation the Director-General's wish to consult with Member Nations regarding preparations for the World Fisheries Conference, as exemplified by the present discussions, and recommended that these consultations should continue. It suggested that a summary of the recommendations made by the various regional conferences should be submitted to the FAO Council at its forthcoming session in November-December 1982 and that the Council of FAO at its June/July 1983 Session should be provided with a draft agenda for the World Fisheries Conference.

98. The Conference noted with interest that OECD was carrying out studies on national management policies in the exclusive economic zones of its member countries and on trade in fishery products. It felt that close cooperation between FAO and OECD would be mutually beneficial. The member countries of EEC pointed out that they had transferred competence to the Community in fishery matters and that accordingly the EEC should participate fully in the World Fisheries Conference.

99. Lastly, the Conference noted with appreciation the intention of a number of countries to submit experience papers or case studies to the World Fisheries Conference.

#### The System of Control of Major Animal Diseases in Europe

100. The Conference expressed its appreciation of the substantial achievements of the veterinary services in Europe in attaining a high degree of animal disease control. While most of the major epizootic diseases no longer exist in the continent, there remains the need for continued surveillance. In this connection, the Conference noted the outbreaks of Foot-and Mouth disease (FMD) in the German Democratic Republic and in Denmark in March 1982 which seriously interrupted trade in livestock and livestock products, especially for the latter country.

101. The Conference also noted the efforts which are being made to eradicate the residual foci of such diseases as African swine fever, classical swine fever and Newcastle disease, and on the control of chronic diseases of an enzootic nature, e.g. Aujeszky's disease in pigs and enzootic bovine leukosis.

102. Attention was drawn to the special problems of large animal production units in which the entry of disease agents into such "closed" systems could result in outbreaks of catastrophic proportions. Furthermore, a number of production diseases, ranging from mastitis in cattle to chronic respiratory disease in poultry, were assuming increasing importance. The Conference noted with satisfaction the technical contribution on this subject made by FAO to the Symposium on "Managerial and Economic Aspects of Large Livestock Holdings and Technical, Economic and Sanitary Aspects of their Buildings and Equipment" organized by FAO/ECE and held in Spain in October 1981. The Conference also noted that FAO is collaborating with WHO in the preparation of a Guide to the Prevention of Human and Animal Health Risks Associated with Large-Scale Animal Production in Intensive Farming Systems. The importance of the participation of veterinarians in such enterprises, starting at the planning stage, was emphasized.

103. Having regard to the enormity and complexities of international trade in animals and their products, the Conference stressed the importance of internationally agreed regulatory measures designed to prevent the entry into Europe of exotic diseases. The Conference therefore supported the maintenance of extensive vaccination in the FMD buffer zone in south-eastern Europe at the Turkish, Greek and Bulgarian borders. The Conference recognized the strenuous efforts of the governments concerned, as well as the considerable financial support of the EEC and a number of non-EEC countries which continues to be made available through FAO and its European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth disease.

104. The Conference stressed the importance of preparedness to deal with emergency animal diseases situations and urged any country which has not established emergency plans to take the necessary action. The FAO Expert Consultation on Emergency Disease Control which was held in Rome in 1980 identified national and international requirements in dealing with emergencies created by exotic diseases.

105. The Conference noted the measures which are being taken by FAO, in consultation with Member Governments, to establish an FMD vaccine bank for countries which do not practice vaccination at present but which might need to adopt this measure in the case of an introduced infection that surpasses control by the "stamping out" method. The Conference also noted that the CMEA has established a reserve stock of Asia I FMD vaccine and that the Conference of Heads of Veterinary Services of the CMEA was considering a proposal to establish a bank of SAT 1, SAT 2 and SAT 3 vaccines.

106. The Conference supported the moves which are being made jointly by FAO and IOE to improve disease information systems, recognizing that timely and adequate information exchange between countries is a prerequisite for improved disease control.

107. On disease control methods, the Conference noted that there are disparities between different countries and between country groupings e.g. the EEC and the CMEA. The Conference felt the need for improved harmonization of policies.

108. The Conference endorsed the importance of uniform criteria for important infectious agents and supported the initiative of FAO in consultation with the IOE, and with WHO as appropriate, to establish a network of reference centres for the standardization of testing procedures and to provide specialized diagnostic reference facilities.

109. On research, the Conference recognized the value and scope of the research activities which are being undertaken in European institutions but expressed concern over the inadequacy of coordination in several areas. Some mechanisms exist e.g. on FMD, through the Research Group of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease, and the IQE/FMD Commission; and on African Swine Fever (ASF) through the EEC and FAO. The Conference recommended that FAO and the IOE should propose methods for improved information exchange on research programmes.

110. With specific reference to research on the development of a vaccine against ASF, the Conference noted the efforts which are being made by FAO to obtain extra-budgetary funds amounting to some \$2 million to support a 3-year research programme involving four laboratories in Europe, one in the USA and one in Brazil. The Conference commended this programme to funding agencies as a matter of priority since there are reasonable prospects of achieving the objective of the production of a vaccine within the foreseeable future.

111. The Conference, recognizing the need for improved coordination of animal disease control action in Europe, strongly recommended that the Director-General of FAO should convene a Working Group comprising FAO, IOE and WHO together with representatives from CMEA, EEC and from countries which fall outside both of the latter groupings. Terms of reference need to be worked out but the Group should include such matters as improved information exchange, animal health policies, emergency disease control preparedness, reference diagnostic facilities, etc.

#### Representation of Europe on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

112. The Conference re-elected Greece and Romania for the 1982/83 biennium. It recalled that the researchers appointed to represent the Region from Southern and Eastern Europe should participate regularly in the meetings and supply adequate and satisfactory information when they return to their country after meetings.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### Date and place of the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference for Europe

113. The Minister of Agriculture of Iceland officially invited the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference for Europe to hold its meeting in his country in 1984.

114. The delegation of Turkey communicated the invitation of its Government which would like to host the Fifteenth FAO Regional Conference.

115. The Regional Representative for Europe thanked these delegations for their kind invitations which he said would be submitted to the Director-General of FAO who would take the necessary decisions in due course.

#### Closure of the Conference

116. At the conclusion of the discussions of the Conference the Chairman thanked the participants for their spirit of cooperation and expressed appreciation of the active interest they had taken in the different items for the Agenda. Cooperation between the member nations of the region in the field of food and agriculture has acquired increasing importance and must take into account the needs of the developing countries. The Chairman urged the delegations to implement the conclusions of the Conference by practical measures in cooperation with the other international organizations, particularly the Economic Commission for Europe. He stressed that the solution to agricultural and food problems both at the world and the European level was linked to maintaining peace and security.

117. Speaking on behalf of all the participants, the delegations of France, Greece and Poland expressed their gratitude to the Government of Bulgaria for the generous hospitality and excellent organization offered to the Conference. The Conference had also given the delegates the opportunity to become acquainted with some of the achievements of Bulgarian agriculture.

118. Speaking on behalf of the Director-General, the Regional Representative for Europe once more expressed the gratitude of FAO to the Government of Bulgaria and said that he considered that the proceedings of the Conference had marked a successful stage in the strengthening of cooperation in the European region. He also thanked the participants for their energetic support to FAO's activities in Europe and throughout the world.

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable
4. Statement by the Director-General of FAO
5. Statement by the Executive Secretary of ECE
6. Statement by the Executive Director of the WFP
7. Country Statements and General Debate on the Food and Agricultural Situation in Europe
8. FAO Programme in the Region:
  - a) Report on FAO activities in Europe including action taken on the main Recommendations presented at the Previous Regional Conference
  - b) FAO Programme of Work in the Region 1982/83
9. New and Renewable Sources of Energy for Agriculture and Rural Development
10. Report on the Preparation of the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development
11. The System of Control of Major Animal Diseases in Europe
12. Representation of the Region on the CGIAR
13. Any other business
14. Date and place of the Fourteenth Regional Conference for Europe
15. Adoption of the Report
16. Closing of the Conference

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STATEMENT BY MR EDOUARD SAOUMA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates and Observers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I should like to welcome Their Excellencies the Ministers, Heads and Members of Delegations gathered here and the distinguished Observers and Representatives of international and regional Organizations who honour this meeting with their presence. I greet in particular the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe with whose collaboration this Conference has been organized.

I take this opportunity of addressing for myself, on behalf of FAO and, I am sure, of all of you our sincerest thanks to the People and Government of Bulgaria for their generous hospitality. The quality of facilities and the great care devoted to the smallest details will certainly confirm the well-known tradition of welcome of the Bulgarian people. Our work cannot but benefit from such favourable conditions.

Speaking before a European audience, I should perhaps concentrate my address exclusively on the agricultural problems and the activities of FAO in your region.

But you will agree with me that one cannot withdraw oneself from the background of international relations. Europe lives to a large extent on its trade. It is one of the foremost suppliers and customers of the developing countries. Their economic health has direct repercussions on it. Recession in the developed countries depresses the exports of the Third World, hence its growth. Conversely, however, economic stagnation in the developing countries gradually closes the outlets the developed countries need to overcome the crisis and reduce unemployment.

Europe, in particular, needs dynamic and solvent trading partners.

We cannot escape the objective interdependence that links all countries of the world. You understand therefore that I begin my brief review with a reference to the world food situation and some comments on the prospects of development.

Harvests

At this time of the year, we can draw up a balance-sheet of the past farming season and try to assess the current year. Overall, the situation is satisfactory. Harvests in 1981 were excellent virtually everywhere in the world though they declined slightly in Europe. Harvests in 1982 are also reported to be plentiful with some record peaks, especially in certain European countries.

In 1981, total agricultural production increased by about 2.9 per cent in marked contrast with the stagnation of the previous two years. World grain production rose by some 100 million tons to reach one and a half billion tons. Europe accounts for more than 400 million tons in this figure.

This level is expected to be exceeded again this year. In Western Europe, wheat and coarse-grain crops are forecast to be well above those of last year. In Eastern Europe, wheat production may be slightly higher whereas coarse grain is expected to be less. On the other hand, harvests in the USSR may be poor for the fourth successive year.

These excellent harvests at world level are welcome. They will make it possible to substantially replenish reserve stocks. At the beginning of the 1982/83 season, it is estimated, stocks may total about 270 million tons of grains, that is 18 per cent of world consumption. However, the expected increase is largely due to coarse grains and will be concentrated in exporting countries. Stocks in developing countries will remain dangerously inadequate. Surpluses in some parts of the world will not prevent hunger in others.

Developing countries as a whole have also had good crops but progress has been distributed very unevenly. India has even resumed its imports of wheat following an insufficient and erratic monsoon period. Twenty-two countries are suffering from acute food shortages. About 10 million refugees need aid for their daily subsistence. In many low-income countries, per caput food supplies are diminishing, especially in Africa. The grain imports of developing countries have reached the staggering figure of 100 million tons.

#### Development Prospects

At any rate, one cannot isolate agriculture from the rest of the economy, and it is the very development prospects in the Third World that are becoming increasingly problematic. These countries actually are the first victims of recession.

Falling commodity prices, rising volume and costs of imports, an excessive burden of loans and high cost of money - all factors combine to aggravate their situation. Their indebtedness is becoming unbearable and jeopardises their future - about 516 billion dollars in 1981. According to the International Monetary Fund, debt servicing alone in 1982 represents some 22 per cent of the income from exports of goods and services of non-oil developing countries.

Their difficulties are sharpened by the chronic instability of markets and the rise of protectionism.

Commodity prices today are at their lowest level or subject to large fluctuations. The example of sugar defies all logic. Negotiations on most commodities are marking time. Existing agreements operate unsatisfactorily. The setback in grain talks blocks any progress toward world food security. The Common Fund for Commodities has not yet been set up. Only seven European countries have ratified the agreement up to now. STABEX cannot meet all transfer needs, and its expansion, broached several times, still has not been achieved.

Developing countries are also coming up against many tariff and non-tariff measures hampering their exports on the markets of developed countries. Competition among the wealthy countries and export support and subsidy policies oust the weakest from markets.

Yet we are going to overcome the crisis only by expanding trade in general. This presupposes a lasting stabilisation of markets at remunerative prices and the maintenance of an open trading system taking into account the particular needs of developing countries. The GATT discussions in November should be an opportunity for positive decisions because the escalation of unilateral measures and resulting reprisals can only be harmful for all.

Mr. Chairman,

I do not intend to draw a pessimistic picture of things. I wish to emphasize the risk to world equilibrium if the economic drift of the Third World is allowed to go on.

Under present circumstances, these countries need the active solidarity of the international community more than ever. Yet we observe a deterioration of the climate in international relations and a halt in global North-South negotiations.

Development aid is declining in real terms although it barely attains half the target set by the United Nations at 0.70 per cent of gross national product.

I am therefore forced to make a twofold appeal to you.

#### More Aid to Agriculture

In the first place, I should like to plead with the developed countries, both of West and East, for more aid to agricultural development in the Third World. To be sure, stepping up production is the primary responsibility of the poor countries themselves. Many of them are spending only 5 to 10 percent of their budget on it, and it is true that this is not enough. But it is also inadmissible that agricultural development aid has been declining without letup in real terms since 1979 although agriculture has been acknowledged the foremost priority by all recent summits of Heads of State and Government.

Likewise, the resources for WFP operations are declining from year to year despite a constant increase of requirements. For the 1981-82 period, the Programme's resources are still only at 82 per cent of the one-billion-dollar target, and for 1983-84 barely 52 per cent has been raised to-date. In 1981, the International Emergency Food Reserve fortunately had attained its minimum target of 500 000 tons of grain, but this year contributions total only 405 000 tons at present.

I venture to appeal to traditional and potential donor countries for generous contributions to WFP's regular resources and to the Reserve.

In some exporting countries, grain surpluses are going to pile up and export support and subsidy costs are going to increase. Greater food aid would mitigate the situation. Moreover, from a financial point of view, the present easing of prices should facilitate additional gifts.

#### World Food Security

Secondly, present good harvests should facilitate discussions on world food security. We must overcome the setback of negotiations on a new international grains agreement and achieve a decisive breakthrough in this field.

It would be enough to comply with the recommendation of the 69th Conference of the Interparliamentary Union recently held in Rome "to adopt grain policies and objectives, set up security food stocks and manage them in conformity with the criteria set out in FAO's Plan of Action on World Food Security".

To be sure, some progress has been made in the past, but it is not enough to guarantee the supply of poor food-deficit countries in case of widespread bad harvests.

Therefore I have proposed that the Committee on World Food Security at its next session review the concept of food security, its components and the ways and means of establishing an effective and dependable system.

I am convinced that I can count on the cooperation of your countries in the review of these questions.

Mr. Chairman,

I should like now to come to the FAO programme in Europe.

When I had the honour of speaking to you for the first time as Director-General in Bucharest at the Tenth Regional Conference in 1976, I promised that FAO's contribution to national and regional activities in Europe, as elsewhere in the world, should be of a practical nature geared to action.

I am happy to find that the Member Nations have always given their support and that appreciable progress has been made in this direction.

#### European Cooperative Networks

Here are some examples:

In the first place, I would list the European cooperative networks for agricultural research. They have developed gradually since 1974 in line with a recommendation of the Seventh Regional Conference for Europe and on the basis of studies sponsored by the European Commission on Agriculture.

I am glad of the cooperation they have promoted in the region and of the interest they have aroused among institutions and countries outside Europe. I note with satisfaction the unanimous support the European Commission on Agriculture expressed for them at its session last June and the hope it voiced that they would carry on and intensify their activities.

Their rapid development attests to their success. In 1980, the networks had 200 cooperating institutions. Today, they number about 350, including more than 40 partners overseas.

Notable improvements have also been made in their structure and working methods to meet the expectations of their users.

They will certainly continue to adapt their programmes to the changing needs of agricultural development with the intention of promoting the transfer of technology not only among developed countries but also between them and developing countries.

#### European Programme for Rural Energy

Secondly, I should mention the European Cooperative Network on Rural Energy established in October 1981; it held its first consultation in May of this year.

At the Regional Conference in Athens in 1980, I agreed to this undertaking whose interest for the countries of Europe and overseas I realised. The lines of research adopted for the network would seem particularly appropriate and promising: energy conservation, biomass production and collection for energy purposes, technologies for new and renewable rural energy, integrated energy systems. Research as a whole in this important sector is being stimulated by exchanges of information and experience among the institutes concerned. Systematic arrangements for contacts among researchers should also avoid duplication.

The network will operate on the basis of voluntary contributions. To-date, a number of countries have already paid their first share to the trust fund, giving tangible proof of their interest in this new programme.

#### European Rural Employment and Development Programme

The third example: the European rural employment and development programme being drawn up by the Regional Office for Europe with active collaboration by the Joint FAO/ECE Division.

The programme is based on a study submitted to the Regional Conference of Athens on agricultural manpower policies and problems in the European region. The Conference had recommended to the European Commission on Agriculture to review these questions in depth, especially those of part-time farming and multiple rural activity.

Work done in close liaison with the Working Party on Women and the Agricultural Family in Rural Development resulted in a concrete programme of action: multi/bilateral technical cooperation of a pointlike nature in which some of you are engaged, exchange of experience through seminars and meetings of expert groups which you have already proposed, for instance in order to organize international training courses for women in farm management, and field projects for multiple rural development.

The three examples I have just listed have common features which, it would seem to me, are in line with the concerns and interests we share regarding FAO's activities in Europe:

- first of all, they are selective programmes that meet actual priorities; your constant support confirms it;
- the programmes help strengthen cooperation in Europe; and
- all of them have, or can have, extra-European extensions of immediate benefit to developing countries.

#### Conference on Fisheries Management and Development

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, allow me to return for a moment to a world problem. Many of you must know that preparations are under way to organize an FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development. Scheduled for the spring of 1984, the Conference will investigate the problems raised by application of the new ocean regime as well as the social and economic aspects of fisheries management and development.



It will have to deal with future needs and the potential offered not only by marine fisheries but also by inland fisheries and aquaculture. It will discuss such major issues as the impact of the new ocean regime on the International fish market, the needs and interests of geographically disadvantaged countries, international cooperation and the role of bilateral and multilateral aid in the fisheries development of the Third World. The European countries have a long tradition of fisheries. I am convinced that they will realize the significance of the Conference against the background of a new convention on the law of the sea adopted last April. A whole sector of international relations has received substantial codification with numerous implications.

I am sure that your countries will not fail to make a positive contribution to the Conference and to its preparatory stage in 1983, particularly on subjects like technical cooperation or technology transfer to developing coastal countries. The paper that has been submitted to you - ERC/82/5.- sets out the significance of the Conference, and we shall take note of your comments with great interest.

Mr Chairman,

It is time to conclude. I have told you about my concern about the present climate of international economic relations and the progressive deterioration of the food situation in many low-income countries. I have expressed my hope of greater aid to agricultural development and decisive action for a true system of food security. These are the topics of capital importance to the well-being of millions of people throughout the world.

I have not dwelt on the details of FAO's programme in Europe. This is familiar to you, and I may state that it will continue to the extent of available resources. In concluding, I want to assure you that I fully recognize the role the European region is playing in the Organization. Your countries are financing nearly half its Regular budget and some of them are the principal source of trust funds.

They are thus contributing directly to supporting our field programmes for the benefit of the poorest people. I thank them for their generosity and this proof of confidence in our Organization. Their backing is a valuable encouragement for us in our fight against hunger and malnutrition.

I thank you for your attention and wish you complete success in your work.

STATEMENT BY MR YOURI P. CHESTNOY, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF  
THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

It is an honour and pleasure for me to address this Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Europe on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe, who very much regrets that he is not able to attend this Conference himself. He has asked me to transmit to you his very best wishes.

As you know, the ECE is one of the regional bodies of the United Nations and as such has a clearly defined regional mandate. Within this mandate ECE has developed over the years into a forum where all countries of the region can exchange their views and experiences and undertake a joint assessment of the international environment and its influence on their national economies. ECE is also a framework for regular cooperation on economic, technological and environmental matters, a data bank of comparable information and a meeting place for experts in a large variety of fields.

Within its regional mandate ECE covers all major sectors of the economy as well as aspects common to all sectors, such as science and technology, protection of the environment etc. Although in the UN terminology all ECE member countries are developed, i.e. industrialized countries with strong manufacturing and service sectors, there is no doubt that agriculture, with all its differences within Europe and notwithstanding its relatively small share in the economies of many countries, continues to be a basic sector of the European economy.

It means that agriculture is no longer a more or less autonomous sector, somewhat apart from the others, and the closer links lead to a more rapid and fuller transmission of problems and difficulties between sectors.

These have shaped the ECE work on agriculture and timber which fits very well into the basic pattern of the role and function of ECE.

I might add here right away that these activities are generally carried out in a close co-operation with FAO, this collaboration being assured on the secretariat level by a joint ECE/FAO Division and on the working level by the co-sponsorship for nearly all subsidiary bodies of the two ECE Committees and for most of the technical symposia and seminars. The annual Committee sessions provide a forum for the exchange of up-to-date information on recent developments and changes in agriculture and the timber sector and in related policies, this exchange being supplemented by comprehensive market reports on major commodities which are widely used as reference sources. Medium and long-term trends are the subject of special studies. The improvement of the statistical basis for all these studies is the concern of joint subsidiary bodies on statistical methodology.

The list of technical activities carried out by ECE in cooperation with FAO is very long and a complete enumeration would go too far in the present context, but I would like to mention a few examples.

In fact, at its fourth session in 1981 the joint Working Party on Agrarian Structure and Farm Rationalization discussed as main topic the growing relationships between agriculture and other sectors of the economy and the consequences for the agrarian structure. Other projects of this Working Party relate, for instance, to the rational use of natural resources and the use of modern methods and technical auxiliary means for solving management problems. The joint Working Party on Mechanization of Agriculture pays special attention to energy problems and environmental aspects. Periodic technical symposia deal with latest developments for two major agricultural inputs, e.e. feedingstuffs and fertilizers, but have recently also turned to the discussion of marketing problems and changes in marketing channels with their impact on agricultural production. Obviously the Timber Committee pays great attention to all developments concerning the use of wood in industry. The wide importance of the ECE standardization work (for agricultural products and in the field of timber) does not need underlining. The closer links of agriculture with other sectors have also resulted in more emphasis on joint activities inside ECE, for instance between the Committee on Agricultural Problems and on Water Problems on such questions as water pollution from animal production and on irrigation.

This by necessity abbreviated list does not mean that ECE ignores the technical and economic question inside these sectors. This is evident from the regular work on agrarian structure, farm rationalization and agricultural mechanization, and from the technical reports and symposia on soil fertility, on land use, on specific crops and on the technological and economic problems of large-scale intensive animal husbandry. Jointly with FAO and ILO, ECE also has a Committee on Forest Working Techniques and Training of Forest Workers.

Looking at the main items on your agenda, I would still like to dwell briefly on two of the topics listed. I first mention the question of energy, which is also a priority issue in the ECE programme of work. In many respects, international cooperation in the field of energy can be considered to be the touchstone for the economic cooperation in the region. A practical step in this area was made by the USSR when they submitted the proposal in 1976 to hold a Congress or Inter-State Meetings on Environment, Energy and Transport. This resulted in further work, including the establishment of Senior Advisers on Energy. At the present time, more than one-third of the ECE programme concerns energy projects. I already referred to the Working Party on Mechanization of Agriculture which deals, inter alia, with the possibilities within its sphere of work of reducing energy consumption and of utilizing new sources of energy. A noteworthy development was the recent ECE seminar at Lake Ohrid in Yugoslavia which analysed energy demand, primarily heat, and the most rational forms of energy supply in meeting this demand. Possibilities of fuel wood and biomass were given special attention. I could also refer to the recent seminar on energy conservation in the saw milling industry. As regards new and renewable sources of energy in general, our calculations show that they could provide up to 15 per cent of the energy requirements of our region by the end of the century. At its latest session, the Economic Commission for Europe adopted a decision on energy which, in particular, invites the Executive Secretary to convene an ad hoc meeting on new and renewable sources of energy. FAO recently established a European Cooperative Network on Rural Energy and it is my pleasure to confirm before you the willingness of ECE to cooperate with this network wherever such collaboration is appropriate.

Turning to a completely different subject, I noted that in your review of FAO activities in Europe you will also discuss questions of rural employment and pluri-activity. To a certain extent at least this is a continuation and extension of earlier projects relating to the problems of regions less favoured by nature where employment questions and the possibilities of combining agriculture and non-agricultural activities play an important role. The pursuance of these projects gives a very good example for the close and efficient cooperation between FAO and ECE. Work on less favoured regions started with a general discussion at the Regional Conference of 1976 and has since been continued in a number of stages by the joint Working Party on Agrarian Structure and Farm Rationalization, the latest logical step in this series being a symposium in Finland earlier this year on agriculture and tourism.

Pluri-activity is a topic covering a wide range of questions with considerable implications, but allow me to add that there are two basically different forms of pluri-activity to be considered. Both show that not only agriculture, but also the agricultural population is becoming more and more integrated into the over-all economy. One form relates to the smaller farmers whose holding does not provide a sufficient income for the farm family, so that the operator or family members undertake non-agricultural activities to supplement to a varying extent their income from farming. In fact, by now the number of holdings with such supplementary, if not main income from other sources often already constitutes the majority of holdings in western Europe. The second form of pluri-activity relates to large holdings, which are also extending their activities beyond agricultural production in a narrow sense. Quite often these other activities are still related to agriculture, covering, for instance, the supply of inputs such as feed, or the storage and transformation of their own produce, but they can also turn to other non-related economic activities or to providing cultural and health services for their labour force. It might be worthwhile to take both forms of pluri-activity into account in further pursuing this project to meet the interests of all countries of the region.

I have so far referred to the relevant activities of ECE, which means mainly joint FAO/ECE activities, in the field of agriculture and timber for the ECE region in which there is no lack of problems concerning these important sectors of the economy. However, even if ECE has a clearly defined regional mandate, this does not at all mean that we overlook the importance of putting our region into the worldwide context. The weight of Europe in world agriculture can be indicated with a few figures taken from FAO statistics for 1979-1981:

Europe accounts for around 30 per cent of world production of grain, fruit and vegetables, and sugar, for about 40 per cent of meat output, for nearly 60 per cent of milk production and, in current values, for more than 55 per cent of agricultural imports and more than 40 per cent of agricultural exports. European countries also share the worldwide concern for the serious problems of developing countries and this found its expression once again at the 1982 session of the Economic Commission for Europe when "many speakers urged that every effort should be made to ensure that the results of ECE's work be made available to developing countries" (Annual Report, para. 86). In its Resolution 1 (XXXVII), adopted at the same session, the Commission, inter alia, "... requests its subsidiary bodies to take into account in their activities the possible contributions of the ECE to the United Nations programmes designed to assist developing countries and the necessity of effective cooperation with other international organizations." There is therefore no doubt about our willingness to make such a contribution.

The importance of Europe in world agriculture lies, however, not only in its share in world production and trade, which I mentioned, but also in the high level of skills and expertise acquired over time and in the diversified experience gained on farms operating also in Europe under widely different natural, political, economic, technical and social conditions. We are aware that the agricultural technology of developed countries might not always be the most appropriate one for developing countries which have to look for simple labour-intensive solutions. We also realize that budgetary constraints constitute a severe obstacle for the active participation of experts from these countries in ECE activities. However, we note with satisfaction that ECE or FAO/ECE documents and reports meet with growing interest in other regions and that at least to some extent experts from developing countries, in particular non-member countries around the Mediterranean, find it possible to participate in our technical symposia.

To sum up, I hope I have succeeded in this brief description of ECE activities to give at least some significant examples of issues which are common to FAO and ECE. Common issues mean common interests and call for common activities. In Europe, we are together facing crucial challenges, and we are not overlooking the role which Europe is called upon to play in solving the serious worldwide problems. It is my sincere hope that the continuing close cooperation between FAO and ECE will be of benefit to the countries of the region and beyond it.

I wish you every success in your work.



