

Report of the

TWELFTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST

Amman, Jordan, 31 August - 9 September 1974



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

FAO MEMBER NATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST REGION

(at 9 September 1974)

Afghanistan	Jordan	Saudi Arabia
Bahrain	Kuwait	Somalia
Cyprus	Lebanon	Sudan
Egypt	Libyan Arab Republic	Syrian Arab Republic
France	Oman	United Arab Emirates
Iran	Pakistan	Yemen Arab Republic
Iraq	Qatar	Yemen, People's Democratic Republic of

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for the Near East:

First	—	Cairo, Egypt, 2-14 February 1948
Second	—	Damascus, Syria, 28 August - 6 September 1951
Third	—	Cairo, Egypt, 1-9 September 1953
Fourth	—	Damascus, Syria, 10-20 December 1958
Fifth	—	Teheran, Iran, 21 September - 1 October 1960
Sixth	—	Tel Amara, Lebanon, 30 July - 8 August 1962
Seventh	—	Cairo, Egypt, 19-31 October 1964
Eight	—	Khartoum, Sudan, 24 January - 2 February 1967
Ninth	—	Baghdad, Iraq, 21 September - 1 October 1968
Tenth	—	Islamabad, Pakistan, 12-22 September 1970
Eleventh	—	Kuwait, Kuwait, 9-19 September 1972
Twelfth	—	Amman, Jordan, 31 August - 9 September 1974

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Rome, 1974

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS^{1/}

I. THE SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

1. The Standing Committee consisting of H.E. the Minister of Agriculture and Municipalities, Bahrain, H.E. the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, UAE and the FAO Regional Representative in the Near East to promote FAO's government cooperative programme - placing the Regional Office as the focal point, in accordance with the recommendation made at the 11th Regional Conference (para 29).
2. FAO to develop the International Fertilizer Supply Scheme and Governments to promote - as far as possible - the production of fertilizers and pesticides and other physical inputs in and not for the developing countries (para 20).
3. Country Perspective Studies should be extended to all countries of the Region (para 25).
4. The Director-General of FAO to submit the Egyptian proposal regarding the system of appointment and terms of office of FAO Regional Representatives to member countries for their consideration and presentation of views to the Director-General FAO, to present resulting views to the next Regional Conference (paras 33-34, 36).

II. MATTERS OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

Prospects of Increasing Production of Rainfed Agriculture
with particular emphasis on low rainfall areas

5. A Regional Study to be initiated for the collection of available data on precipitation and its distribution. On the basis of such analysis, FAO to determine the relationships between crop yields and rainfall and between its distribution under different soils and crop management systems (para 40).
6. FAO to establish closer cooperation between the activities of the proposed International Research Centre with those of the existing national and regional institutes particularly with the Arab Research Centre for Arid Zones and Dry Land in Damascus (para 42).
7. Undertake socio-economic studies on the institutions constraints to the development of rainfed agriculture such as fragmented small holdings; lack of credit and marketing facilities; inadequate price policy and the economic conditions of the nomads and small farmers in the rainfed areas. Study the possibility of group insurance programme for rainfed crops and its role in increasing production and stabilizing farmers' income in rainfed areas (paras 39, 43).
8. Establishment of a Regional Institute for the Study of Desert Creep, Range Management and Arid Land which the Libyan Arab Republic offered to host (para 44).

^{1/} Prepared and presented according to the Agenda Items.

9. Establishment of a Regional Training Centre for Rainfed agriculture for training in soils and water conservation and improved dry farming techniques which Jordan offered to host. This proposed centre would work in collaboration with the proposed International Agricultural Research Centre (para 45).

10. FAO to make provision in the forthcoming FAO Programme of Work and Budget for undertaking the regional rainfed studies in greater depth than was done before to be extended to other countries and to be considered in a comprehensive regional frame (para 38).

Integrated Rural Development

11. Governments to adopt the concept of Integrated Rural Development formulated by the FAO Regional Office in their national development plans (para 52).

12. The case studies undertaken by the FAO Regional Office to be extended to other countries of the Region. FAO to undertake indepth studies of specific aspects of integrated rural development and practical administrative problems involved in the integration of fundamental elements (para 50).

13. Governments to coordinate work on Integrated Rural Development on a national level through the establishment of a National Committee or a National Board consisting of high level officers in charge of planning and execution of components of Integrated Rural Development (para 53).

14. Coordination of activities on integrated rural development should also take place among the UN agencies in the region, with FAO serving as the focal point in the UN system (Recommendation 2/74).

15. The establishment of a Regional Project in the Near East for training, research and advice to countries in formulating and implementing integrated rural development programmes (para 59 and Recommendation 2/74).

16. FAO to set up regional panel of experts on integrated rural development in the Near East (Recommendation 2/74).

17. The planned FAO World Credit Conference in 1975 should examine the link between credit and marketing giving special attention to credit needs and improving marketing services for small farmers (para 57).

18. FAO to publish an analysis of the findings of the studies so far carried out in the countries of the region and circulate such publication to member governments (Recommendation 2/74).

19. In view of the important role of Forest industry in integrated rural development Governments should broaden the functional responsibilities of their forest administrations and support the closer integration of their forestry programmes with rural development (para 56).

Agricultural Adjustment for Regional Cooperation

20. FAO to make further elaboration of the proposed strategy on International Agricultural Adjustment in the light of the discussions and conclusions of the World Food Conference (para 62).

21. The focus for agricultural adjustment should be increasingly on processed agricultural commodities and not to be limited to raw agricultural commodities and emphasis should be placed on the transfer of experience and technologies between various countries of the Region (para 64).

22. Formulation of well-defined and operational work programme on regional agricultural adjustment with the undertaking of in-depth studies on the identification and complementarities between countries and their implications for regional self-sufficiency, intra-regional trade as well as the region's trade with the rest of the world (Recommendation 3/74 and para 65).

23. The Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning should give priority to the issues contained in the above three paragraphs and that the title of the Commission should be "Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning and Adjustment" (para 65 and Recommendation 3/74).

Financial Needs and Possibilities for Investment in Agriculture

24. The activities of the Regional Office for the Near East to be orientated towards investment work in collaboration with the FAO Investment Centre. For this purpose, a Senior Investment Officer should be appointed in the Regional Office (para 72 and Recommendation 4/74).

25. Governments to utilize this Regional Office's services in project identification and preparation of investment projects (para 72).

26. FAO to collaborate with other international agencies working in the Region particularly ECWA for the full utilization of the available expertise in project identification and preparation and for avoiding duplication of efforts in assisting governments (para 73).

27. FAO to provide governments with information on the Investment Centre and its cooperative programme as well as other financing institutions operating in the region (para 74 and Recommendation 4/74).

28. The new guidelines recently published by the FAO Investment Centre on the preparation of projects in irrigation, drainage, livestock and agricultural credit should be distributed to member governments of the Region (para 74).

World Food Programme

29. World Food Programme to send a Mission as soon as possible to the Syrian Province of Kunneitra (Golan Heights) which was liberated, in order to assist in its rehabilitation (para 79).

30. World Food Conference to define the long-term policy for food-aid with particular attention to the role of multilateral food-aid through World Food Programme (para 81).

31. Following the generous contribution of Saudi Arabia to World Food Programme, other governments in a position to do so, should make contributions in support of economic and social development problems and emergency operations for the benefit of needy people in the developing countries (para 78).

III. REVIEW OF REGIONAL ACTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

Conclusions of Regional Commissions and Committees and Other Meetings of Interest in the Near East

32. Future sessions of the Regional Commissions to take place prior to the Regional Conference during each biennium (para 85).

33. The establishment of a Plant Protection post in the FAO Regional Office under the Regular Programme (para 86).

34. The organization of a Regional Training Course on International Pest Control and Plant Quarantine (para 86).

35. To establish a regional meat inspection and meat hygiene training centre in the Sudan which should be expanded in future to provide for training in Meat grading. For this purpose, a comprehensive survey of diseases should be made to ensure that movements of livestock do not spread epizootic diseases (para 87).

36. The second phase of the Regional Institute for Research and Training in Statistics in the Near East, if implemented, should include a strong component for research and training in agricultural statistics, the organization of national and regional seminars on integrated long-term development of statistics (with the help of UNFPA), and the addition of experts in fisheries statistics (para 89).

37. FAO should investigate the possibility of establishing a Regional Census Fund to provide financial assistance to needy countries to enable them to undertake agricultural censuses, including census of forestry and fishery (para 89).

Review of Field Programmes including Progress of and Priorities for Regional Projects

38. Regional Integration should be a focal point for preparing a long-term perspective plan for the development of agriculture in the Region. The Regional Office should prepare a draft framework under which such a plan can be prepared in collaboration with ECWA and other existing institutions in the Region. The plan should be submitted to member governments for their views and comments. The draft framework and the comments of member governments should be discussed at the next Session of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning (para 92).

39. The Regional Representative to make a survey of existing Regional Projects particularly institutes and centres analyzing their terms of reference and reviewing their future programme activities including the need for possible reorientation (para 94).

40. FAO to undertake a survey and study on the problems arising from the use of Qat. Such a study should recommend specific solutions to the problem including the introduction of suitable substitute crops (para 96).

41. FAO's existing Fertilizer Supply Programme should include the supply of pesticides in order to overcome its acute shortage and to assist countries in obtaining adequate supply (para 97).
42. The post of Regional Desert Locust Officer to be included in the Regular Programme of FAO and the three Regional posts financed from the extra-budgetary resources in the Locust Control Projects should also be included in the Regular Programme if such sources cease to be available (para 98).
43. FAO to undertake regional survey and study on horticultural production problems of main crops with a view to propose effective measures for production improvement through research, training and supply of improved plant materials and also to identify suitable regional projects for implementation (para 27).
44. A Regional Centre for Palms and Dates to be established to undertake research and training in connection with production, processing and marketing in collaboration with the Government of Iraq who offered to host this Centre (para 99 and Recommendation 6/74).
45. FAO to accept the offer made by the Iraqi Government to host the follow-up project under cost-sharing arrangements to succeed the present UNDP/FAO NEADEC Project starting July 1975 (Recommendation 7/74).
46. FAO to approach UNDP to increase its contribution for the continuation of the "Regional Project for the Improvement of and Production of Field Food Crops in the Near East and North Africa", in order to promote the creation of at least four additional posts of Regional Specialists in Oilseed crops, sorghum and millets, irrigation and dry land agronomy. This project should be closely involved in the activities of the proposed International Research Centre for Agriculture in dry areas planned in the Near East Region (para 100 and Recommendation 8/74).

Regional Studies

47. Three additional studies to be undertaken on agricultural mechanization, extension of the study on marginal lands and the review of research on crop water use and salt-affected soils. These studies to be considered by the respective Regional Commissions (para 104).

New Regional Activities

48. FAO, in collaboration with the UN Fund for Population Activities to strengthen the population activities of the Regional Office in order to increase its effectiveness in assisting member countries in the population component of national plans (para 107).
49. FAO to organize regional training courses in home economics extension in selected countries of the region where training facilities and accommodation are available, to produce women extension workers for rural areas (para 111).
50. FAO to give high priority to the formulation of the regional food research and nutrition programme (para 114, 115).
51. The Regional Office to intensify development support communication activities in the region through studies on strengthening communication between technicians and rural population, training qualified communication personnel in member countries and advisory service to governments (para 93 and Recommendation 9/74).

52. Regional Fisheries Commission for the Near East to be established (para 119).
53. Fisheries to be included as a separate item on the agenda of future Regional Conferences (Recommendation 10/74).
54. A Sub-Regional Fisheries Project to be promoted to enable exploitation of the Red Sea Fisheries(Recommendation 10/74).
55. Member Governments to give priority to inland fisheries and aqua-culture in their Fisheries Development Programme(Recommendation 10/74).

World Food Security

56. FAO should take all necessary steps to assist countries in the building up of warehousing and storage facilities adequate for keeping reserving food stocks (Recommendation 11/74).
57. The Communication system of information at the Regional level should be strengthened to supply promptly member countries with information concerning crop production and crop forecasting (Recommendation 11/74).

1980 World Census of Agriculture

58. Intensification of assistance to countries for implementing the Census Programme through the possibility of establishing a Census Fund, advisory service and the possible help from UNFPA for investigating the nomadic population(para 130).
59. Making available to member countries the results of studies related to the use of remote sensing in relation to the 1980 World Census of Agriculture(para 129).

FAO Activities in the Region and their future orientation

60. FAO activities in the region to be oriented in the near future as presented by the Regional Representatives for the Near East which was based on the emphasis placed by the delegates during the Conference (para 134).
61. The Regional Office to serve as the focal point in the growing tendency of governments to allocate part of their resources for self-help and regional projects (para 29 and 132).
62. FAO to raise the financial allocation in 1976/77 programme of Work and Budget to increase the Arabic translation programme from 1.8 to 2.5 million words per biennium(paras 28 and 133).
63. The policy of strengthening the Regional Office should be actively pursued particularly by the addition and use of highly qualified technical personnel and the allocation of increasing and adequate financial resources, especially for consultant and travel funds(Recommendation 12/74).
64. The Regional Office be given a greater degree of authority through the process of decentralization as between FAO Headquarters and the Regional Office in order that countries of the Region could be more effectively served(Recommendation 12/74).

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. The Twelfth FAO Regional Conference for the Near East was held in Amman (Jordan) from 31 August to 9 September 1974 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Conference was held in the premises of the Jordanian University.

2. The Conference welcomed the United Arab Emirates to the Regional Conference and hoped that the UAE would play its role along with other Member Countries.

Opening of the Conference

3. The Conference was inaugurated by His Royal Highness Prince Hassan, Heir to the Throne, on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The opening ceremony was attended by His Excellency the Prime Minister of Jordan and the Cabinet Members, Members of the Parliament, the President of the Jordanian University and Deans of Colleges, Members of the diplomatic corps and other high ranking officers of the Government.

4. In his inaugural address, His Royal Highness Prince Hassan said that Jordan was aware of the problems of food and agriculture as they stood today. Considering the present world food crisis, His Royal Highness emphasized the need for increasing production. He referred to cooperative efforts made by Jordan and FAO in dryland farming and integrated agricultural development in Jordan Valley.

5. While extending his welcome to the delegates and observers, His Royal Highness expressed his wishes for the success of the Conference. Coming at such a crucial time in human history and as part of the international meetings, he hoped that the Regional Conference would contribute effectively to the solution of the problems of the Region.

6. Dr. Addeke H. Boerma, FAO Director-General, thanked His Royal Highness for inaugurating the Conference and his welcome statement. Dr. Boerma praised Jordan for its efforts in development despite many constraints and limited resources. He particularly mentioned the opportunities afforded for agricultural research and training, and the institution of agricultural credit to farmers to improve their production.

Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Conference

7. The Conference unanimously elected the following officers:

<u>Chairman of the Conference</u>	:	His Excellency El-Sayed Marwan Al Hmood, Minister of Agriculture of Jordan
<u>Vice-Chairmen</u>	:	Heads of Delegations

8. The Chairman expressed his gratitude and appreciation for his election as Chairman of the Conference. He welcomed the gathering of leading personalities and agricultural planners to Jordan. He expressed his admiration for the services rendered by the FAO and its Near East Regional Office to the Region. He hoped that the discussions that would follow would lead to finding out solutions to the vital problems of food shortage and the development of agriculture in this Region.

Drafting Committee

9. The following countries were elected for the Drafting Committee:

Iran	Pakistan
Iraq	Sudan
Libya	United Arab Emirates

The Head of the Iraqi delegation was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Drafting Committee.

Expression of Gratitude to Jordan

10. The Conference expressed its sincere thanks, gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty the King, His Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for their kind and generous hospitality. The Conference also expressed its sincere thankfulness to His Excellency, Mr. Marwan Al-Hmood, Minister of Agriculture of Jordan, and all his assistants for their efforts and services which were put at the disposal of the Conference that made it a unique success.

Conference Messages

11. Cables and telegrams on behalf of the 12th FAO Regional Conference for the Near East were sent to:

His Majesty the King of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan thanking him for hosting the Conference under his Majesty's patronage;

His Majesty the King of Saudi Arabia for his generous contribution to the World Food Programme;

The President of Iraq appreciating the financial support received from his Government for the implementation of the Regional Projects;

The Government of Kuwait for its contribution for strengthening the use of Arabic language in the FAO Regional Office and

The President of the Jordanian University thanking him for hosting the Conference in the campus of the University, for the facilities extended, hospitality shown and for the appreciated services of his staff and students.

12. The Conference sent a telegram to the UNDP Resident Representative, Nicosia, Cyprus, to convey to the responsible authorities there the appreciation of the Conference of their offer to hold the Twelfth Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East in Nicosia, and its regret that Cyprus had not been able to participate in the Conference, hoping that peace would return to the country so that it could host the Conference in future.

Bidding Farewell to the Director-General

13. The Conference was informed that this was to be the last FAO Near East Regional Conference attended by the Director-General, Dr. A.H. Boerma. The Conference expressed its thanks to the Director-General and its appreciation of the efforts he

made in the development of food and agricultural resources of the Near East. The Conference also expressed its sincerest wishes for his happiness and good health on the occasion of his retirement at the end of his term in late December 1975.

Signing Memorandum of Understanding between FAO and ECWA

14. On 2 September 1974, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Dr. A. H. Boerma, Director-General, on behalf of FAO and by Dr. Mohamed Said Al-Attar, Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Western Asia, on behalf of ECWA.

15. On this occasion, Dr. Boerma expressed his satisfaction on signing the agreement. He said ECWA was responsible for all economic development while FAO was responsible for economic, social and technical development of agricultural aspects. He announced that the agreement called for the establishment of a Joint FAO/ECWA Division to be staffed by both the organizations, in consultation with the FAO Director-General or his Regional Representative for the Near East Region. Both Dr. Boerma and Dr. Attar gave assurance that their organizations would work jointly in the interest of the Region.

16. The delegates welcomed the signature of this Memorandum during this session and expressed sincere hope for the establishment of constructive relations between FAO and ECWA, and for similar relations with other financing agencies in the Region.

SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

17. The Conference discussed the statements of: the Director-General (NERC/74/CONF/1), the Regional Representative and his review on FAO's activities during the biennium in the Near East (NERC/74/CONF/2) and (NERC/74/2), the Secretary General of the World Food Conference (NERC/74/CONF/3), the Executive-Secretary of ECWA (NERC/74/CONF/4) and the statement of the Executive-Director of the World Food Programme (NERC/74/CONF/5).

18. In their written statements prepared for this item, delegates included brief accounts of their progress made in agricultural development in their respective countries and comments on a number of important subjects dealt with in the Statements and Review referred to above.

Discussion on Statements^{1/}

19. Delegates shared the deep concern of the Director-General in his comments on the seriousness of the present world food situation and expressed support for the actions being initiated under the Programme of the United Nations Emergency Operation.

1/ Summary of these statements is included as Appendix D.

20. Several delegates expressed anxiety about the present situation regarding world supplies and stocks of fertilizers and pesticides and the spiralling prices of these vitally important inputs. The Director-General had referred to the International Fertilizer Supply Scheme and delegates urged FAO to intensify its efforts to develop that scheme. The scheme could undoubtedly be of great assistance but some delegates felt that the real solution to the problem was that as far as possible countries should endeavour to promote production of fertilizers and pesticides and other physical inputs in and not for the developing countries.

21. The Conference took note of and welcomed the Director-General's remarks regarding the FAO unified programme approach. Conference went on to emphasize the vitally important role of the Regional Office in FAO's service to the countries of the Region and reiterated what had been stated at the last Regional Conference held in Kuwait (Recommendation 10/72) that a greater degree of decentralization should be effected in FAO's structure. Only through such decentralization could the Regional Office achieve maximum effectiveness in its service to the Region. In this connection, delegates expressed their appreciation of the admirable services rendered to the countries of the Region by the Regional Office over the last two years in spite of its limited resources.

22. The Conference acclaimed the new spirit of self-help prevailing in the Region. The 11th Regional Conference had stressed the importance of such self-help and welcomed the various regional and sub-regional projects initiated by the Regional Office as responding soundly to this recommendation.

23. The Conference also expressed its appreciation of the contribution made by Iraq in support of the Regional Applied Research Project for Land and Water use and of the indication which that country had given of its willingness to host and support a regional follow-up project to the existing UNDP/FAO NEADEC Project. The Conference also expressed appreciation of Iraq's contribution in the field of fisheries.

24. The Conference welcomed the placing of Regional Office as the focal point in the FAO system in this growing tendency for regional cooperation.

25. The Conference welcomed the programme of Country Perspective Studies referred to by the Director-General and the Regional Representative. There was general agreement that these should be extended to all countries of the Region.

26. The Conference also expressed agreement with the Regional Representative's views regarding the importance of agricultural research. It welcomed the decision to establish an International Agricultural Research Center and fully appreciated and supported the Regional Office in its efforts to promote regional and inter-country cooperation in this field. The Conference expressed its gratification that a number of countries had offered to host the new Research Center or its associated Centres.

27. The Conference welcomed the two proposals for the Regional Horticultural Projects referred to in the Regional Representative's statement and recommended that FAO should undertake a regional survey and study of horticultural production problems of main crops with a view to propose effective methods for improving production through research; training and the supply of improved plant material; and also to identify suitable regional projects for implementation.

28. The efforts to strengthen the use of the Arabic language in the Regional office for the service of member countries were fully supported by the Conference, which expressed its appreciation of the generous contributions made for the purpose by Kuwait (US \$ 100,000), Iraq (US \$ 5,000) and United Arab Emirates (US \$ 10,000). It welcomed the decision of the Director-General to provide Arabic interpretation in

Council Sessions, and at the same time, requested the Director-General to raise the financial allocation in the 1976-77 Programme of Work and Budget for increasing the Arabic translation programme from 1.8 million words to 2.5 million words per biennium.

29. The Conference also expressed its strong support for the recommendations put forward by Kuwait at the 11th Regional Conference and referred to at present Conference under which a Standing Committee consisting of:

H.E. Minister of Agriculture and Municipalities, Bahrain
H.E. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, UAE
FAO Regional Representative - Near East Region

had been set up.

30. This Standing Committee has been established to promote FAO-Governments cooperative programmes through regional development assistance and self-help in Agriculture in order to accelerate regional development assistance and self-help in agriculture through FAO.

31. Fully appreciating the gravity of the current world food situation and its implications for the Near East Region, the Conference took note with great interest of the Statement of the Deputy Secretary-General of the World Food Conference. The hope was expressed that this Conference would complete its task with tangible results which would contribute positively to the alleviation of the present food crisis.

Egyptian Proposal Regarding the System of Appointment
and Terms of Office of FAO Regional Representatives

32. The Conference had before it document NERC/74/15 and the delegate of the Egyptian Arab Republic explained the proposal to effect the appointment of Regional Representatives by the Director-General bearing in mind the following:

- a) The term of appointment of the Regional Representatives be changed from 5 to 6 years. This should apply also to Deputy Regional Representatives in view of the inter-relationship between the two posts;
- b) The appointment to the post of Regional Representatives should be effected from outside the Secretariat in view of the nature of the post which requires that the incumbent be selected from amongst agricultural policy makers and of practical experience in the field of agriculture. This will also make it possible for Member Countries to fill this high post with one of their nationals;
- c) Consultation between Member Countries and the Director-General should be carried out with regard to filling this post. This should be effected through presentation of nominations from Member Countries of the Region to the Regional Conference for views and submission to the Director-General;
- d) The Director-General may wish to consider other appropriate means to effect the principle of consultation and present his views thereon.

33. In view of the short time available to the Conference as well as to the Director-General for considering the proposal in detail, the Egyptian Delegation suggested that the proposal be submitted to Member Countries of the Region for consideration and the presentation of their views to the Director-General who will also consider the proposal from the point of view of the Secretariat.

34. The Director-General is requested to submit the result of the study to the forthcoming Regional Conference, and in the meantime, inform other Regional Conferences of the study.

35. This proposal was discussed by the Conference and two proposals emerged from the discussion:

a) Jordan : That the Conference may adopt the last suggestion made by the Egyptian delegation, i.e. that the matter be referred to the countries and the Director-General for consideration and presentation to the next Regional Conference;

b) Syria : That proposal tabled under Agenda item (6a) be removed from the Agenda.

36. These proposals were discussed and the Conference finally adopted by majority the Jordanian proposal.

MATTERS OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

Prospects of Increasing Production of Rainfed Agriculture with Particular Emphasis on Low Rainfall Areas

37. The Conference in discussing this item (document NERC/74/3) commended the regional office on its initiative in undertaking this study which emphasized the importance of agriculture in rainfed areas and identified the bottlenecks in increasing productivity.

38. The Conference recommended that this study should be carried out in greater depth and to be extended to other countries of the region. To ensure its implementation, FAO is to provide the required resources in its forthcoming programme of work and budget.

39. The Conference stressed that the above studies should examine in more details the socio-economic constraints in developing low rainfed areas. The delegates pointed out several examples of these constraints which were considered serious such as small sized holdings and their fragmentation, lack of credit and marketing facilities, lack of price policy, the high cost of inputs and general poor economic conditions of the nomads and small farmers in rainfed areas.

40. The delegates also stressed the importance of harvesting rainwater for its maximum utilization for crop production. The feasibility of underground and surface water use to supplement rain water was also recognized. To this end, a programme of field research was proposed to establish relations between rainfall and soil moisture, and between soil moisture and crop physiological development, under different crops and agricultural practices. It was emphasized that the aim of such research is to establish those practices which are best suited to conditions of low and

changeable rainfall and which would lead to increasing agricultural production in these areas.

41. The delegates felt the need for establishing national development policy through an integrated approach dealing simultaneously with the various technical and socio-economic problems for rainfed agriculture with a view to reducing the disparity between the less favoured and the favourable environment, stressing the importance of rural handicrafts and small-scale industries for rainfed areas.

42. The Conference expressed the need for regional cooperation in the fields of research, training and exchange of experience. In this context, the Conference welcomed the decision of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research to establish an International Agricultural Research Centre for the Near East and North Africa. It was hoped that the Centre would supplement national and regional research programmes. The delegates expressed their intention to cooperate fully with the Centre. They appreciated the existing cooperation between FAO and the Arab Research Centre for Arid Zones and Dry Land in Damascus and the Conference recommended a closer cooperation and coordination between the activities of the proposed International Research Centre with those of the existing national and regional institutes, particularly the Arab Research Centre for Arid Zones and Dry Land.

43. The Conference felt the need for studying the possibility of a group insurance programme for rainfed crops and its role in increasing production and in the stabilization of farmers' income in rainfed areas.

44. The Conference recognized the fact that efficient range land management had not been adequately studied. Since the problem of the desert creep was interrelated to range lands, therefore, there should be an integrated approach to seek the solutions to their problems, involving closely the animal production aspect. The Conference therefore recommended the establishment of a Regional Range Management and Arid Land Institute to tackle the problems concerning desert creep, range and marginal lands and integrating them with animal production. The Conference welcomed the desire expressed by the Libyan delegate, on behalf of his Government to host such an institute. In this connection and with regard to other proposed regional institutes or centres, the Conference asked the regional office to study carefully the most suitable site for each project before deciding on this matter.

45. Recognizing the importance of training in soil and water conservation and improved dry farming techniques, the delegates proposed the establishment of a Regional Training Centre for this purpose. The Conference also welcomed the offer made by the Jordanian delegate, on behalf of his Government, to host the Centre. The delegates stressed the importance for collaboration between this Centre and the proposed International Agricultural Research Centre.

46. The Conference noted that the Second Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) endorsed, in principle, FAO's approach in offering assistance to Member Countries through a low rainfall area production development programme. The Conference recommended to the Director-General that assistance envisaged by the FAO and approved by the COAG should concentrate to a considerable extent in those countries of the Near East Region where the problems of rainfed agriculture were acute and widespread.

47. The delegates felt a great need for carrying out the basic soil surveys in the rainfed areas, making full use of the remote sensing techniques through orbiting satellites for survey, evaluation and monitoring purposes for which FAO may provide assistance and information.

48. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1/74

ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF DESERT CREEP

RANGE MANAGEMENT AND ARID LAND AND REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

FOR RAINFED AGRICULTURE

THE CONFERENCE,

Welcoming the decision by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research to establish in the Region an International Agricultural Research Centre,

Recognizing that the Region's immense area of range-land, which provides the bulk of the feed for the Region's livestock, had not been adequately studied nor the problems of these areas solved,

Noting the importance of desert creep and its relation to range management practices,

Stressing further the importance and need for training in soil and water conservation and other improved techniques of dryland farming,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That a Regional Institute for the study of Desert Creep, Range Management and Arid Lands be established in Libya which offered to host such an Institute, after a careful study by the Regional Office and in consultation with governments concerned.

That a Regional Training Centre for rainfed agriculture be established in Jordan which offered to host it after preparing a suitable project and after consultation with Governments concerned.

Integrated Rural Development

49. The Conference had before it document NERC/74/4 in which were presented the concept and fundamental components of integrated rural development, together with the findings of case studies carried out by the FAO Regional Office in Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Somalia and Syria as well as the work of an international team of experts in Pakistan. In the document NERC/74/4, Suppl.1, the preliminary findings of an FAO special mission to Cyprus, Iraq and Syria on the contribution of forestry and forest industry to integrated rural development, were also presented.

50. The Conference expressed its appreciation of the studies carried out by the Regional Office and its role in promoting the concept of integrated rural development in the region. It recommended that such studies should be extended to other countries of the Region. The delegates of Iraq, Jordan, Libyan Arab Republic, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Pakistan requested the Regional Office to undertake similar studies in their respective countries. The Conference, however, while recognizing the usefulness of these

studies stressed the importance of studying in depth specific aspects such as the mechanism of the people's participation, the machinery required to integrate rural development programmes at national and local levels, and the role of such components as extension, credit, marketing, cooperatives, agrarian reform, agricultural education and the social aspects such as education, health, population planning, welfare centres, and the role of women in integrated rural development.

51. The Conference welcomed the priority accorded to rural development in the development programmes of a number of countries of the Region and also the programme of work proposed by the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA).

52. The Conference supported the concept of Integrated Rural Development as formulated in the document and urged Governments to adopt it in their national development plans. The Conference, while agreeing that the fundamental principles and components enunciated were adequate to encompass different economic systems, stages of developments and the divergent strategies of development noted that the order of priority given to these principles varied in each country according to its strategy and stage of development. In view of the need to increase food production, emphasis had to be placed on modernizing agriculture and in providing incentives to farmers (through adequate price policies, subsidies and credit facilities for essential production inputs), marketing services and land tenure security.

53. The importance of establishing national institutions to coordinate planning, financing, training and evaluation required for integrated rural development was stressed by a number of delegates on the basis of their countries' experience. Among the institutions discussed was a national Committee or a National Board consisting of high level officials in charge of planning and the execution of the components of integrated rural development.

54. The Conference expressed particular concern over the existing wide gap between rural and urban living conditions and the related increasing migration from rural areas to urban centres. The need to reform price policies for agricultural products in favour of farmers and not urban residents, to expand employment opportunities and to improve the environment for living in rural areas, was stressed.

55. In discussing employment aspects of integrated rural development, the Conference stressed that population policy (including employment) should be a built-in component of integrated rural development plans in order to ameliorate conditions resulting from unbalanced population growth in different regions of a country. Intensification and diversification of land use coupled with development of technically and economically sound food and agricultural product processing industries, were cited as important measures. Rural/agricultural industries, which are employment intensive and capital saving, required the utilization of appropriate technologies along with the development of marketing, and long-term credit facilities.

56. In this connection, the Conference noted that forestry and forest industry could and did have an important role in integrated rural development. The Conference appreciated the initiative taken by the Regional Office in studying this relationship and noted with satisfaction that this subject would be discussed at the forthcoming Seventh Session of the FAO Near East Commission on Forestry to be held later this year. The Conference, therefore, recommended that Governments should broaden the functional responsibilities of their forest administrations and support the closer integration of forestry programmes with rural development. The Conference requested FAO to assist Member Countries in their cooperation at the regional level by the exchange of knowledge and experience among forestry and rural development planners and by case studies in selected countries of the Region.

57. The Conference considered that agricultural credit and price policies were important instruments in achieving the increased production and income aims of integrated rural development. It was noted that at present, the proportion of credit allocated by the central banks to agricultural credit banks was inadequate to meet small farmers' needs for increasing production. It was also noted that price policies were by and large, geared to benefit the consumer in urban areas more than the farmer as producer. The Conference noted with satisfaction FAO's plan to hold the World Credit Conference in 1975 as a follow-up of the Seminar held in 1973, on Agricultural Credit for the Near East Countries. The question of linking credit and marketing needs to be considered by this planned conference. The Conference stressed the importance of improving marketing services for small farmers and noted with satisfaction that FAO is implementing a regional project for agricultural marketing information and research.

58. The Conference emphasized the importance of extension in rural development but noted that extension information and communication services to farmers were generally weak. The Conference stressed the importance of broadening the concept of agricultural extension so as to include extension amongst women and communication techniques in order that information, knowledge and skills could be transferred to farmers. A suggestion was made that existing institutions in villages such as schools should have multipurpose functions and that educational curricula should be oriented in accordance with the type of development in different rural areas.

59. The Conference endorsed the recommendations concerning integrated rural development made by the Joint Seventh Session of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning and the Near East Commission on Agricultural Statistics as provided for in Recommendation 2/72 of the 11th Session of the FAO Regional Conference. The Conference emphasized, in particular, the recommendation for the establishment in the Near East Region of a Regional Project or institute, for integrated rural development to provide for the training, research and advisory needs of member countries similar to the project in Asia and the Far East. The Conference, in supporting this recommendation, expressed its appreciation of the pioneering work on integrated rural development being undertaken in Pakistan. The Conference also expressed its appreciation of the offer of Iraq to assist in implementing this important project. The Conference expressed the view that a working link should be established between the FAO Regional Office and existing regional and national bodies concerned with training, research and planning in the field of rural development.

60. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2/74

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing that the concept of Integrated Rural Development was a new and multidisciplinary approach to comprehensive development of rural areas,

Appreciating that investment in an integrated rural development programme could substantially contribute to the solution of the Region's food and supply problems, provide increased employment opportunities and alleviate rural poverty through a more equitable distribution of income,

Welcoming the contribution of the FAO Regional Office for the Near East in studying different approaches to the subject through case studies undertaken in a number of countries and in promoting the concept within the Region,

Urging FAO and other UN specialized agencies, IBRD and Regional Development Funds to assist member countries in this field and coordinate their efforts and, furthermore,

Urging Member Governments to adopt this concept in their national development programmes and to accord it high priority,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That the study on Integrated Rural Development prepared by the FAO Regional Office should be extended to all countries of the Region.

The setting up at the Regional level of a panel of experts on Integrated rural development, which, pending the establishment of the Institute recommended in clause 3 of this recommendation, would study in depth the component elements of integrated rural development and recommend to Member Governments ways and means of implementing programmes in the field.

The establishment of an Institute for Integrated Rural Development linked to national research and training bodies as appropriate and functioning as a Regional Project for the provision of training, research and advice to countries of the Near East Region and for assisting them in the integrated rural development approach.

That an analysis of the findings of the studies so far carried out by FAO in the Region should be compiled and published and circulated to Member Governments for information.

Agricultural Adjustment for Regional Cooperation

61. The Conference discussed agricultural adjustment issues contained in document NERC/74/5 at three broad levels: global, national and regional. On the global level, it noted that the continuation of purely inward-looking national adjustments could only contribute to periodic imbalances and instability of international agricultural trade and prices which could well become more frequent and more damaging to the economies of both developed and developing countries.

62. For this reason, the Conference took special interest in the objectives sought by international agricultural adjustment as contained in the document. It also expressed appreciation of the initial effort made by FAO in evolving a strategy to attain these objectives including an overall frame, guidelines, indicators for monitoring and consultations and negotiations. It stressed the need for further elaboration of that strategy in the light of the discussions which would take place and the conclusions which might be reached at the forthcoming World Food Conference.

63. The Conference considered national adjustment an integral part of global and regional adjustments. It stressed the need for parallel efforts on adjustment being made within countries as well as between countries. As such, it considered the Near East Regional Office Consultant Report an important step in identifying various aspects of national agricultural adjustment. It noted that the Study had certain limitations particularly in its coverage which extended only to seven countries of the Region and in the little attention devoted to measures and proposals for expanding intra-regional trade. It also pointed out that emphasis had been put by the Study on the establishment of regional centres and institutes. The Conference felt that much greater care was needed in identifying areas for regional cooperation and that

applied agricultural research, seed production and distribution and range management seemed to be fields in which regional cooperation could be fruitful.

64. The Conference pointed out two additional aspects of the subject not elaborated in the study. The first concerned post-harvest treatment and processing of agricultural products. The focus of agricultural adjustment should be increasingly on processed agricultural commodities and not limited only to raw agricultural commodities. The second aspect concerned the transfer of experience and technologies between various countries in the Region. In this respect reference was made to the need for "technical" adjustment.

65. The Conference considered that the needs and opportunities for regional agricultural adjustment were the most crucial issues. Several examples were cited illustrating the need for production specialization based on comparative advantages as well as on the opportunities for the expansion of intra-regional trade in agricultural output and inputs. The Conference urged that planned complementarities should be built into the national planning process and, particularly in the Near East Region, with reference to well-identified sub-regions. It stressed the need for a well defined and operational work programme on regional agricultural adjustment. In this respect it fully endorsed the recommendations of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning, particularly in regard to the need for an integrated series of in-depth studies to be undertaken geared to the identification of complementarities between countries and the implications of the adjustment process on regional self-sufficiency, intra-regional trade, as well as the region's trade with the rest of the world. It felt that the Commission should continue to give these issues high priority and that the title of the Commission should include agricultural adjustment as an integral part of its planning responsibilities.

66. The Conference welcomed the proposed 1975 seminar on agricultural adjustment and urged FAO and the Council of Arab Economic Unity to include ECWA and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development in this pioneering effort. It stressed the need to recruit professionals of the highest calibre for the proposed study and the importance of adopting an approach reflecting a strong policy orientation. It expressed the hope that the outcome of the seminar would lead to a symposium at which a programme on inter-governmental action could be drawn up.

67. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 3/74

AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

THE CONFERENCE,

Agreeing with the objectives and proposed strategy for international agricultural adjustment,

Aware that reconsideration of these objectives and proposed strategy may be required in the light of the forthcoming World Food Conference,

Urging FAO to extend the coverage of the Near East Study (Yates Report) to other countries of the Region, and that particular attention should be paid in these to post-harvest technology and processing in addition to the transfer and exchange of experience between countries of the Region,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That an integrated and phased series of in-depth studies should be arranged with a view to identifying the scope of sub-regional adjustments and their implications for self-sufficiency, intra-regional trade and trade with the rest of the world.

That the Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning should be entrusted with the task of pursuing efforts towards Regional agricultural adjustment and that the title of the Commission should be changed to "Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning and Adjustment".

Financial Needs and Possibilities for Investment
in Agriculture

68. The Conference discussed document NERC/74/6 on "Financial Needs and Possibilities for Investment in Agriculture" prepared by the FAO Secretariat and NERC/74/6-Sup.1 on "Financial Needs and Possibilities of Investment in Arab Agriculture with reference to the Kuwait Fund Experience", prepared by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, at the request of FAO.

69. It recognized that the importance of the agricultural sector for the countries of the Near East region arose from the size of the population in agriculture, the share of agriculture in the Gross Domestic Product and the share it had of external trade.

70. The Conference noted that only a rough order of magnitude of the investment needed in agriculture in the Region could be estimated at the present time because of the on-going revision of national development plans which was taking place in some countries. It was, however, recognized that, in fact, these needs could well be within the capacity of the Region in view of the flow of resources from countries in financial surplus to others with limited financial resources in which the potential in agriculture, both physical and human, offered scope for development.

71. The Conference emphasized that one of the major constraints to investment at the present time was the need for soundly prepared investment projects, realistically drawn up to take account not only of their technical and economic feasibility but also of the organizational and management capacity available for implementation of such projects within the countries.

72. The Conference took note of FAO's Investment Centre's activities in the identification and preparation of investment projects. With the assistance of the FAO/IBRD Cooperative Programme of the Investment Centre, ten projects had been prepared and these had obtained financing from the World Bank/IDA in eight countries of the Region. However, the Conference considered this size of activity insufficient since there was an urgent need to prepare investment projects for submission to other sources of financing in the Region. The Conference called, therefore, for the strengthening of FAO's assistance to governments in the identification and preparation of investment projects and particularly for a reorientation of the activities of the Regional Office in this regard.

73. It was also recognized that the need for assistance to Governments in the preparation of investment projects was so great that FAO needed to collaborate with other institutions in the Region and particularly ECWA, to enable all available expertise in this field to be utilized. Every effort had to be made to avoid duplication of effort by FAO and other institutions when rendering this type of assistance to Governments.

74. The Conference requested that information on the Investment Centre and its Cooperative Programmes, as well as on other financing institutions operating in the Region could be distributed so that Governments could be advised of all the sources of assistance available both in the preparation of agricultural projects and in the financing of them. The Conference also decided the new guidelines recently published by the Investment Centre on the preparation of projects in irrigation and drainage, livestock and agricultural credit should be distributed to Member Governments of the Region.

75. The Conference considered that, while the project-by-project approach to investment had had considerable merits in the past by ensuring that a close scrutiny was given to investment proposals, it was now in danger of proving too slow a method under the present circumstances of the deeply felt need to effect more rapid development in the Region. There was also an urgent need to devise new systems of development financing and in this connection the Conference noted the programme and sector method adopted by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development in its approach to agricultural development in the Sudan which was an interesting pioneer effort and one in which FAO had been glad to cooperate.

76. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4/74

ORIENTATION OF THE NEAR EAST REGIONAL OFFICE OF FAO

TOWARDS GREATER INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing the importance of agriculture in the economies of Near East countries; the rapidly growing demand of the Region for foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials for industrialization and export and the vast potential of countries to expand agricultural production,

Considering that financial resources available to some countries of the Region could be channelled to investment for the development of agriculture and related activities within the Region,

Taking note of the increasing resources of national, regional and international financing institutions and their expressed willingness to invest a portion of these resources in the development of agriculture in the Region,

Realizing that the severe shortage of adequately prepared investment projects in agriculture and related fields and the scarcity of national personnel trained in investment project preparation were the major constraints to rapid absorption of investment in agriculture, and further,

Recognizing the new trends in investment for joint ventures within the Region and the need for the more active involvement of the Regional Office,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That the activities of the Regional Office should be orientated towards Investment work in collaboration with the FAO Investment Centre and that for this purpose a Senior Investment Officer as coordinator be appointed at the Regional Office.

That the activities referred to above should be directed towards and include:

maintaining an active dialogue with Member Governments of the Region and other regional interested bodies on investment ideas and possibilities;

reviewing the information available on investment studies and proposals put forward by Governments, Regional bodies and financing institutions;

working jointly with the FAO Investment Centre and fully utilizing the services of Regional Officers in the assessment of investment proposals, project preparation and evaluation;

assisting Member Governments in organizing training courses, workshops and seminars in agricultural project analysis in close collaboration with the FAO Investment Centre;

the compilation of a manual for the information of Member Governments on the various bodies which could provide financial assistance for suitable investment projects.

To Member Governments

That financing institutions and other related bodies should utilize the services to be provided by the Regional Office, as proposed above to the Director-General, in project identification and preparation and,

That they assist and cooperate with FAO in fulfilling these enlarged investment activities.

World Food Programme

77. The Conference examined Document NERC/74/7 and expressed its appreciation of the work of the World Food Programme in providing food aid to assist the countries of the Region in their economic and social development as well as in emergency situations. The Conference expressed its regret for the limited resources which had been available to the programme since 1973 and which had forced it to postpone the signing of Plans of Operation for several Projects already approved thereby curtailing its activities at a time of acute world food crisis.

78. The Conference in this connection expressed its warm appreciation of the generous contribution of US\$ 50 million made by His Majesty King Feisal, the king of Saudi Arabia. It expressed the hope that further substantial contributions would be made available not only from those countries of the Region in a position to do so but also from traditional donors.

79. The Conference recommended the request made by the Syrian delegation that the World Food Programme should send a Mission as soon as possible to the liberated Golan Heights for assisting in its rehabilitation.

80. The Conference supported the Executive Director's firm intentions of using the additional cash resources made available to purchase commodities from developing countries whenever possible.

81. The hope was expressed that the World Food Conference would be able to define a long-term policy for food-aid with particular attention to the role of multilateral food-aid through the World Food Programme.

82. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation. 5/74

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

THE CONFERENCE,

Deeply concerned by the serious world food situation and in particular, the increase in food shortages in many developing countries,

Aware that inspite of all efforts to increase agricultural production in these countries, food aid will still be needed for many years to come,

Recognizing that WFP has rendered and is rendering very effective food assistance to the developing nations and that it could do much more if it had greater resources,

Taking note with great satisfaction of the contribution of US\$ 50 million to WFP by Saudi Arabia,

Recommends

To Member Governments

That other governments in a position to do so should make generous contributions to WFP for use in support of economic and social development programmes and emergency operations for the benefit of needy people in the developing countries.

REVIEW OF REGIONAL ACTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

Conclusions of Regional Commissions and Committees
And Other Meetings of Interest to the Near East

83. The Conference reviewed the conclusions reached and recommendations made by the Regional Commissions and Ad Hoc Committees and meetings of interest to the Near East held during the past biennium, as presented in document NERC/74/8. It endorsed, in general, these recommendations and urged their implementation. The Conference drew particular attention to a number of the recommendations made.

84. In connection with land and water use, the Conference requested the Director-General to arrange for regional seminars on the following subjects: reclamation and management of gypsiferous soils, investigation, development and utilization of underground water; land evaluation (with special reference to the requirements of arid and semi-arid regions) and rainfed agriculture (with special reference to land and water use problems. The view was expressed that the recommendations of the UNDP/FAO Seminar held in Cairo in 1973 on "Reclamation of Gypsiferous Soil" should be developed into a regional action programme.

85. In regard to forestry, the Conference noted that the Near East Commission, which had not met since 1970, would hold its Seventh Session in Baghdad, Iraq, in November/December 1974. It recommended that future sessions of this Commission be held before Regional Conferences.

86. In the field of plant protection, the Conference urged the establishment of a plant protection post in FAO's Regional Office under the Regular Programme. Such an officer, beside his other duties, should be able to assess the magnitude of the plant protection problems in Member Countries of the Region and draw up a regional project for studies on the biology and control of grain eating birds. The Conference recommended the organization of a regional training course on integrated pest control and another on plant quarantine.

87. In the field of animal production and health, the Conference welcomed the request made to FAO that it should continue to assist Member Governments in formulating a uniform, standardized veterinary health certificate for general use in the Region. It also welcomed the proposed establishment of a Regional Range Management Centre although drawing attention to the need to avoid any duplication of activities with existing regional institutes. The Conference also strongly supported the recommendation for the establishment of a Regional Meat Inspection and Meat Hygiene Training Centre in the Sudan and to the expansion of that Centre, in due course, to provide for training in meat grading. It expressed the hope that such a Centre would be established as soon as possible. In this connection, the view was expressed that a comprehensive survey of diseases was a necessary prerequisite to the expansion of the meat industry so as to ensure that movements of stock did not spread epizootic diseases. A number of countries supported the extension of NEADEC after expiration of the project in mid 1975, and on this point, Iraq repeated its offer to host a follow-up project.

88. In connection with agricultural planning, the Conference endorsed the recommendations of the Seminar on Perspective Planning held in Beirut in March 1974. It stressed the need to extend the coverage of Perspective Studies to other countries of the Near East Region. The Conference felt that such studies could be very helpful to member countries in the preparation of their medium-term development plans, as well as in tackling major agricultural adjustment issues in the Region. The Conference

urged FAO to give special attention to in-service training which it considered should be geared to the particular needs and circumstances of member countries.

89. In regard to statistics, the Conference recommended that if the second phase of the Regional Institute for Research and Training in Statistics for the Near East was implemented it should include a strong component for research and training in agricultural statistics; the organization (with the help of UNFPA) of national and regional seminars on integrated long-term development of statistics; the addition of experts in fisheries statistics, on a regional and group-country basis and investigation of the possibility of establishing a Regional Census Fund to provide financial assistance to needy countries to enable them to undertake agricultural censuses, including censuses for forestry and fisheries.

Review of Field Programmes, including Progress of and Priorities for Regional Projects

90. The Conference in considering document NERC/74/9 took note of four main areas: a) the need to prepare a long-term perspective plan for agricultural development in the Near East Region; b) the desirability of undertaking special studies for new programme development and project preparation (pre-investment and investment projects) in individual sub-sectors of agriculture; c) the need for a manpower survey to assess the long-term trained manpower requirements of individual countries and to identify the areas for special training programmes; and d) the need for a searching analysis and assessment of proposed regional institutes and centres to avoid fragmentation and duplication of efforts.

91. The Conference took note of the statement made by the UNDP Representative who briefed delegates on the general background to UNDP's regional programmes now being implemented by the Regional Bureau for Europe, Mediterranean and the Middle East and drawing attention to the importance of its agricultural component. In preparing this regional programme, UNDP consulted the agencies within the UN system as well as organizations outside the UN system, particularly the Council for Arab Economic Unity, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Kuwait and Abu Dhabi Funds for Arab Economic Development and the Permanent Maghreb Consultative Committee were mentioned. In highlighting some of the on-going and proposed UNDP regional projects, the UNDP representative emphasized the possibilities of cost-sharing under which a modest UNDP input could be used as a catalyst for stimulating activities involving larger Government contributions and expressed the readiness of UNDP to expand its Regional programme under such a formula. It was stressed that the proliferation of regional institutes which often proved difficult adequately to staff, presents a problem but the location where such activities were to be initiated required very careful consideration case by case.

92. The Conference endorsed the suggestion made to prepare a long-term perspective plan for the development of agriculture in the Region. It emphasized that regional integration should be the focal point of such a plan and that it should make a special effort to include the supporting elements required for its implementation. It was also recognized that the plan should cater for the special problems confronting selected sub-regions of the Near East. The Conference asked the Regional Office to prepare a draft framework under which such a perspective plan could be prepared in collaboration with ECWA and other institutions present in the Region and that this should be submitted to Member Governments for their views and comments. Before full-scale work on the plan was initiated, the draft framework and the comments of Member Governments on it should be discussed at the next Session of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Planning.

93. A number of delegates proposed that high priority should be given to a range of regional studies to be undertaken by the Regional Office in consultation with FAO Headquarters and other regional bodies. 1/ It was emphasized that these studies should lead to the development of special action programmes. It was further suggested that some of these studies, including any emerging action programmes, might be financed by member countries having the necessary financial resources.

94. Many delegates expressed concern regarding the creation of new regional institutions, the manpower burden which such new institutions called for and the time required before they could reach the stage of full maturity. Because of the number of new institutions proposed under various items of the agenda, the Conference requested the FAO Regional Representative to undertake a survey of existing institutions in the Region, carefully analyzing their terms of reference, reviewing their future programme activities, including the need for possible re-orientation and assessing the capacity of each institute to undertake new functions. The Conference expressed the hope that such a searching analysis would pave the way for determining areas which could benefit from the creation of new institutes and centres. It also stressed the need for closer cooperation between existing and future regional institutes and national centres. A further important point made was that strong emphasis needed to be placed on the sharing of experience, a factor which had received little attention in the past.

95. A number of delegates stressed the advantages to be obtained from promoting the development of existing national centres so as to enable them to serve as nuclei of embryos for wider regional activities. The delegate of Pakistan expressed the readiness of his government to make available the facilities of existing agricultural research centres and institutions for the benefit of member countries in the Region. The delegate of the Libyan Arab Republic made a similar offer regarding the International Centre for Agricultural Research for the Near East and North Africa. The Conference welcomed the offers of assistance from these two countries.

96. The delegate of the Yemen Arab Republic, after describing the problems which arose from the use of Qat in some countries of the region proposed that a survey and study should be undertaken of the problem especially in its economic, social and health implications in the countries affected. This study should recommend specific solutions to the problem, including the introduction of suitable substitute crops (which would not, however, cause the farmers economic harm) and the identification of projects for dealing with the problem on a short and long-term basis.

1/ The proposed studies(not in order of priority) are:

- i. Expansion of the Wheat Production Programme
- ii. Farmers' response to Technological Changes and their involvement in Development Policies and Programming
- iii. New Techniques and Approaches to Development Support Communications in Rural Areas
- iv. Economic Utilization of Water for Agricultural Purposes
- v. Priority Areas for the Development of Agro-Industries including Transfer of Technology
- vi. Fruit and Vegetable Production in the Region

97. The delegate of the Yemen Arab Republic also raised the question of the problem of "army worm" in his country where it was difficult to maintain stocks of pesticides adequate for the control of both army worm and of desert locust. The Conference recommended that the FAO existing Fertilizer Supply Programme should include the supply of pesticides in order to overcome its acute shortage and to assist countries in obtaining adequate supply. The Conference expressed its appreciation of the offer made by Libyan Arab Republic to provide direct assistance to the Yemen Arab Republic in this field.

98. Both proposals made by the delegate of the Yemen Arab Republic received the support of the Conference. Because of the continuing and increasing danger of the locust, the Conference asked FAO that the post of Regional Desert Locust Officer be included in the regular programme of FAO, the duties of this post being extended to include emergency operations for pest control, and that in terms of paragraph 209 of the report of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference held in 1973, the three regional posts financed from extra-budgetary resources in the Locust Control Project should also be included in the Regular Programme, if such sources cease to be available.

99. The delegate of Iraq expressed his Government's readiness to host the establishment of a Regional Centre for Palms and Dates and also the follow-up Project to the Near East Animal Production and Health Centre on the termination of UNDP assistance to this project in July 1975. The Conference welcomed these offers of assistance and supported both proposals.

100. The Conference expressed its satisfaction with the achievements of the UNDP/FAO Project - Improvement and Production of Field Food Crops in the Near East and North Africa. It expressed its appreciation to SIDA, Rockefeller Foundation, DANIDA and NORAD for their generous help and assistance in supporting the on-going programme. Because of the urgent need to increase food production in the Region, the Conference expressed the hope that the activities of the programme could be further expanded and could include an increase in the number of project staff and of funds for training suitable personnel in research leadership.

101. The Conference adopted the four following recommendations:

Recommendation 6/74

ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PALMS AND DATES

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing the economic and social importance of date production in many countries of the Region but, being

Aware of the many problems facing their production, including those arising from salinity, high levels of ground water, poor cultural methods, shortage of trained labour and increased costs of production,

Realizing the importance of increasing yields in many countries of the Region and improving the quality of date products and the methods of marketing in order to secure better returns,

Recalling the recommendations of the Second Date Conference held in Baghdad in 1969 and that of the Second Session of the FAO Horticultural Commission for the Near East and North Africa, held in Algiers, 1970

Recommends

To the Director-General

That a Regional Centre for Palms and Dates be established to undertake research and training in connection with this crop.

Since date production was a very important feature of its agricultural economy and Iraq had offered to host the above Regional Centre that a suitable project for the establishment of such a Centre in Iraq be formulated in cooperation with the Iraq Government.

That FAO convenes, at an early date, a technical meeting which would include on its Agenda the subjects of date production, processing and marketing.

Recommendation 7/74

FOLLOW-UP PROJECT TO THE UNDP/FAO NEADEC PROJECT

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing the importance of the work of the present UNDP/SF Project and the need for this project to continue after the termination of UNDP support in June 1975,

Appreciating the generous offer of the Government of Iraq to host a follow-up project and provide financial support for it,

Recommends

To Member Governments

That the offer of the Iraq Government to host a follow-up project under cost sharing arrangements to succeed the present UNDP/FAO NEADEC Project in July 1975 be gratefully accepted.

That representatives of Member Governments attending the Second Board Meeting of the present project in November should be at the highest level possible and given authority to indicate:

- (a) the extent to which their countries would be prepared to contribute financial support to the Project;
- (b) whether the draft proposals already submitted to Member Governments represent the kind of project they wished to have;
- (c) the kind or organization for the project which Member Governments would prefer; and
- (d) such other matters as would enable clearcut arrangements to be made for implementing the proposed follow-up Project in July 1975.

Recommendation 8/74

REGIONAL PROJECT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT AND PRODUCTION OF FIELD
FOOD CROPS IN THE NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (REM/73/293)

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing and Appreciating the useful work done by the Project through pooling the financial resources of different organizations, aid-giving agencies (Rockefeller Foundation, SIDA, DANIDA, NORAD) and Member Governments in carrying out the activities of the Project,

Realizing that the improvement and production of field food crops is of paramount importance and requires much more concerted efforts to meet the rising food demands,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That FAO should approach UNDP with a view to increasing its contribution in order to permit the creation of at least four additional posts of Regional Specialists in the fields of Oilseed Crops, Sorghum and Millet, Irrigation Agronomy and Dryland Agronomy and additional funds for leadership training and research and the continuation of the Project.

That FAO should approach Member Governments having the necessary resources with a view to seeking assistance in the provision of short-term in-service training facilities; fellowships for under-graduate and post-graduate studies; specialists as consultants for short-term periods and the donation of high quality seeds of identified, high yielding crop varieties, etc.

That this Project should be closely involved in the activities of the proposed International Research Centre for Agriculture in rainfed areas for the Near East Region, in order to develop practical working relationships for outreach activities.

To Member Governments

That Member Governments continue their support for the cooperative programmes more vigorously in the future, through establishment of Task Forces so that all essential disciplines could be integrated in the improvement and production of field food crops.

Recommendation 9/74

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

THE CONFERENCE,

Noting that the role of FAO in dissemination of new ideas and technology is important in increasing agricultural production and improving agriculture and nutrition in countries of the Region, and that communication is a basic requirement in the transfer of these new ideas and technology to the farmer,

Recognizing that communication is a key element in securing the participation of rural people essential in achieving integrated rural development programmes including women's programmes,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That the Regional Office should intensify development support communication activities in the Region by carrying out studies on the possibilities of strengthening communication between subject matter specialists and rural people; organizing training courses and workshops and seminars in the field of communication to provide countries of the Region with qualified communication personnel; advising them to implement development support communication programmes based on multi-disciplinary and media approach.

That an Agricultural Information and Communication Expert be included on a consultancy basis in the panel of experts on Integrated Rural Development to be set up at the regional level as recommended by the Conference.

Regional Studies

102. The Conference considered Document NERC/74/10 which contained a summary of the findings of the regional studies undertaken during the previous biennium. It had also before it two summary reports, namely that of the FAO Near East Mission on Marginal Lands and that of the FAO Near East Agricultural Engineering Mission.

103. The Conference noted that of the six regional studies which had been made, three, i.e., those on rainfed agriculture, integrated rural development and agricultural adjustment, were undertaken at the request of the Eleventh FAO Regional Conference and were the basis of Conference Documents NERC/74/3, NERC/74/4 and NERC/74/5, respectively. Action called for in respect of these studies are included in other parts of this Report. Three other studies, those dealing respectively with agricultural engineering, marginal lands and research on crop water use, salt affected soils and agrometeorology were undertaken on the initiative of the Regional Office.

104. The Conference requested that additional studies should be undertaken on agricultural mechanization which would take into consideration the different economic and social conditions of the countries concerned. It stressed the need for testing and adapting agricultural machinery to solve local problems and pointed out the importance of improving and modernizing traditional agricultural tools and implements. The Conference, while drawing attention to the importance of training in the field of agricultural machinery, emphasized the role of the manufacture and of the industrialized countries in this field.

105. The Conference also requested that the studies on marginal lands and the review of research on crop water use and salt affected soils be extended to cover more countries and recommended the application and use of improved agricultural practices with the object of optimizing the economic use of scarce water resources.

106. The Conference expressed its appreciation of the studies which had been undertaken and requested that the last three be placed before the regional commissions concerned for their consideration.

New Regional Activities

- Population Activities

107. In commenting on Item 15(a) of the document NERC/74/11, the Conference commended the Regional Office for initiating this activity. The need for further expansion of these activities was stressed to maintain the present momentum. The Conference felt the necessity to work out programmes adaptable to the Region to promote awareness among the rural population about the implications of unbalanced population growth. However, there was a need to combine these activities with programmes to provide rural employment and opportunities to improve the quality of life of the rural population.

108. The Conference appreciated the role of population factors in determining growth rates and the direction of economic and social development towards its goals and recommended that FAO, in collaboration with the UN Fund for Population Activities, further strengthen the population activities of the Regional Office to increase its effectiveness in providing Member Countries assistance in support of population component of their national plans. The Conference felt that the Member Governments should adopt a population strategy, appropriate to the requirements and conditions for incorporation in their overall national development strategy.

- Environment

109. The Conference reviewed the item 15(b) of the above mentioned document and supported the new activity. Some delegates specifically drew the attention of the Conference to the need to provide resources to the Regional Office to intensify this activity in relevant areas, particularly those relating to rainfed agriculture and problems of land degradation.

- Role of Women in Rural Development

110. In reviewing the item 15(c), the Conference expressed interest in the activities being carried out by the Regional Office in order to promote family and women's programme. The Conference supported the view that unless the efforts of women and men were fully integrated at all levels into total rural development and shortage of trained women extension workers was not overcome, the balance in the process of rural development could not be achieved.

111. The Conference accordingly recommended that FAO should organize regional training courses in home economics extension in selected countries of the Region where training facilities and accommodation are available; the objective is to turn out a corps of trained personnel for each country that would be able to assume responsibility for establishing and conducting training programmes in their own countries to produce extension workers for rural areas.

112. The Conference noted that the International Women's Year 1975 had a special significance to the countries of the Region in that it drew attention to the importance of initiating specific activities involving rural women with the aim of improving their conditions, create more opportunities for them thus enabling them to participate more effectively in agricultural and rural development.

- Food Nutrition in Agricultural Development Strategy

113. The Conference in reviewing item 15(e) expressed appreciation of the approach which has been promoted by the Regional Office, especially in dealing with the question of food and nutrition in a comprehensive manner. It welcomed the basis of this new strategy in which food production, marketing, consumption and the factors which affect them represent one single system. It realized that any attempt to solve the problem through isolated action in one of these activities alone would not achieve the desired rural welfare. The Conference realized that, if improvement of nutrition is accepted as a prime objective within national development goals, nutrition will have to become an integrated planning component in each sub-sector.

114. The Conference felt the need for the training of manpower in the field of food and nutrition policy. It was emphasized that food and nutrition in the Region should receive more attention in terms of research and training. The delegates supported the idea of a Regional Food Research and Nutrition Programme.

115. The delegates supported the Joint FAO/WHO/UNICEF efforts in the field of food and nutrition and expressed hope that such efforts would be intensified in future.

116. The Conference recognized a need for countries, particularly those importing large quantities of food, to establish national body to deal with food supply, handling, storage, processing, marketing, price fixing, price subsidies, control consumption pattern, consumer habit and nutritional needs.

- Initiating Fishery Training Programme and Developing Inland Fisheries, especially Fish Culture and Water Reservoirs

117. The Conference noted with interest the paper submitted by the Regional Office item 15(d) and also the background paper for Agenda Item 15(d).

118. Considerable interest was shown by delegates in the subject of Fisheries as this was the first occasion that this subject was placed before the Conference.

119. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 10/74

FISHERIES

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing that Fisheries could play a major role in the economy of the Region and were of considerable importance in the Gulf and the Red Sea, which was bordered by six countries of the Region and in the Mediterranean,

Observing that it was the only sector which had no Regional Commission and that insufficient attention had been given it at the present and past Conferences,

Appreciating the efforts made to establish the proposed sub-regional Fisheries Training Centre in Kuwait,

Noting with interest the importance of inland fisheries and aqua-culture as new fisheries resources for the Near East Region,

Recommends

To the Director-General

That a Fisheries Commission for the Near East Region be established to coordinate and follow-up regional and sub-regional activities in the field of fisheries;

That fisheries be included and discussed among the countries of the Region as a separate item on the Agenda for future Regional Conferences;

That a Sub-regional Fisheries Centre be established to service Near East countries in the Red Sea and Mediterranean areas which would provide training, research, management and other related services;

That a Sub-regional Fisheries Project be developed to enable exploitation of the Red Sea Fisheries;

That inland fisheries and aqua-culture be given priority in fisheries development programme, and the number of fellowships in this field be increased to meet the requirements of the countries involved in these programmes.

To Member Governments

That the countries participating in the Sub-regional Training Centre in Kuwait should take the necessary steps to implement the project as soon as possible;

That inland fisheries and aqua-culture be given priority in fisheries development programmes.

World Food Security

120. The Conference noted that the world cereal supply and food stocks situation, as representing security against food shortage, had become increasingly serious, especially since 1972 as a result of the huge increase in commercial demand caused by crop failures in several major producing areas of the world in that season. North America could no longer be looked upon as the sole carrier of an adequate world food reserve. It was in response to this situation that the FAO Conference in November 1973 had adopted its Resolution 3/73. Under the terms of this Resolution, world food security was to be sought through a coordinated network of national food stocks in which developing countries would participate through special measures designed to assist these countries in holding stocks according to their needs and capacities.

121. The Conference noted with satisfaction that FAO Secretariat were following up Resolution 3/73 of the Seventeenth Session of FAO Conference held in November 1973, along the following lines. Firstly, the revised text of the draft International Undertaking on World Food Security to be presented to the World Food Conference, after this had been formally adopted by the Council at its Sixty Fourth Session in November 1974. Secondly, the initiation of consultations between countries on the situation regarding world food stocks and the evaluation of the position as presented in a draft document prepared by FAO. Thirdly, the strengthening of FAO food information system which would incorporate an expanded Early Warning System, the existing Food Aid Information Service and the various commodity market intelligence services. This would be linked with the work of specialized inter-governmental bodies and the information then made available would be disseminated to Governments in periodic reports designed to give a comprehensive picture of the world food supply situation. Fourthly, sending of missions to interested developing countries to assist them in formulating food stock policies, working out requirements regarding their warehousing and storage facilities and mobilizing the necessary financial assistance.

122. The Conference expressed special interest in the provision of credit facilities to needy countries to enable them to build up food reserves, without adversely affecting their balance of payments, was of the greatest importance. It was noted that the World Bank, the IMF and a number of countries with the necessary resources in the Near East Region had offered to assist in the financing of food stocks under certain conditions.

123. Some delegates questioned whether it was an appropriate time for developing countries to attempt to buy foodgrains for stocking up, since supplies were very short and prices extremely high, and it was anticipated that shortages would continue for the coming season. It was appreciated that the building of world food security through widespread national stockholding would take time and that stocks in many developing countries would have to be based mainly on increased domestic production. In the meantime, such countries should be able to define their policies so far as their reserves were concerned and concentrate on increased production which would be a major contribution to their food security. In regard to immediate short term food needs, the Conference noted that the UN had established an Emergency Operation under which certain funds were to be made available to assist countries in special need because of the raw materials crisis.

124. The Conference also considered that the strengthening of communications at the regional level would enable countries to have timely and essential information on crop conditions in other countries so as to enable them to take whatever action was required. FAO was also considering the improvement of crop production forecasting, as an integral part of statistical reporting, in its Food Information System.

125. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 11/74

FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES AND STRENGTHENING OF
REGIONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

THE CONFERENCE,

Expressing serious concern over the world food situation and its associated problems;

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive food security programme;

Endorsing the efforts made by the Director-General of FAO in this connection and the arrangements being made by FAO to strengthen its food information system;

Recommends

To the Director-General

That FAO should take all necessary steps to assist countries in the building up of warehousing and storage facilities sufficient for keeping reserve food stocks, and

That the communication system of information at the regional level should be strengthened in order that member countries may be supplied promptly with information concerning crop production and crop forecasting.

1980 World Census of Agriculture

126. The Conference took note of the main features of the 1980 World Census of Agriculture programme including the distinction between irrigated and unirrigated areas, the better coverage of nomads and the possibility of collecting data on rural community infra-structural services. The fundamental importance of the agricultural census for planning agricultural and rural development and for providing a sampling frame for the development of current agricultural statistics was emphasized.

127. Delegates expressed their appreciation and support to the efforts made by FAO in planning for the 1980 census programme and several called for more assistance in carrying out the programme in view of its importance. In this connection, it was pointed out that previous FAO World Census Programmes had provided valuable guidelines.

128. Some delegates emphasized the approaches made to integrating and coordinating the agricultural census with the population census. A number of suggestions were made concerning the improvement of the 1980 census programme document by clearer definitions of objectives and uses, more elaborate outline of the methods of collecting and updating census information, as well as inter-census activities and speeding up of the results from the census.

129. In reporting on experiments made in the use of remote sensing, some delegates indicated the desire that these techniques should be explored for use in the 1980 census of agriculture. A view was expressed as to the need to increase distribution of resources, production and income and particularly information on small farmers. The need was also expressed for collecting data in the census to meet the demand for information on the use of agricultural credit.

130. The Conference reiterated its endorsement and support of the recommendations made by the Seventh Session of the Near East Commission on Agricultural Statistics concerning the establishment of a census fund, organization of training centres and intensifying assistance to countries for implementing the 1980 census programme with the help of specialized regional and inter-regional advisors and the help of UNFPA for investigating the nomadic population and their activities.

ORIENTATION OF FAO ACTIVITIES

FAO Activities in the Region and
their Future Orientation

131. The Conference, in taking note of Document NERC/74/14, expressed its general support for the steps which it was proposed should be taken by FAO in order that it could play a positive role in the proposed new international economic order and programme of action the importance of which had been stressed in the Director-General's Statement.
132. The Conference also welcomed and supported the increasing tendency of Governments to allocate part of their resources for regional projects. This trend represented the growth of a system of self help in the Region the focal point of which was FAO.
133. The Conference took note of and expressed its appreciation of the steadily expanding use of the Arabic language by the Regional Office and expressed the hope that FAO would increase the Arabic translation programme over the next biennium.
134. The Conference fully endorsed the new activities to be undertaken and the future orientation of the work of the Regional Office as had been outlined by the Regional Representative and which may be summarized as follows:
- (a) Orientation of the Regional Office towards investment activities in order to overcome the acute shortage of well prepared investment projects in agriculture
 - (b) The placing of more emphasis on the problems of increasing aridity, range management and the development of land and water resources for arid and dryland farming.
 - (c) The promotion of agricultural research with the assistance of the proposed Regional International Agricultural Research Centre.
 - (d) The strengthening of the activities of the Regional Project for the Improvement and Production of Field Food Crops in the Near East and North Africa.
 - (e) The promotion of new activities in the development of fisheries, especially in the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture and in exploring possibilities of creating effective machinery for consultation among Governments on a regional basis.
 - (f) Continuation of indepth studies in connection with integrated rural development, including the role of rural women and youth and population policies and assisting governments in the formulation of regional and national projects in this field.
 - (g) Speeding up of the development of statistics and studies needed in the planning of agricultural and socio-economic development, reorientation of the programme of the 1980 World Census of Agriculture to bring it more into line with the conditions of the countries of the Region and the arrangement of special support to needy countries.

- (h) The promotion of food and nutrition policies and assistance given to countries in order to speed up the development of activities in this field.
- (i) The encouragement of more concerted action in the fields of forestry, horticulture, plant and animal disease control.
- (j) The strengthening of activities in connection with the development of support communications, particularly in their relationship to agricultural extension work and integrated rural development.

135. The Conference expressed the wish to see that the Technical Commissions developed maximum effectiveness and stressed the need for all meetings of these Commissions to be held before Regional Conferences in order that their recommendations could be given the necessary attention by the Regional Conference concerned.

Appreciation of the Regional Representative's Activities

136. The Conference expressed its wholehearted appreciation of the valuable contribution made to agriculture development by the Regional Office under the leadership of Dr. Mohamed A. Nour. It was considered that under Dr. Nour the Regional Office staff had continuously endeavoured to promote effective action, a spirit of self-help and inter-country cooperation in the Region. Initiatives undertaken by Dr. Nour in certain fields of agricultural and rural development were of a pioneer nature and for all that he had accomplished the Conference placed on record its sincerest thanks.

137. The Conference adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation No. 12/74

Strengthening the Near East Regional Office

The Conference

Appreciating the efforts made by the Regional Office in serving member countries

Aware of the limited resources with which this was being done

Recalling Recommendation No. 10/72 of the 11th Regional Conference under which it was recommended that the Regional Office should be strengthened and made more effective in a number of respects

Conscious that, in the implementation of Recommendation No. 10/72, some progress had been made

Recommends

To the Director-General

That the policy of strengthening the Regional Office should be actively pursued particularly by the addition and use of highly qualified technical personnel and the allocation of increasing and adequate financial resources, especially for consultant and travel funds;

That the Regional Office be given a greater degree of authority through the process of decentralization as between FAO Headquarters and the Regional Office in order that countries of the Region could be more effectively served.

CONCLUDING ITEMS

Date and Place of the Thirteenth FAO Regional
Conference for the Near East

138. The Conference agreed that the 13th Session of the Conference would be held during the second half of 1976. As regards its location, the Conference noted that the offer of the Government of Cyprus to host the Near East Regional Conference was still open. In the selection of the location of the next Regional Conference priority should, therefore, be given to Cyprus. Iran reiterated its previously extended invitation to host the Thirteenth Regional Conference in Teheran while Iraq also expressed its readiness to act as host for that Conference.

139. The Conference requested FAO to consider the desirability of shortening the duration of future conferences so that delegations could attend the final sessions of the Conference at which crucial policy decisions and technical recommendations were adopted. A suggestion was made that consideration should be given to holding Regional Conferences every four years instead of every two as at present.

140. The 12th Session of the Conference was officially brought to a close by the Chairman at 14.00 hours on 9 September 1974.

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AGENDA FOR THE TWELFTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST

- I. PROCEDURAL MATTERS
 1. Opening of the Conference
 2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Drafting Committee
 3. Adoption of the Agenda

- II. SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION
 4. Statement by the Director-General
 5. Statement by the Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for the Near East
 - 5(a) Statement by the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference
 - 5(b) Statement by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for West Asia
 - 5(c) Statement by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme
 6. Country Statements
 - 6(a) Egyptian Proposal Regarding the System of Appointment and Term of Office of FAO Regional Representatives

- III. MATTERS OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION
 7. Prospects of Increasing Production of Rainfed Agriculture in the Near East Region
 8. Integrated Rural Development
 9. Agricultural Adjustment for Regional Cooperation
 10. Financial Needs and Possibilities for Investment in Agriculture
 11. World Food Programme

IV. REVIEW OF REGIONAL ACTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION

12. Conclusions of Regional Commissions and Committees and other Meetings of Interest in the Near East
13. Review of Field Programmes, including progress of and priorities for Regional Projects
14. Regional Studies
15. New Regional Activities (Population Activities, Role of women in rural development), Environment, Fishery Training Programmes and developing inland fisheries and Nutrition in agricultural development strategy
16. World Food Security
17. 1980 World Census of Agriculture

V. ORIENTATION OF FAO ACTIVITIES

18. FAO Activities in the Region and their Future Orientation

VI. CONCLUDING ITEMS

19. Any other business
20. Adoption of the Report
21. Date and Place of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for the Near East
22. Closing of the Conference

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APPENDIX B

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman Marwan Al-Hmood (Jordan)

MEMBER NATIONS IN THE REGION

BAHRAIN

Abdulla Bin Khalid Al-Khalifa	Minister of Agriculture and Municipality Manama
Siddiq Al-Alawi	Superintendent of Plant Protection Manama

EGYPT

Hassan Baghdadi	Supervisor, Agricultural Research Centre Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation Cairo
Hassan Abdallah	Director, Foreign Relations Department Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation Cairo

IRAN

Hossein Sepehri	Deputy Minister Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Teheran
Massoud Komeilizadeh	Director-General Bureau of Evaluation and Supervision Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Teheran
F. Arbabi	Director-General, Department of Provinces Coordination Affairs and Development Teheran
Mohamed Samii	Head of the Seed and Plant Improvement Institute in Karaj
Hossein Amir Hosseini	Plan Organization Representation Teheran

IRAQ

Shabib Al-Maliki	Under-Secretary Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Baghdad
Redha Saeed Ma'rouf	Director-General of Field Crops Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Baghdad
Zuhayr Al-Shahad	Director of Planning Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Baghdad
Ihsan Mohammed El-Karim	Director of Public Relations Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Baghdad

JORDAN

Marwan Al-Hmood	Minister of Agriculture Ministry of Agriculture Amman
Khalil Lubani	Under-Secretary Ministry of Agriculture Amman
Salah Juma	Deputy Director Agricultural Credit Corporation Amman
Jouad Dajani	Director Plant Production and Protection Department Amman
Hisham Nuseibeh	Director Veterinary Department Amman
Said Ghezawi	Director Research and Extension Department Amman
Abdul-Rahim Al-Talli	Director Forestry and Soil Conservation Department Amman
Hassan Gharaybeh	Director Animal and Agricultural Production Department Amman
Fahid El-Azab	Director Agricultural Economics Department Amman
Najeeb F. Tleel	Director of Irrigation Department Natural Resources Authority, Amman

JORDAN (Cont'd)

Shawkat Muhaisin	Director Administration Department Amman
Mohamed Ibrahim Huneidi	Jordan Valley Commission Amman
Mohammad A. Lubani	Director Agricultural Marketing Association Amman
Youssef Attiyeh	Chief, Agricultural Division National Planning Council Amman
Samir Awali	Central Cooperative Organization Amman
Muwaffak S. Sa'oudi	International Public Relations Amman
Walid Abu Gharbieh	Instructor University of Jordan Amman

KUWAIT

Hmoud Yussef Al-Nesf	Minister of Public Works Ministry of Public Works Kuwait
Salem Ibrahim Al-Mannai	Assistant Under-Secretary Director of Agricultural Department Ministry of Public Works Kuwait
Abdul Latif Zeydan	Chemist, Agricultural Department Ministry of Public Works Kuwait

LEBANON

Elias Al Harrawi	Representative of Zahle Head of the Agricultural Parliamentary Committee Beirut
Adel N. Cortas	Under-Secretary of Economy and Trade Director-General of the Cereals and Sugar Beet Office Ministry of Economy Beirut

LEBANON (Cont'd)

Amin Abdel Malek	Director of Agriculture in Bekaa Agricultural Department Zahle
Joseph Chami	Head of Agricultural Planning Ministry of Agriculture Beirut
Khalil Choueiri	Head of the Department of External Relations Ministry of Agriculture Beirut

LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Mohamed Khalifa Bukor	Under-Secretary Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Tripoli
Mohamed Sidky Zehni	Head of the Board of Directors Agricultural Research Centre Tripoli
Mohamed Ramadan Abu Lukmeh	Director of Crop Production Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Tripoli
Salem Ahmed Shamileh	Director of Planning and Evaluation Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Tripoli
Abu Ojeilah Hussein Ibrahim	Public Relations Office Ministry of Agriculture Tripoli

OMAN

Karim Al-Harmi	Minister of Development Ministry of Development Muscat
Abdullah Suleiman	Assistant Under-Secretary for Agricultural Affairs Ministry of Development Muscat
Mohammed Reda Hassan	Director, Research and Scientific Studies Department of Agriculture Muscat
Khaled Omar Al-Zobeidi	Director of Agricultural Information Division Ministry of Development, Muscat

OMAN (Cont'd)

Wazir Hassan

Adviser of Research and Studies
Agriculture Department
Ministry of Development
Muscat

Humaid Salim Al-Ghuraibi

Second Secretary
Embassy of Oman in Italy
Rome

PAKISTAN

Malik Khuda Bakhsh

Special Assistant to Prime Minister of
Pakistan for Food and Agriculture
Government of Pakistan
Islamabad

Sadiq Malik

Joint Secretary of Rural Development
Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Rural
Development
Islamabad

Saeed Ur Rahman

First Secretary
Embassy of Pakistan in Jordan
Amman

Javed Salim Khan

Agricultural Attache
Embassy of Pakistan
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to FAO
Rome

QATAR

Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Mana

Director, Minister's Office
Ministry of Agriculture and Industry
Doha

Michel Farah

Head of Extension Section
Ministry of Agriculture and Industry
Doha

SAUDI ARABIA

Abdulmuhsin Sudeary

Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia
to FAO
Rome

SUDAN

Hussein Idris

Minister of State for Agriculture,
Food and Natural Resources
Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Natural
Resources, Khartoum.

SUDAN (Cont'd)

Mohamed Osman Mohamed Salih	Director-General Agricultural Research Corporation Khartoum
Yassin Hakim Ali	Under-Secretary for Animal Resources Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Khartoum
Hassan Mohammedi Betake	Director, Soil Conservation and Land Use Administration Khartoum

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Mohammed Ibrik	Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Damascus
Mustafa El Sa'di	Director of Agricultural Affairs Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Damascus
Mahmoud Said	Director of Irrigation and Agricultural Planning State Planning Commission Damascus

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Hamad Abdullah Salman	Under-Secretary Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Abu Dhabi
Mohamad Abdul Aziz Mohamad	Agricultural Adviser Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Abu Dhabi
Mohamed Hassan Makki	Chief of Administration Section Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Abu Dhabi

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

Mohammed Abdul Qoddous Al-Wazir	Minister of Agriculture Ministry of Agriculture Sana'a
Mohammed Hussein Jaghman	Director-General of Projects and Statistics Ministry of Agriculture Sana'a

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC (Cont'd)

Kamel Mansour	Head, World Bank Team Sana'a
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YEMEN, PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF

Saleh Nino	Under-Secretary Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Aden
Abubakr Al-Muallam	Director, Agricultural Research Centre Aden
Mohsen Said Abu Atif	Cooperative and Agrarian Reform Department Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Aden

OBSERVERS FROM MEMBER NATIONS NOT IN THE REGION

TURKEY

Muammer Oyan	First Secretary Embassy of Turkey in Jordan Amman
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UNITED KINGDOM

K.G.W. Frost	Principal Ministry of Overseas Development Secretary, FAO Committee London
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Paul J. Findlen	International Organization Affairs Officer Foreign Agricultural Service Department of Agriculture Washington, D.C.
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REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS

Mohammed Said El-Attar	Executive Secretary UN Economic Commission for West Asia Beirut
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WEST ASIA

Mohammed Said El-Attar	Executive Secretary
Christian G. de Clercq	Economic Affairs Officer Agricultural Unit Economic Research and Planning Division

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

Ali Othman	Senior Programme Officer
Zuhni R. Qubeiwey	UNICEF Liaison Officer in Jordan

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Jean Claude Aimé	UNDP Resident Representative in Jordan
Peter Prins	Chief of Division for Regional Projects Bureau for Europe, Mediterranean and the Middle East UNDP, New York

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Francisco Aquino	Executive Director Rome
W.N. Fraleigh	Assistant to Executive Director Rome
F. Pronk	Chief, North Africa and Near East Branch Project Management Division Rome

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

W. Parisi	Malariologist Malaria Eradication Programme in Syria
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OBSERVERS FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

AFRO-ASIAN RURAL RECONSTRUCTION
ORGANIZATION

Krishan Chand	Secretary-General New Delhi
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ARAB AFRICA BANK

Ali Gritly Economic Adviser

ARAB FUND FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Hazem Beblawi Adviser
Kuwait

ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Kamal Ramzi Stino Director-General
Khartoum

Ahmed Abdulla Osman Deputy Director-General
Khartoum

COUNCIL OF ARAB ECONOMIC UNITY

Abdul Razzak Sidky Consultant
Cairo

Ahmad Al-Ghandour Assistant Secretary-General
Cairo

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF EPIZOOTICS

Hisham Nuseibeh

KUWAIT FUND FOR ARAB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sultan Abou Ali Economic Adviser
Kuwait

ARAB CENTRE FOR THE STUDIES OF ARID ZONE AND DRY LANDS

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SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS MADE TO THE CONFERENCE

Statement of the FAO Director-General

Dr. A.H. Boerma, FAO Director-General, referred early in his statement to the recent adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Declaration and a Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New Economic Order. FAO attached the greatest importance to this Declaration and Programme of Action since it was designed to enable the developing countries most badly affected by the economic crisis to maintain their essential imports.

The Director-General referred to the serious food shortage which had arisen the previous year due to widespread drought coupled with many other factors, a situation that had brought cereal stocks to their lowest level for a quarter of a century. Despite all efforts to increase food production, he could not foresee any major improvement in the situation in the near future. If a widespread crop failure occurred in one of the world's major producers areas in 1974/75, the situation could be most serious.

He stated that the fertilizer crisis was a major world problem and in response to a resolution adopted by ECOSOC, FAO had formally launched an International Fertilizer Supply Scheme with the object of eliminating the fertilizer deficit of developing countries. The scheme involved the participation of the developing countries, the fertilizer industry, donor governments and financial agencies, all of which would work with FAO in meeting the needs of countries as these arose. In regard to pesticides, FAO felt that there should be an overall strategy, both for pesticide and fertilizer production and not merely for the developing countries but in the developing countries. This would be one of the major subjects to be considered at the forthcoming World Food Conference.

The World Food Conference, which would deal not only with the technical but also the political aspects of the world food problem, provided a vitally important opportunity for Governments to take decisions which could bring about necessary improvements in the world food situation.

He expressed the hope that the World Food Conference would provide the political support for a World Food Policy which FAO had been advocating. This World Food Policy included the concept of minimum world food security; measures for price stabilization; expanded markets for developing countries and international agricultural adjustment; more effective arrangements for dealing with emergency food situations; the use of rational and systematic long-term food policies better adjusted to more general requirements; improved food information and, most important of all, a massive drive to increase agricultural production in developing countries. The crucial test of such a policy would be the willingness of Governments to implement it.

The Director-General then referred to the golden opportunity provided by the net oil income of the ten oil-exporting countries of the Region which, accumulating over the period 1975 to 1985, would amount to some US\$ 615 billion. Such a sum would provide an enormous resource for investment to assist the less affluent countries of the Region in intensive and extensive agricultural and rural development.

Commenting on priorities in the Region, the Director-General expressed the view that the first priority was to initiate studies and projects in support of national development activities with a view to evolving the most suitable approaches for removing constraints on development and expediting the whole development process. Such studies needed to be carried out on a regional and sub-regional basis. There was also an urgent need to improve planning and implementation of all the activities in question since, in spite of the large number of on-going programmes and projects carried on by the various Governments and those financed and supported by UNDP, the World Bank and other agencies, progress had been slow. He stressed too the need for trained manpower at every level in agriculture.

As he and Mr. McNamara had frequently emphasized, the main long-term objective of development must be the raising of the productivity and living standards of the smaller farmer and for this a comprehensive strategy for integrated rural development had to be devised which would include improved health, nutrition and physical infrastructure, vocational training, better income distribution, viable credit systems, fuller extension services, the organization of cooperatives and the encouragement of women to play a bigger role in economic and social development.

The Director-General referred to the steps taken to improve FAO's overall performance. These included measures to integrate the work of Headquarters and the Regional Offices and the setting up of small policy and planning groups in the Regional Offices. FAO was also, of course, cooperating fully with UNDP in the implementation of the Country Programming system.

Referring to regional cooperation, the Director-General welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Economic Commission for West Asia, which would strengthen economic cooperation in the Region, and expressed his satisfaction with the establishment of constructive relations with the Council of Arab Economic Unity, the Arab Fund, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development and the Arab Centre for Study of Arid Zones and Dryland.

Statement by the FAO Assistant Director-General and
Regional Representative for the Near East Region

In commenting on the Second Development Decade, the Assistant Director-General stated that the strategy had called for an annual increase of 4 percent in agricultural production but, in fact, only 2.8 percent had so far been achieved in the Near East Region. This had been due not only to vagaries of weather but to a number of other factors. He stressed the need to increase the efforts being made to develop the vast arid, semi-arid and marginal lands of the Region and referred to the various in-depth studies carried out in this field. A Regional Range Management Officer had now been secured and a number of countries were intensifying their efforts to check desert creep.

The Regional Office had already taken a number of important steps in the development field related to agricultural production, such as population growth, the role of women in rural development, environment factors and research.

A number of Country Perspective Studies for long-term planning had been or were being completed while a pioneering study on Agricultural Adjustment in the Near East had also been launched.

In regard to agricultural research, the Regional Office had sponsored missions to most countries of the Region dealing particularly with the organizational and administrative aspects of the subject. In the forthcoming year the Regional Office would hold a Regional Conference on Agricultural Research. The Consultative Group

on International Agricultural Research had approved the establishment of an International Research Centre for Agriculture in Dry Areas in the Near East Region while Kuwait had established a fund for Arab Scientific Research to develop science and technology in the Region and elsewhere.

The Regional Office had established a system of formal working relations with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development and with the Arab Centre for Study of Arid Zone and Dryland. It was also engaged in joint activities with the Council of Arab Economic Unity and had developed a growing working relationship with the Kuwait Fund for Social and Economic Development, the Arab Fund, the Arab African Bank and other regional bodies. The Regional Office was coordinating its activities with the UNICEF Regional Office in Beirut and an FAO/UNICEF Coordinating Officer would join the Regional Office before the end of the year while, in discussions with the Executive Secretary of ECWA, it had been agreed to initiate a joint Agricultural Division with that Organization.

Referring to the recommendations of the 11th FAO Regional Conference, the Assistant Director-General informed the Conference that the Government of Iraq had offered US\$ 768,000, and more in kind, as contributions towards the Regional Applied Research Programme for Land and Water Use. UNDP had pledged a further US\$ 280,000 in support of this Project. Iraq had also offered to contribute towards a regional programme in fisheries and in support of strengthening the use of Arabic in the Regional Office.

It was hoped that countries would support the Near East Animal Production and Health Development Centre Project after the termination of UNDP support to this Project in mid 1975. A Regional Project for the survey of the Gulf fisheries potential was being executed by FAO with Qatar as its headquarters while, through sub-regional development assistance, a Fisheries Training Centre Project, based on Kuwait, was under formulation funds and facilities having been pledged by the Governments of Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Iraq.

Integrated Rural Development, with emphasis on employment and marketing, was receiving the attention of the Regional Office and the appointment of a Project Manager Designate at the Regional Office represented a first step in the establishment of a UNDP financed Regional Institute for Marketing, Research, Training and Information. The Regional Project on Improvement of Field Food Crops had been expanded and a full scale UNDP financed Regional Project valued at US\$ 1 million and assisted by other aid giving bodies was now operational. The Project Manager, Dr. Abdul Hafiz had received the B.R. Sen Award for his contribution to the introduction of HYV in the Region.

Through the Regional Consultant Fund missions in a variety of fields had been sent to a number of countries. The Assistant Director-General expressed the hope that the Conference would support his proposal for the addition to the Regional Office of a small group which, in cooperation with the Investment Centre at Headquarters, could initiate investment orientated studies and missions able to formulate projects for the consideration of financing institutes and agencies in the Region.

Statement on Behalf of the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference

The representative of the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference recalled the acute food crisis of 1972 which made the UN General Assembly decide to convene a World Food Conference in November 1974. Since that decision had been taken, the position in some aspects, such as in fertilizer supplies, had worsened.

Two main Conference documents (already sent to Governments), the "Assessment of the World Food Situation" and the "Proposals for National and International Action" contained a detailed presentation of the strategy which emerged from Conference Secretariat studies. These had been endorsed by the Preparatory Committee of the World Food Conference.

It was hoped that objectives achieved under this strategy would lead to the formulation of a World Food Policy. The first objective, namely, increasing food production within the developing countries, envisaged an increase in annual average growth rate of food production from 2.6 percent to at least 3.6 percent over the next decade (still below the target of the Second Development Decade - DD2). For this massive investment in inputs, including increased fertilizer and pesticide production and reduction of water loss, research and integrated rural development, would be required. Such investment would require the doubling of the rate of investment over the next five years to some US\$ 5 billion per annum with a corresponding increase in external assistance.

An adequate administrative framework had also to be created since, without it, integrated rural development programmes would hardly be pursued. With regard to the financial means for implementing such programmes, the recent acquisition of wealth by the oil exporting countries had created an atmosphere of confidence and hope.

Distribution problems had also to be overcome. These included maldistribution due to poverty and malnutrition and the rundown of previously held large surplus food stocks. There was an urgent need for a world food security system under which individual countries would hold reserve stocks coordinated by some international mechanism. In this connection, considerable progress had been made in recent months in discussions initiated by FAO on an International Undertaking on Food Security.

Food aid would be needed in the future, as it had been in the past, but on a more permanent and secure basis.

Another main objective of a World Food Policy would be the need to effect stabilization of prices and expansion of export markets for the products of developing countries. The inherent conflict between the national objectives of many governments and the international requirements for food security and price stability could not be resolved without some agreed arrangement for stabilizing grain prices. Attention had also to be given to the removal of obstacles to trade.

It was clear, therefore, that there was now an urgent need for countries to reconcile national interests with the needs of collective economic security. The issues which had, therefore, to be closely examined by countries before the Conference met were: (1) the strategy itself; (2) its implementation; and (3) the mobilization of additional resources for implementation.

Finally, mention had to be made of the proposal for establishing a World Food Authority as the means of implementing the strategy which had been described. The main purpose of the Authority would be to strengthen the action of existing Agencies and coordinate international actions and policies in the three inter-related fields of food production, food security and food aid. It would not, however, become another operating Special Agency of the UN nor would it take over the functions of the existing specialized organizations such as FAO and the World Bank.

Statement of the Executive Secretary of the
UN Economic Commission for West Asia (ECWA)

The Executive Secretary stressed the importance of the creation of his Commission at a time when spectacular and profound changes were taking place in the established economic order.

The Commission's mandate was "to help national progress through regional co-operation" and in this it would cooperate with the various organizations of the UN family and other bodies.

He said that the work programme of ECWA would include projects for the planned development of water resources and studies on ways to accelerate production of cereals and livestock, fill the food gaps, apply the concept of rural integration, develop the chemical fertilizer industry and the means of intensifying regional co-operation and integration in the agricultural sector. These projects would be undertaken in cooperation with FAO.

Statement of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP)

The Executive Director stressed that WFP was now feeling the full impact of spiralling prices of food and transport making it necessary to restrict the programme.

While at the world level, and up to 1985, no food deficit appeared likely this was not the case so far as certain individual developing countries unable to benefit from rising commodity prices, were concerned. Such countries were likely to be adversely and dramatically affected.

It was clear that food deficits in developing countries would grow substantially larger during forthcoming decades. Crucial recommendations were, therefore, expected and hoped for from the World Food Conference in regard to the size and quality of the international flow of new resources.

The Executive Director referred to the important advantages to be gained from donor countries channelling a greater proportion of food aid through multilateral channels. WFP had some US\$ 600 million worth of projects in the pipeline, yet for 1975 it had to restrict new commitments to US\$ 125 million although for these emphasis was being placed on the least developed of developing countries.

With regard to the Near East Region, over 35 percent of WFP resources had been allocated to it since the inception of the programme. Out of the US\$ 500 million spent in the Region, some US\$ 250 million had been invested in land reclamation and settlement, irrigation and drainage, afforestation, soil conservation and development of industrial and mining projects; over US\$ 125 million for human resources; US\$ 100 million for improvement of economic and social infrastructure and US\$ 34 million for emergency assistance. These sums, in fact, represented a total mobilization of some US\$ 2.5 billion for investment over the period. There was still, however, a great need for continuing and expanding assistance - assistance which WFP, with its experience and organization, was well capable of handling. Contributions from countries in the Region now able to help, such as the recent generous gift from Saudi Arabia, as well as from developed countries, would, therefore, be warmly welcomed.

Statements made by Heads of Delegations

Since the views expressed by heads of delegations in country statements prepared for the Conference are reflected in the record of discussions contained in this Report, no attempt has been made to summarize them here.

