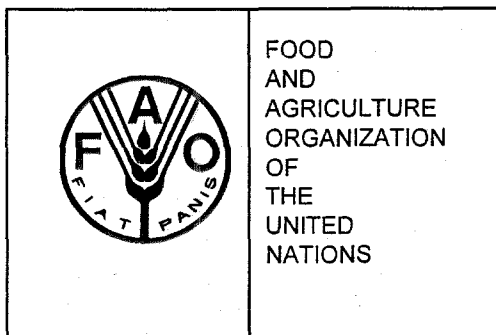


REPORT

**Asunción,
Paraguay,
2 - 6 July
1996**

**Twenty-fourth FAO
Regional Conference
for Latin America
and the Caribbean**



*FAO Member Nations served by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
(as of 6 July 1996)*

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Antigua and Barbuda | Dominican Republic | Panama |
| Argentina | Ecuador | Paraguay |
| Bahamas | El Salvador | Peru |
| Barbados | Grenada | Saint Kitts and Nevis |
| Belize | Guatemala | Saint Lucia |
| Bolivia | Guyana | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| Brazil | Haiti | Suriname |
| Colombia | Honduras | Trinidad and Tobago |
| Costa Rica | Jamaica | Uruguay |
| Cuba | Mexico | Venezuela |
| Chile | Nicaragua | |
| Dominica | | |

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Latin America and the Caribbean

| | |
|---------------|--|
| First | -- Quito, Ecuador, 18-25 September 1949 |
| Second | -- Montevideo, Uruguay, 1- 12 December 1950 |
| Third | -- Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1-10 September 1954 |
| Fourth | -- Santiago, Chile, 19-30 November 1956 |
| Fifth | -- San Jose, Costa Rica, 12-21 November 1958 |
| Sixth | -- Mexico, D.F., Mexico, 9-20 August 1960 |
| Seventh | -- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 17-27 November 1962 |
| Eighth | -- Viña del Mar, Chile, 13-29 March 1965 |
| Ninth | -- Punta del Este, Uruguay, 5-16 December 1966 |
| Tenth | -- Kingston, Jamaica, 2-13 December 1968 |
| Eleventh | -- Caracas, Venezuela, 12-20 October 1970 |
| Twelfth | -- Cali, Colombia, 21 August - 2 September 1972 |
| Thirteenth | -- Panama, Panama, 12-23 August 1974 |
| Fourteenth | -- Lima, Peru, 21-29 April 1976 |
| Fifteenth | -- Montevideo, Uruguay, 8-19 August 1978 |
| Sixteenth | -- La Habana, Cuba, 26 August - 6 September 1980 |
| Seventeenth | -- Managua, Nicaragua, 30 August - 10 September 1982 |
| Eighteenth | -- Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6-15 August 1984 |
| Nineteenth | -- Barbados, 5-13 August 1986 |
| Twentieth | -- Recife, Brazil, 2-7 October 1988 |
| Twenty-first | -- Santiago, Chile, 9-13 July 1990 |
| Twenty-second | -- Montevideo, Uruguay, 28 September - 2 October 1992 |
| Twenty-third | -- El Salvador, San Salvador, 29 August - 2 September 1994 |
| Twenty-fourth | -- Asuncion, Paraguay, 2-6 July 1996 |

**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
(Asunción, Paraguay, 2-6 July 1996)**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Asunción, 1996**

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- B. Agenda of the Technical Committee
Agenda of the Plenary Sessions
- C. List of Participants
- D. List of Documents

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

World Food Summit

For the attention of governments

The Conference:

1. Ratified its support to the Summit and its commitment to the preparations at national, regional and global levels, and its follow-up activities (para. 12).
2. Broadly supported the proposal formulated by the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) to FAO concerning the Draft Policy Statement and Plan of Action. (para. 41).
3. Requested GRULAC of Rome to study how to use existing mechanisms to mobilize financial resources towards making the agreements of the Summit viable, in order to present them at the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security. The elaboration of the world hunger map, through inter-agency efforts, will serve as a reference framework to channel resources (para. 42).
4. Took note of the document on the situation of food security in Latin America and the Caribbean, and urged the countries of the region to take it into consideration in the design of their national food security policies, as well as the corresponding regional ones (para. 43).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

5. Requested FAO to review the regional targets in the light of the latest estimates of world targets (para. 43).
6. Decided to request the Director-General of FAO to take the necessary measures in order to include as a permanent item on the Regional Conference Agenda, the evaluation of progresses achieved on food security in the region and, in particular, on the execution of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. To this end, the technical meeting will have a duration of one more day. The pertinent part of the report of the FAO Regional Conference will be remitted to the Committee on World Food Security (para. 45).

To the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

7. Agreed that the comments formulated by the delegations to the drafts of the Policy Statement and of the Plan of Action, be reviewed by the GRULAC of Rome in order to determine their possible inclusion and presentation at the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security (para. 41).

8. Agreed on the need for an institutional framework in which the governments can jointly examine food security issues which are relevant for Latin America and the Caribbean, including follow-up of the World Food Summit (para. 45).
9. Agreed on the fact that the results of the Uruguay Round on agriculture, although they constitute only a first step which must continue in 1999, are important because they marked a new path towards liberalization of agricultural trade. Likewise, it highlighted the importance of the full compliance with the agreements of the World Trade Organization, with particular attention to the prompt implementation of the Ministerial Decision of Marrakesh on "Measures related to the possible negative effects of the reform programme in the less developed countries and in the net food-importing developing countries" (para. 46).
10. Adopted the initiative to elaborate the International Code of Conduct for the Application of the Right to Food, which is stipulated in objective 7.3 of the Draft Plan of Action proposed by the GRULAC of Rome (para. 47).
11. Supported the launching of the "Food for all Campaign", by the World Food Summit, with the purpose of creating a public opinion movement to promote the participation of civil society in the actions aimed at overcoming food insecurity and facilitating follow-up to the commitments undertaken at the Summit. This proposal must be adapted to the characteristics which are inherent to each country (para. 48).
12. Supported the request of the Chairman of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) to coordinate the dissemination of information on the Summit in the subregion (para. 49).

Country Statements and General Debate on the State of Food and Agriculture in the Region

For the attention of governments and FAO

The Conference:

13. Underlined that economic growth recovery is an indispensable condition, but not in itself sufficient to be successful in fighting poverty and achieving food security, and that it is essential to achieve a development style capable of generating productive employment and a more equitable distribution of income, as well as a better utilization of natural resources within an environmentally sustainable process. In addition, it is indispensable to establish social policies that ensure minimum levels of well-being for the population in general, respecting ethnic-cultural diversity and ensuring gender equity (para. 17).
14. Emphasized that within the food insecurity affecting the region, the main problem is the lack of generalized access to food, fundamentally due to insufficient incomes. Programmes for overcoming malnutrition are not the sole responsibility of the governments; private agents and civil society must also participate in them (para. 18).
15. Recognized that agricultural growth, although showing some positive characteristics, is insufficient for the sector to fulfill the functions it has at present. There are problems related to concentrated agrarian structure, lack of access to financing, deficiency of infrastructure and insufficient services. There is need for a reevaluation of the rural sector and a sectoral development strategy which, while attending to primary production problems, will lay particular emphasis on agroindustrial integration, post-harvest losses, marketing systems and on an improved operation of the markets (para. 19).
16. Requested the governments and FAO to strengthen regional technical cooperation mechanisms and the system of technical cooperation networks (para. 25).

For the attention of governments

The Conference:

17. Requested the governments to consider the inclusion of the subject of food security in the agenda of the meetings of Heads of State (para. 20).
18. Urged the governments to examine the possibility of financing food security programmes through foreign debt swaps (para. 21).
19. Requested the governments to consider the inclusion of food issues in the activities of the Ministries of Agriculture (para. 22).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

20. Recommended that FAO promote in the region, follow-up activities to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources, held in Leipzig, Germany, in June this year (para. 23).
21. Supported and recognized the extensive work that FAO is carrying out in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and food, in favour of the countries of the region (para. 24).
22. Reiterated to FAO the need to strengthen joint cooperation with IICA in order to optimize their activities in the region (para. 26).
23. Took note of the request made by the Delegations of El Salvador and Nicaragua in the sense that FAO analyze the possibility of establishing the Subregional Office for Central America (para. 27).
24. Supported the request of the Delegation of Paraguay to FAO to establish the Office of the FAO Representation in Paraguay (para. 28).
25. Took note of the proposal of the Parlamento Latinoamericano to channel FAO information towards national legislative bodies (para. 29).

Report on the Activities of FAO in the Region 1994-95**For the attention of FAO**

The Conference:

26. Expressed its satisfaction for the work carried out by FAO in the region in the 1994-95 biennium and underscored the importance of the Mandate of the Organization in the field of technical cooperation (para. 33).
27. Expressed its support to the decentralization process of FAO, which should go hand-in-hand with the corresponding resources to strengthen technical cooperation in the region in terms of efficiency and effectiveness (para. 34).

28. Urged FAO to promote the mobilization of resources for technical cooperation with a view to the follow-up to the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit (para. 35).

Future Ministerial Meetings in Conjunction with Sessions of the Fisheries Committee (COFI) and the Forestry Committee (COFO)

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

29. Agreed with the Director-General of FAO, in the sense that it is preferable not to organize ministerial meetings jointly with those of COFI and COFO in 1997. Likewise, the Conference expects that the Director-General, in the light of the exceptional nature of these meetings, continue consulting the countries regarding the possible holding of future ministerial meetings, in conjunction with one or the other Technical Committee (para. 36).

A Proposal for shortening of Regional Conference Reports

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

30. Supported the proposal to shorten the reports of the Regional Conference, which should essentially include the recommendations, but at the same time, reflect any discrepancy of opinion of the countries, either individually or as a collective minority (para. 54).

Changing Production and Consumption Patterns and their Impact on the Agriculture in the Region

For the attention of governments and FAO

The Conference:

31. Agreed with the analysis set forth in the document and underlined the importance of the estimates submitted as objective and important elements, for the definition of the agricultural development strategy in the Region. It stressed the need to consider the great heterogeneity of situations both among the countries as well as among the groups of products and types of producers, emphasizing the need for more attention to small producers (para. 50).

32. Pointed out the importance of the information and participation of producers in decision-making, and of cooperation of governments, private agents and civil society; likewise, it indicated the need to consider environmental sustainability as a basic variable of the strategy and to incorporate changes in the structure of the population as one of the factors explaining changes in consumption patterns. (para. 51).

33. Highlighted the convenience of including in the analyses, the possibilities of greater inter-sectoral articulation of productive activities carried out in the rural sector and their connection with intermediate city systems as one of the solutions for rural-urban migration (para. 52).

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

For the attention of governments

The Conference:

34. Took note that, in accordance with normal practice, the mandate of El Salvador as the region's representative would continue for another biennium up to 31 December 1998, while that of Chile would expire at the end of 1996. Therefore, the Committee unanimously elected Dr. Ricardo Ramón Pedretti, Director of Agricultural Research of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Paraguay, as representative of the region on the CGIAR for the period 1997-2000 (para. 53).

Other Business

For the attention of governments and FAO

The Conference:

35. Took note of Resolution No. 259 of 28 June 1996, elaborated by the XVI Ordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee of IICA, presented by the Delegation of Bolivia, under the mandate of said Ordinary Meeting and as Chairman of same (para. 58)

Date and Place of the 25th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

For the attention of governments and FAO

The Conference:

36. Took note with satisfaction of the offer of the Delegation of the Bahamas to host the 25th FAO Regional Conference, which would be held in 1998 and requested the Director-General to consider the recommendation of the Conference to decide on the place and date, after consulting with the Government of the Bahamas and with other Member Nations of the region. Likewise, it took note with satisfaction of the offer of the Delegation of Mexico to host the 26th FAO Regional Conference, that would be held in the year 2000 (para. 59).

Asuncion, 1996 INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization of the Conference

1. The Twenty-fourth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Asuncion, Paraguay, from 2 to 6 July 1996. Its Technical Committee met from 2 to 3 July. It was attended by delegations from 20 FAO Member Nations of the region and by observers from countries of other regions, as well as by representatives of several United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and international and national non-governmental organizations. The list of participants appears in Appendix C.

Opening Ceremony

2. The Conference was opened in the presence of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, local authorities, members of the participating delegations, the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Paraguay and observers from other organizations.

3. The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Paraguay, Mr. Juan Alfonso Borgognon, pointed out that the Regional Conference is most important for the proposal of strategies and actions in the agricultural sector, aimed at satisfying food requirements, as well as reaching a common position in the region regarding the World Food Summit. He emphasized that the right to food should constitute the main foundation of all sustainable and equitable development strategies.

4. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, Dr. Rubén Darío Melgarejo Lanzoni, after welcoming the participants on behalf of the Government of Paraguay, pointed out that the new challenges stemming from the globalization of the economy are setting the pace for social and labour realities which are forcing governments to consider new procedures. The producing countries should concentrate their efforts on satisfying growing demand with products competing in quantity, quality and opportunity, by employing modern production techniques. Likewise, he pointed out the importance that MERCOSUR has for the creation of a wider market based on competitiveness and complementation.

5. The Director-General of FAO expressed his appreciation to the Government and to the people of Paraguay for their warm welcome in hosting the Regional Conference.

6. He mentioned that this Regional Conference is particularly important in the light of the recent agreements of the Uruguay Round of GATT, MERCOSUR and NAFTA, and as a regional preparatory activity for the World Food Summit. In the latter, the international community will examine the great challenge posed by the inadmissible fact that 800 million people in the developing countries suffer from chronic malnutrition.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteur Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

7. The Conference unanimously elected the Chair of the Conference, whose members are listed in Appendix C. It subsequently adopted the agenda and timetable, included as Appendix B.

Statement by the Director-General¹

8. The Director-General of FAO emphasized the extraordinary diversity of the region's agriculture, both in geographic and natural aspects as well as in social and technical ones. Although the participation of the agricultural sector in the region diminishes at a rapid pace and at present represents 10% of the GDP, its social importance has a far greater bearing: agriculture presently employs 40 million workers on whom 115 million people, one fourth of the total population of the region, depend. Conversely, agriculture constitutes the basis of a large number of services and industrial and commercial activities.

9. He pointed out that poverty is a major problem in the region, affecting 53% of the rural population vis-à-vis 34% of the urban population. Poverty is the main cause of food insecurity in the region, with an estimated 59 million inhabitants suffering from malnutrition, 13% of the total population; nevertheless the proportion most probably ranges between 20% and 40% in the low-income food-deficit countries. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate integrated policies, envisaging actions for the development of agriculture, the fight against poverty and social inequalities, and the fight for food security.

10. He underscored that at the World Food Summit it is intended to generate a solemn commitment at the highest level to eradicate hunger and guarantee food security for all inhabitants of the world. FAO assigns utmost importance to the national and regional contributions to the Draft Policy Statement and Plan of Action. As a complement, it is expected to mobilize civil society with the launching of the "Food for All" campaign.

SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS

World Food Summit²

11. All the delegations informed on the preparatory activities of the Summit, emphasizing its importance to achieve food security and nutritional welfare of the people, in a context of peace, democracy and equity.

12. The Conference ratified its support to the Summit and its commitment to the preparations at national, regional and global levels, and its follow-up activities.

13. The Conference adopted the conclusions of the Technical Committee in relation to the Summit, which are mentioned in the corresponding report.

14. The Independent Chairman of the FAO Council stated that there is a prevailing expectation that the Summit will reflect the true sense of urgency and of political commitment to meet the challenge of food security and agricultural sustainability. The Summit must not be seen as the final stage of a process but as a starting point for the follow-up of the Plan of Action. Likewise, it must promote cooperative action among the countries, United Nations agencies, NGOs, the private sector and the scientific and academic community, in which FAO's catalytic role will take on its true significance. He underscored that the Summit should search for solutions to alleviate the burden of foreign debt, promoting direct investment, food aid and assistance to development, and link all this with viable food security strategies, especially in

¹ LARC/96/INF/5

² LARC/96/3

LARC/96/4-Rev.1

LARC/96/4-Supp.1

the low-income food-deficit countries. Likewise, it should include the subject of urban agriculture, the elderly population and the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing.

15. The Conference took note of the "Declaration in Defense of Food Security on the part of the Organizations of the Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society", which was prepared by the Regional NGO Consultation, in relation to the World Food Summit, held in Asuncion, Paraguay, from 30 June to 1 July 1996. In this regard, it welcomed the valuable support of the NGOs as a contribution to the deliberations of the Regional Conference and to the preparation of the Summit.

16. Several observers at the Regional Conference expressed their support to the Summit, provided information on the preparations and contributions carried out and emphasized, amongst other issues, the integral development of humankind; attention to the family; setting goals on access to food; consumer orientation; integration of health, nutrition and food policies in social development and economic policies; market liberalization and its impact on the poor; non-tariff barriers in international trade, and foreign debt.

Country Statements and General Debate on the State of Food and Agriculture in the Region

17. The Conference underlined that economic growth recovery is an indispensable condition, but not sufficient in itself to be successful in fighting poverty and achieving food security. Income and power-concentrating models which are polarizing and excluding and which are predators of natural resources and ecosystems, should be avoided. It is essential to achieve a development style capable of generating productive employment and a more equitable distribution of income, as well as a better utilization of natural resources within an environmentally sustainable process. In addition, it is indispensable to create social policies that ensure minimum levels of well-being for the population in general, respecting ethnic-cultural diversity and ensuring gender equity.

18. The Conference emphasized that within the food insecurity affecting the region, the main problem is the lack of generalized access to food, fundamentally due to insufficient incomes. Programmes for overcoming malnutrition are not the sole responsibility of the governments; private agents and civil society must also participate in them. In turn, the great changes in the world trade system can offer better growth opportunities in the long term, but junctural problems must be attended to and the implementation of agreed-on support mechanisms for the poorer countries must be ensured.

19. The Conference recognized that agricultural growth, although showing some positive characteristics, is insufficient for the sector to fulfill the functions it has at present. There are problems related to concentrated agrarian structure, lack of access to financing, deficiency of infrastructure and insufficient services. There is need for a revaluation of the rural sector and a sectoral development strategy which, while attending to primary production problems, will lay particular emphasis on agroindustrial integration, post-harvest losses, marketing systems and on an improved operation of the markets.

20. The Conference requested the governments to consider the inclusion of the subject of food security in the agenda of the meetings of the Heads of State.

21. The Conference urged the governments to examine the possibility of financing food security programmes through foreign debt swaps.

22. The Conference requested the governments to consider the inclusion of food issues in the activities of the Ministries of Agriculture.

23. The Conference recommended that FAO promote in the region, follow-up activities to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources, held in Leipzig, Germany, in June this year.
24. The Conference supported and recognized the extensive work that FAO is carrying out in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and food, in favour of the countries of the region.
25. The Conference requested the governments and FAO to strengthen regional technical cooperation mechanisms and the system of technical cooperation networks.
26. The Conference reiterated to FAO the need to strengthen cooperation with IICA in order to optimize their activities in the region.
27. The Conference took note of the request made by the Delegations of El Salvador and Nicaragua in the sense that FAO analyze the possibility of establishing the Subregional Office for Central America.
28. The Conference supported the request of the Delegation of Paraguay to FAO to establish the Office of the FAO Representation in Paraguay.
29. The Conference took note of the proposal of the Parlamento Latinoamericano to channel FAO information towards national legislative bodies.

Report on FAO activities in the Region 1994-95

30. The Assistant Director-General, Regional Representative of FAO, on presenting this item³, outlined the orientations and principal actions carried out in the region through the FAO programmes. He underscored that in the field of TCDC/ECDC, 62 technical events were organized with the participation of 1,290 experts. Within the programme for the utilization of retired experts, 10 missions were carried out by these experts from some countries of the region.
31. He underscored the implementation of 150 national and 15 regional technical cooperation projects (TCPs) benefitting the countries of the region.. In addition, he pointed out the importance of government cooperation projects (GCPs) and investments in projects formulated by the Investment Centre for poverty alleviation and management of natural resources, including water.
32. As follow-up to the recommendations made by the last FAO Regional Conference, he informed on the significant progress achieved regarding coordination with IICA, joint activities executed during the past biennium and potential areas for technical cooperation.
33. The Conference expressed its satisfaction for the work carried out by FAO in the region in the 1994-95 biennium and underscored the importance of the Organization's mandate in the field of technical cooperation.
34. The Conference expressed its support to the decentralization process of FAO, which should go hand-in-hand with the corresponding resources to strengthen technical cooperation in the region in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

³ LARC/96/2

35. The Conference urged FAO to promote the mobilization of resources for technical cooperation with a view to the follow-up to the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit.

Future Ministerial Meetings in Conjunction with Sessions of the Fisheries Committee (COFI) and the Forestry Committee (COFO)⁴

36. The Regional Conference, agreed with the Director-General of FAO, in the sense that it is preferable not to organize ministerial meetings jointly with those of COFI and COFO in 1997. Likewise, the Conference expects that the Director-General, in the light of the exceptional nature of these meetings, continue consulting the countries regarding the possible holding of future ministerial meetings, in conjunction with one or the other Technical Committee.

A Proposal for shortening of Regional Conference Reports⁵

37. The Conference adopted the resolution of the Technical Committee concerning the shortening of the reports.

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Opening of the Technical Committee Meeting

38. The Assistant Director-General, Regional Representative of FAO, opened the Technical Committee Meeting, welcoming the delegates and observers.

Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable.

39. The Committee unanimously elected the Officers of the Technical Committee, who are listed in Appendix C and then adopted the Agenda and Timetable which appear in Appendix B.

World Food Summit (WFS)

40. The Committee expressed its support to the preparations for the World Food Summit, to be held in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996. Likewise, the Committee was informed of the activities being carried out by the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security.

41. The Committee broadly supported the proposal formulated by the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) to FAO concerning the Draft Policy Statement and Plan of Action. The Committee agreed that the comments formulated by the delegations to the drafts of the Policy Statement and of the Plan of Action⁶, many of which appear in Appendix A, be reviewed by the GRULAC of Rome in order to determine their possible inclusion and presentation at the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security.

42. The Committee requested GRULAC of Rome to study how to use existing mechanisms to mobilize financial resources towards making the agreements of the Summit viable, in order to present them at the

⁴ LARC/96/7

⁵ LARC/96/8

⁶ LARC/96/3

forthcoming meeting of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security. The elaboration of the world hunger map, through inter-agency efforts, will serve as a reference framework to channel resources.

43. The Committee took note of the document⁷ on the situation of food security in Latin America and the Caribbean, and urged the countries of the region to take it into consideration in the design of their national food security policies, as well as the corresponding regional ones. In addition, it requested FAO to review the regional targets in the light of the latest estimates of world targets.

44. The Committee took note of the proposal made by the Organizations of the Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society on the Draft Policy Statement and Plan of Action of FAO for the World Food Summit, prepared during the NGO Consultation held in Asuncion, Paraguay from 30 June to 1 July 1996. Likewise, it highlighted the broad participation of the NGOs in the Consultation and their significant contribution.

45. The Committee agreed on the need for an institutional framework in which the governments can jointly examine food security issues which are relevant for Latin America and the Caribbean, including follow-up of the World Food Summit. In this regard, it decided to request the Director-General of FAO to take the necessary measures in order to include as a permanent item on the Regional Conference Agenda, the evaluation of progresses achieved on food security in the region and, in particular, on the execution of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. To this end, the technical meeting will have a duration of one more day. The pertinent part of the report of the FAO Regional Conference will be remitted to the Committee on World Food Security.

46. The Committee agreed on the fact that the results of the Uruguay Round on agriculture, although they constitute only a first step which must continue in 1999, are important because they marked a new path towards liberalization of agricultural trade. . Likewise, it highlighted the importance of full compliance with the agreements of the World Trade Organization, with particular attention to the prompt implementation of the Ministerial Decision of Marrakesh on "Measures related to the possible negative effects of the reform programme in the less developed countries and in the net food-importing developing countries".

47. The Committee adopted the initiative to elaborate the International Code of Conduct for the Application of the Right to Food, as stipulated in objective 7.3 of the Draft Plan of Action proposed by the GRULAC of Rome.

48. The Committee supported the launching of the "Food for all Campaign", by the World Food Summit⁸, with the purpose of creating a public opinion movement to promote the participation of civil society in the actions aimed at overcoming food insecurity and facilitating follow-up to the commitments undertaken at the Summit. This proposal must be adapted to the characteristics which are inherent to each country.

49. The Committee supported the request of the Chairman of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) to coordinate the dissemination of information on the Summit in the subregion.

⁷ LARC/96/4-Rev.1

⁸ LARC/96/4-Supp.1

Changing Production and Consumption Patterns and their Impact on the Agriculture in the Region

50. The Committee, in line with the analysis set forth in the document⁹, underlined the importance of the estimates submitted as objective and important elements, for the definition of the agricultural development strategy in the Region. It stressed the need to consider the great heterogeneity of situations both among the countries as well as among the groups of products and types of producers, emphasizing the need for more attention to small producers.

51. It pointed out the importance of the information and participation of producers in decision-making, and of cooperation of governments, private agents and civil society; likewise, it indicated the need to consider environmental sustainability as a basic variable of the strategy and to incorporate changes in the structure of the population as one of the factors explaining changes in consumption patterns.

52. It highlighted the convenience of including in the analyses, the possibilities of greater inter-sectoral articulation of productive activities carried out in the rural sector and their connection with intermediate city systems as one of the solutions for rural-urban migration.

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

53. After considering the document on the subject¹⁰, the Committee took note that, in accordance with normal practice, the mandate of El Salvador as the region's representative would continue for another biennium up to 31 December 1998, while that of Chile would expire at the end of 1996. Therefore, the Committee unanimously elected Dr. Ricardo Ramón Pedretti, Director of Agricultural Research of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Paraguay, as representative of the region on the CGIAR for the period 1997-2000.

A Proposal for shortening of Regional Conference Reports

54. The Committee supported the proposal¹¹ to shorten the reports of the Regional Conference, which should essentially include the recommendations, but at the same time, reflect any discrepancy of opinion of the countries, either individually or as a collective minority.

Other Business

55. No issues were raised by the delegations.

Adoption of the Report

56. The Committee adopted the Report after introducing the modifications it deemed adequate.

⁹ LARC/96/5

¹⁰ LARC/96/6

¹¹ LARC/96/8

Closure of the Meeting of the Technical Committee

57. The Chairman of the Technical Committee closed the working sessions of the Committee after thanking the delegations for their participation.

FINAL ITEMS

Other Business

58. The Conference took note of Resolution No. 259 of 28 June 1996, elaborated by the XVI Ordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee of IICA, presented by the Delegation of Bolivia, under the mandate of said Ordinary Meeting and as Chairman of same.

Date and Place of the 25th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

59. The Conference took note with satisfaction of the offer of the Delegation of the Bahamas to host the 25th FAO Regional Conference, which would be held in 1998 and requested the Director-General to consider the recommendation of the Conference when deciding on the place and date, after consulting with the Government of the Bahamas and with other Member Nations of the region. Likewise, it took note with satisfaction of the offer of the Delegation of Mexico to host the 26th FAO Regional Conference, that would be held in the year 2000.

Adoption of the Report

60. The Conference approved the report, including the report of the Technical Committee, after introducing the modifications it deemed adequate..

Closure of the Conference

61. The Conference thanked the Government and people of Paraguay for their warm welcome and the excellent organization of the meeting.

62. The Chairman closed the 24th Regional Conference, thanking the delegations for their active participation and the high level of the deliberations.

APPENDIX A**PROPOSAL FOR MODIFICATION OF THE DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT****Paragraph 5:**

After civil strife, add: "We reaffirm that the right to food is a fundamental human right and, therefore, the use of food as an element of economic and political pressure cannot be permitted."

PROPOSAL FOR MODIFICATION OF THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL FOOD SECURITY

Incorporate the definition of food security.

Paragraph 3:

Add a new paragraph: "Plans to increase food production should take into consideration the crucial importance of child care and the burden of work of women if it is desired to improve nutrition, under the provisions of the World Statement and Plan of Action on Nutrition in its Section IV.6.35 of December 1992."

Paragraph 18:

In point b), add: "ensuring their participation in decision-making".

Commitment Two:

After institutions, insert: "community-based organizations".

Paragraph 22:

Objective 2.2, at the end, add: "taking into account the phenomenon of feminization of poverty".

Paragraph 25:

After point h), add: "i) Promote training of professionals and technicians for sustainable agricultural production". In this same point, add: "... This should be undertaken at different levels with the objective of improving the consumption of available food through a better selection, combination and handling in order to deal with the problem of malnutrition due to excessive eating, which is a major concern for many countries in the region".

Paragraph 31 b:

Add: "and guarantee that the provision of food assistance does not include political conditions that violate the principles of national sovereignty and free determination of the States".

Paragraph 31 c:

Add: "and guarantee that emergency assistance actions are executed through the coordination between relief agencies and national or local authorities".

Paragraph 32:

In point (a), eliminate "where there is no effective government or" and add "where the government's capacity is limited".

Paragraph 35:

Add another paragraph after paragraph 35: "Agroforestry and other land regenerative uses which have the potential of combining indigenous and modern expertise with conservation and food production purposes, should be promoted."

Paragraph 38:

Objective 4.1, add: "We shall enhance, maintain and establish permanent mechanisms to allow the rehabilitation of food and natural resources production and potential and arrest their degradation and depletion".

Objective 4.2, add: "We shall promote agroecologic practices to permit food production diversification in order to achieve durable improvements in relation to productivity, effectiveness and safety, reduce wastes and losses and protect the environment".

Paragraph 39:

Add after point c): "In view of the capital role played by water in agricultural production, the commitment of the international community for investments aimed at establishing infrastructures to permit an adequate management of this natural resource must be ensured."

Paragraph 44:

Insert after "...self-reliance strategies." "However, export subsidies have adverse effects on food production and distribution in countries that do not subsidize their domestic production. The artificial reduction of average costs leads to a displacement of competitors, cornering of markets and domination of food security of countries that are artificially at a disadvantage".

Paragraph 45:

At the end of Objective 5.1 add: "We shall strive to eliminate export subsidies."

Add: Objective 5.4: "We shall watch over the non-application of economic blockages and other types of unilateral measures of one State against another which affect the international trade and food security of the countries".

Paragraph 46:

To achieve Objective 5.1, add at the end of the paragraph: “with the perspective of gradually eliminating export subsidies”.

Commitment Six:

An alternative formulation is proposed: “We shall promote investment, participation, transparency and durable impact in research on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and natural resources, as well as in extension, infrastructure and institutions”.

Paragraph 53:

Add before point c): “Urge the developed countries to comply with their commitment of earmarking 0.7% of their GDP to Official Development Finance (ODF) and supervise and monitor the flows of ODFs destined to the agricultural, fisheries and forestry sectors of the developing countries, to ensure that funds are sufficient to achieve the objectives of the Food Summit, and that these external funds be used efficiently and have continuous effects so that they can be allocated in a foreseeable and stable manner.”

Commitment Seven:

A more proactive formulation is suggested: “We shall ensure that international cooperation and assistance are effectively conducive to strengthening the local power, training and at the benefit of food security, the environment and the living conditions of the farmers”.

Paragraph 58

Objective 7.1, after point f) add: “In line with the provisions of the United Nations Resolutions GA/49/139B and GA/50/19, promote the creation of national teams of volunteer experts, similar to the “Cascos Blancos”, capable of participating in the establishment of food security programmes and taking part in assistance operations”.

Objective 7.1, add a new point: “Increase international financial assistance to direct South-South cooperation and facilitate its implementation”.

Objective 7.1, add another point: “Explore new ways of obtaining substantial financial resources that can be destined to programmes to increase food production; one of them should be a significant reduction of expenditures on the armament race on the part of the principal military powers, including the trade of weapons as well as production and investments in this enterprise. The reallocation of these resources for development activities would permit that a considerable amount of them could be destined to food security-related activities.”

Objective 7.1, add another point: “Mobilize new and additional resources that are adequate and foreseeable, guaranteeing the use of all available sources of resources, including multilateral, bilateral and private ones, on concessional terms.”

Objective 7.1, add another point: “Study innovative forms of financing, including new ways of generating public and private resources. In this sense, the various measures aimed at alleviating the enormous burden of foreign debt for the developing countries, among which are its remission or

reduction, and which will permit allocating important resources to food security-related activities, may play an important role.

Paragraph 61:

At the end add: "The governments and international organizations, taking into account reasons of efficiency and effectiveness, should offer and resort to the teams of specialized volunteers constituted within the image of the "Cascos Blancos", as foreseen in Resolutions GA/49/139B and GA/50/19 of the United Nations, and as another way to address food security issues, including participation in operations aimed at guaranteeing food in crisis situations".

Paragraph 68:

Add: "It is also equally necessary to see that monopolies in the trade of food products are not constituted at the national level; the consolidation of small operators in the framework of a fluid and transparent market must be particularly favoured in deficitary countries."

Add a new paragraph: "In the case of extremely deficitary countries, improvement in production passes, at least for a short time, through a minimum protection of producers in respect of international competition. It is not desirable, therefore, to reduce customs tariffs applied to food. It is necessary to jolt food imports with customs tariffs in order to create favourable conditions for the re-launching of local production".

General observations

Regarding the recommendations in relation to macroeconomic and social policies, employment, land policy, tax policy, etc., it must be noted that the countries have assumed commitments in other international and regional fora, which limits the possibility of adhering to some of the aforementioned recommendations (Paragraph 15 c), 24 c), 24 e) 23 c), 41 e), 43, 47, 45, Objectives 5.1, 5.2.).

APPENDIX B**AGENDA OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE****(2 - 3 July 1996)****I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Opening of the Technical Committee
2. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

II. TECHNICAL ITEMS

4. World Food Summit: draft Policy Statement and Plan of Action
5. World Food Summit: state of Food security in Latin America and the Caribbean
6. Changing production and consumption patterns and their impact on the agriculture in the region
7. Representation of the region on the CGIAR
8. A Proposal for the shortening of the Regional Conference reports
9. Others matters
10. Adoption of the report
11. Closure of the Technical Committee meeting

AGENDA OF THE PLENARY SESSION**(4 - 6 July 1996)****I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Inaugural ceremony
2. Election of Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

II. STATEMENTS

4. Statement by the Director-General
5. World Food Summit
6. Country statements and general debate on the food and agricultural situation in the region
7. Report on FAO activities in the region

III. CONCLUDING ITEMS

8. Future Ministerial meeting in conjunction with Sessions of COFI and COFO
9. A proposal for shortening the Regional Conference reports
10. Other Matters
11. Date and place of the 25th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
12. Adoption of the report (including the report of the Technical Committee)
13. Closure of the Conference

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| Report Officer Oficial de Informe | Cecilio MORON |
| Press Officer Oficial de Prensa | Germán ROJAS |

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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| LARC/96/1 | Provisional annotated agenda |
| LARC/96/2 | Report on FAO activities in the region 1994-95 |
| LARC/96/3 | World Food Summit: draft policy statement and plan of action |
| LARC/96/4-Rev.1 | World Food Summit: state of food security in Latina America and the Caribbean |
| LARC/96/4-Sup.1 | Food for All Campaign |
| LARC/96/5 | Changing production and consumption patterns and their impact on the agriculture in the region |
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| LARC/96/7 | Future ministerial meetings in conjunction with sessions of COFI and COFO |
| LARC/96/8 | A proposal for shortening of Regional Conference reports |

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| LARC/96/INF/1 | Information note |
| LARC/96/INF/2-Rev.1 | Provisional timetable |
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| LARC/96/INF/4 | Action taken on the main recommendations of the 23rd Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean |
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