

**ERC/04/REP**

***REPORT***

**Montpellier, France,  
5 – 7 May 2004**

**Twenty-Fourth FAO  
Regional Conference  
For Europe**

**REPORT**  
**of the**  
**FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**

**Twenty-Fourth Session**  
**Montpellier, France, 5 – 7 May 2004**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**Rome, 2004**



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## SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Follow-up to the World Food Summit and *World Food Summit: five years later***

#### *For the attention of Governments*

The Conference underlined:

1. Regular monitoring of implementation of the goals of the World Food Summit (WFS) as an important part of the fight against hunger and malnutrition (para. 15 (a));
2. Agricultural development as an engine of economic growth and an essential component to reduce poverty and achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (para. 15 (b));
3. The need to prioritize rural development and food security issues in national development strategies (para. 15 (d));
4. The importance of strengthening competitiveness of agriculture and non-agriculture sectors to raise rural incomes (para. 15(e));
5. Good governance, enhancing the capacity of governments and administrations, and the prevention of conflict as essential factors for achieving food security (para. 15(g));
6. The importance of land rights, land markets and an enabling environment for rural entrepreneurs, access to markets, credits, market information, advisory services and proper infrastructure (para. 15(i));
7. The importance of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as a tool to support the conservation of plant genetic resources and to encourage benefit sharing (para. 15(q)).

#### *For the attention of FAO*

The Conference underlined:

8. The importance of FAO's work, both normative and operational in the European Region to support policy assistance and capacity building (para. 15(p));
9. The leading role of FAO in the Collaborative Partnerships on Forests and the support of the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of the Forests in Europe as well as the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (para. 15(r)).

## **Food Safety and Quality in Europe**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

10. Reaffirmed that food safety was a universal and non-negotiable right (para. 20(a));
11. Confirmed recommendations endorsed by the FAO/WHO Pan European Conference on Food Safety and Quality (Budapest, 2002) (para. 20(b));
12. Agreed that food quality was not limited to food safety, but included nutritional and added-value characteristics such as forms of production (oriented to environmental protection, animal welfare and biodiversity) and production areas (designation of origin) (para. 20(c));
13. Agreed that traditional products and designation of origin, carefully controlled, could help to sustain employment in rural areas and contribute to rural development in both developed and developing countries (para. 20(d));
14. Stressed that control systems and a risk analysis approach could help to improve food safety (para. 20(g)).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

15. Stressed the importance of FAO technical assistance in capacity building in food safety in order to comply with international food standards (para. 21);
16. Requested that FAO assistance should focus on the fundamental need to assess the food composition, including the content of traditional foods for achieving food quality and nutritional balance and avoiding nutrition caused diseases (obesity, overweight, malnutrition) (para. 24).

## **Agricultural Research: Its role and contribution to sustainable rural development**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

17. Confirmed the emphasis on sustainable agriculture and rural development based on the needs of rural communities and their importance to society as a whole (para. 27(a));
18. Acknowledged the various roles of agriculture and the importance of a competitive farming sector (para. 27(b));

19. Recognized the need to broaden agricultural research to include rural development and research on impact assessment of the revised Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and to conduct more interdisciplinary research (para. 27(c));
20. Confirmed the importance of renewing the focus on agricultural and rural development in the development assistance to developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger (para. 27(d));
21. Underlined the need for special attention to revitalize agricultural research and to increase relevant resources in the development assistance to developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger (para. 27(e));
22. Recognized the role of the European research networks and urged the need to refocus them to promote multidisciplinary research supporting sustainable rural development throughout Europe (para. 27(f));
23. Noted that the new EU member countries could facilitate coordination of further collaboration of the EU with Balkan and CIS countries in research and technology (para. 30).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

24. Requested FAO to assist in monitoring the sustainability of European research networks and should facilitate CEE and CIS countries to establish linkages to international networks and access to international collaboration in agriculture research (para. 28);
25. Noted the need for further support to new EU member countries in restructuring research institutions and in establishing private research (para. 30).

### **Report on FAO Activities in the Region, 2002-03**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

26. Urged Member Nations, who had not yet established a National Codex Committee, to make efforts to do so (para. 41);
27. Stressed that ensuring land tenure was important for the development of the agriculture and rural sectors (para. 42).



*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

28. Stressed that FAO activities in the European region were of paramount importance in assisting a number of countries to meet the challenges in agricultural and rural development (para. 37);
29. Expressed its satisfaction with the increased FAO collaboration with other international organizations as well as its cooperation with European NGOs, and requested this collaboration be further developed and strengthened (para. 38);
30. Urged FAO to strengthen its activities to implement the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (para. 39);
31. Underlined that the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EUFMD) was a valuable resource in assisting European countries in combating this serious transboundary disease (para. 40);
32. Welcomed the work of FAO in the area of land management and overall natural resource management (para. 42);
33. Emphasized the importance of policy assistance and institution capacity building and welcomed FAO's work in this area (para. 43);
34. Welcomed the activities undertaken by FAO in the areas of fisheries and forestry (para. 44);
35. Endorsed the recommendations contained in the document to strengthen agricultural production by supporting non-farm income generation activities in the framework of integrated rural development, including grass-roots level development and policy assistance at local level (para. 45);
36. Welcomed the attention given to the new emerging issues such as organic farming, biotechnology and biosafety as well as assistance to transition countries in their efforts for EU integration (para. 45).

**Programme for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide to  
Reduce Food Insecurity and Poverty**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference noted that:

37. More attention would need to be given to vulnerable groups to prevent their exclusion (para. 52(a));

38. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was a powerful tool to be used for poverty reduction and to increase food security achieving the MDG, and to promote local democracy, transparency and accountability (para. 52(b));
39. ICT should be implemented with a high degree of partnership among the various stakeholders (para. 52(c)).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

40. Stressed that FAO should focus its ITC efforts on areas with a comparative advantage and coordinate closely with other UN agencies within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (para. 52(e));
41. Urged that donors and international organizations, including FAO, should assist in bridging the digital divide by incorporating their activities into national e-strategies within national poverty reduction programmes (para. 54).

**Date, Place and Main Theme(s) of the Twenty-fifth FAO Regional Conference for Europe**

*For the attention of Governments*

The Conference:

42. Welcomed the renewed offer extended by the Delegation of Latvia to host the next Conference and also welcomed the offer extended by the Delegation of Austria to host the 26<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe in that country (para. 58).

*For the attention of FAO*

The Conference:

43. Agreed that both offers should be conveyed to the Director-General for decision in consultation with the Members of the Region (para. 58);
44. Unanimously endorsed the statement made by the Delegation of Ireland to the effect that, given the recent enlargement of the European Union and the changes taking place within the wider region, the European Community and its twenty five member states was of the opinion that it was now opportune to reassess the objectives and format of the Regional Conference for Europe as well as of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) (para. 59);
45. Agreed that the Executive Committee of the ECA be mandated to examine how future conferences should be organized, with a view to presenting proposals for changes for the consideration of the European Regional Group during the preparation for the next (25<sup>th</sup>) FAO Regional Conference for Europe (para. 60);

46. Further agreed that the Executive Committee should consider how the Regional Conference for Europe could best meet the needs of the membership and increase its relevance to the changing situation in the European Region (para. 61);
47. Stressed that the Regional Conference for Europe should continue to facilitate debate on themes of relevance to the entire European Region and attract a high level of participation (para. 61).

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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1. The Twenty-fourth FAO Regional Conference for Europe was held in Montpellier, France, from 5 to 7 May 2004 at the invitation of the Government of France.
2. The List of Participants is given in Appendix A to this Report.

### **OPENING CEREMONY**

3. The Director-General of FAO, Mr Jacques Diouf, welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed appreciation to the Government of France for the hospitality and excellent facilities that had been provided for the Conference.
4. The Chairman of the Interministerial Committee on Food and Agriculture of France, Mr Alain Pierret, welcomed participants to the Conference on behalf of the Government of France and expressed deep regrets that His Excellency, Hervé Gaymard, Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Rural Affairs of France, was not able to attend the ceremony. He stressed the importance of the conference in the new enlarged Europe where the rural sector is still a key component and the long tradition of France in agriculture. In referring to the Agenda of the Conference, the Chairperson indicated that it included items of great importance to the Region and the Country.

### **ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR**

5. The Conference unanimously elected the delegation of France as Chairperson.
6. The delegations of the following countries were elected as Vice-Chairpersons:
  - Ireland
  - Turkey
  - Ukraine
7. Mr Francisco Martínez Arroyo, Alternate Permanent Representative of Spain to FAO, was elected Rapporteur.

### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE**

8. The Conference adopted the Agenda as given in Appendix B to this report and the Timetable for the session.

### **STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

9. The Director-General delivered his Statement to the Conference, the text of which is given in Appendix C to this report.

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT AND  
WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: *fyI'***

10. The item, introduced by the Secretariat, highlighted the FAO initiatives to alleviate poverty and the dimension of food security as well as the need for coherent and consistent action in the fight against hunger.
11. Heads of Delegation, as well as a representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation for Europe<sup>2</sup> who highlighted the outcome of the Consultation's debate on this item, intervened on this agenda item.
12. The Conference expressed concern at the slow progress in meeting the goal of the World Food Summit to half the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015, and that on the basis of current reduction results, there was danger of not meeting the target.
13. The Conference took note that the European Community (EC) and its member states have reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
14. The Conference welcomed the renewed commitment by the EC and its member states through multilateral institutions to ensure the focus on poverty reduction.
15. The Conference underlined the following points:
  - a) Regular monitoring of the implementation of the goals of the World Food Summit (WFS) was an important part of the fight against hunger and malnutrition.
  - b) Development of agriculture as the engine of economic growth was an essential component to reduce poverty and achieve the MDG.
  - c) The importance of policy coherence as a means through which the MDG could be achieved.
  - d) The need to prioritize rural development and food security issues in national development strategies.
  - e) The importance of strengthening competitiveness of agriculture and non-agriculture sectors to raise rural incomes.
  - f) The importance of economic growth and sustainable development solutions were vital for poverty alleviation.
  - g) Good governance, enhancing the capacity of governments and administrations, and the prevention of conflict were essential factors in achieving food security.
  - h) The impact of HIV/AIDS on food security.
  - i) The need for land rights, land markets and an enabling environment for rural entrepreneurs, access to markets, credits, market information, advisory services and proper infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> ERC/04/3

<sup>2</sup> Held in Montpellier on 3 and 4 May 2004. The Statement of the Consultation is attached as Appendix D to this Report.

- j) The lack of nutrition education and the unhealthy composition of diets as reasons for the dual burdens of undernutrition/obesity.
- k) The need to provide precise nutritional information and to improve nutrition education.
- l) International cooperation, including support to the multilateral system, played a vital role in combating food insecurity.
- m) Effectiveness of food aid was essential, but it should not impair local and regional production and markets.
- n) The UN Hunger Task Force and the on-going work of the Intergovernmental Working Group for the elaboration of a set of Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security were essential.
- o) The Maputo Declaration of the African Union marked a significant, progressive step with its commitment to devote at least ten percent of the national budgets to the agriculture sector.
- p) Importance of FAO's work - both normative and operational - in the European Region to support policy assistance and capacity building.
- q) The importance of the ratification and implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as a tool to support the conservation of plant genetic resources and to encourage benefit sharing.
- r) The leading role of FAO in the Collaborative Partnerships on Forests and the support of the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of the Forests in Europe as well as the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

16. The Conference expressed its appreciation for the document prepared on this item which highlighted the main causes of food insecurity in the European Region, including natural disasters and man-made conflicts and endorsed the recommendations contained in the document.

17. Member Nations reiterated their commitment to achieving WFS goals in the European Region.

### **FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY IN EUROPE<sup>3</sup>**

18. The item, introduced by the Secretariat, provided an overview of the different approaches to concepts of food quality. The importance of consumer information and participation was stressed as well as the role of the public and private sectors in the control of quality standards.

19. Heads of Delegation, as well as a representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation for Europe<sup>4</sup> who presented an outcome of the debate which took place on this item during the Consultation, intervened on this agenda item.

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<sup>3</sup> ERC/04/4, ERC/04/INF/10 and ERC/04/LIM/1

<sup>4</sup> The statement is attached in Appendix E to this Report

20. During the ensuing discussion, Member Nations:
- a) Reaffirmed that food safety was a universal and non-negotiable right.
  - b) Confirmed recommendations endorsed by the FAO/WHO Pan European Conference on Food Safety and Quality (Budapest, 2002).
  - c) Agreed that food quality was not limited to food safety, but included nutritional and added-value characteristics such as forms of production (oriented to environmental protection, animal welfare and biodiversity) and production areas (designation of origin).
  - d) Agreed that traditional products and designation of origin, carefully controlled, could help to sustain employment in rural areas and contribute to rural development in both developed and developing countries.
  - e) Noted that the current average diet of the European population was far from ideal (increased occurrence of obesity) and that promotion of quality, combined with effective education, could assist in improving this situation.
  - f) Emphasized the importance of providing information on food quality, which implied the active involvement of all stakeholders from producers to consumers.
  - g) Stressed that control systems and a risk analysis approach could help to improve food safety.
  - h) Underlined the need to define the concept of traceability in food safety as fundamental for consumer health.
21. Some delegates from non-EU countries stressed the importance of FAO technical assistance in capacity building in food safety in order to comply with international food standards.
22. The need to develop objective parameters to define various aspects of quality was emphasized by some members.
23. The Conference commended the document<sup>5</sup> prepared on this item and endorsed its recommendations on food safety and quality.
24. FAO's assistance was requested to focus on the fundamental need to assess the food composition, including the content of traditional foods for achieving food quality and nutritional balance and avoiding nutrition caused diseases (obesity, overweight, malnutrition).

### **AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH: ITS ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT<sup>6</sup>**

25. The item, introduced by the Secretariat, provided an overview on the role of agricultural research in rural development, challenges and trends and needs to upgrade and reorient research to better serve sustainable rural development to the benefit of a wider rural community.

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<sup>5</sup> ERC/04/4

<sup>6</sup> ERC/04/5 and ERC/04/5-Sup.1

26. Heads of Delegation, as well as a representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation for Europe<sup>7</sup> who highlighted the outcome of the Consultation's debate on this item, intervened on this agenda item.
27. During the discussion that followed, Member Nations:
- a) Confirmed the emphasis on sustainable agriculture and rural development based on the needs of rural communities and their importance to society as a whole.
  - b) Acknowledged the various roles of agriculture and the importance of a competitive farming sector.
  - c) Recognized the need to broaden agricultural research to include rural development and research on impact assessment of the revised Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and to conduct more interdisciplinary research.
  - d) Confirmed the importance of renewing the focus on agricultural and rural development in the development assistance to developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger.
  - e) Underlined the need for special attention to revitalize agricultural research and to increase relevant resources for new EU and CIS countries to ensure the development of agriculture.
  - f) Recognized the role of the European research networks and urged the need to refocus them to promote multidisciplinary research supporting sustainable rural development throughout Europe.
28. The Conference requested FAO to assist in monitoring the sustainability of European research networks and should facilitate CEE and CIS countries to establish linkages to international networks and access to international collaboration in agriculture research.
29. The Conference took note of the disagreement of the EC with the content of paragraph 9 (Document ERC/04/5) related to sustainability of mainstream agriculture as it did not reflect the current situation, since changes in land use were already taking place towards sustainability of agriculture.
30. The Conference also noted the need for further support to new EU member states in restructuring research institutions and in establishing private research. The new member states could facilitate coordination of further collaboration of the EU with Balkan and CIS countries in research and technology.
31. The Conference welcomed the document, and endorsed its recommendations on agricultural research for rural development.

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<sup>7</sup> The Statement is attached in Appendix F to this Report



**REVIEW OF THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE IN THE REGION:  
FOCUS ON RURAL POVERTY<sup>8</sup>**

32. Under this item, the Secretariat highlighted that poverty in Europe and Central Asia had increased during the 1990s but was in general less than in other regions. However, in the poorer countries poverty was as severe as in poor areas of the developing world. In the European Region poverty was concentrated in the Western Balkans and Commonwealth of Independent States.

33. The absence in the document of specific proposals on poverty alleviation in the region was commented upon by the EC. It was also noted that the effects of agricultural growth on poverty depended on linkages within the agricultural sector and between agriculture and other sectors.

34. The Conference noted that poverty existed on a wide scale in the region.

35. The Conference was informed of the efforts deployed by Member Nations to alleviate poverty in rural areas through support to agriculture and rural development.

**REPORT ON FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION, 2002-03<sup>9</sup>**

36. Under this item, the Secretariat outlined the activities in the European Region in the biennium 2002-2003.

37. The Conference welcomed the document and stressed that FAO activities in the European region were of paramount importance in assisting a number of countries to meet the challenges in agriculture and rural development.

38. The Conference expressed its satisfaction on the increased collaboration of FAO with other international organizations as well as the cooperation with European NGOs and requested that such collaboration be further developed and strengthened.

39. The Conference welcomed the ratification by nine of the then fifteen member states of the EC and four of the new member states of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture by 31 March 2004. It urged FAO to strengthen its activities to implement the Treaty.

40. The Conference underlined that the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EUFMD) was a valuable resource in assisting European countries in combating this serious transboundary disease.

41. The Conference urged Member Nations which had not yet established a National Codex Committee, to make efforts to do so.

42. The Conference welcomed the work of FAO in the area of land management and overall natural resource management.

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<sup>8</sup> ERC/04/6

<sup>9</sup> ERC/04/2

43. The Conference emphasized the importance of policy assistance and institutional capacity building and welcomed FAO's work in this regard.
44. The Conference welcomed the activities undertaken by FAO in the areas of fisheries and forestry.
45. The Conference endorsed the recommendations contained in the document to strengthen agricultural production by supporting non-farm income generation activities in the framework of integrated rural development, including grass-roots level development and policy assistance at local level. It further welcomed the attention given to the new emerging issues such as organic farming, biotechnology and biosafety as well as assistance to transition countries in their efforts for EU integration.
46. The Hungarian Delegation informed the Conference about the reconstruction of the building currently housing the Subregional Office in Budapest and requested consideration of its hosting a bigger unit, like the FAO Regional Office for Europe.
47. The Conference was informed that on the occasion of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Committee for Europe (September 2004, Bratislava) European member countries of Codex would be able to participate in a workshop organized by the Netherlands and Slovakia, on the enhancement of a national Codex Committee.
48. The Conference took note of the offer by Austria to host the 17<sup>th</sup> FAO/ECA WPW Expert Meeting on Gender and Rural Development in June 2004.

#### **INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RICE: 2004<sup>10</sup>**

49. Introducing this item, the Secretariat stressed that rice was the staple food for a large majority of the world population and was also deeply embedded in the cultural heritage of societies.
50. The Conference took note of the activities undertaken by FAO for the preparation and coordination of the International Year of Rice and welcomed the document prepared by the Secretariat.

#### **PROGRAMME FOR BRIDGING THE RURAL DIGITAL DIVIDE TO REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY AND POVERTY<sup>11</sup>**

51. The Conference welcomed the information contained in the document prepared by the Secretariat on this item.

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<sup>10</sup> ERC/04/INF/5

<sup>11</sup> ERC/04/INF/6

52. The Conference noted that:

- a) More attention would need to be given to vulnerable groups to prevent their exclusion. Regional issues would also need to be addressed in building an inclusive information society.
- b) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was a powerful tool to be used for poverty reduction and to increase food security achieving the MDG, and to promote local democracy, transparency and accountability.
- c) ICT should be implemented with a high degree of partnership among the various stakeholders.
- d) Specific design and targeting of interventions were needed to ensure equitable and affordable access for the poor and marginalized.
- e) FAO should focus its ITC efforts on areas with a comparative advantage and coordinate closely with other UN agencies within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

53. The Conference underlined the importance of the World Agriculture Information Centre (WAICENT).

54. The Conference urged that donors and international organizations, including FAO, should assist in bridging the digital divide by incorporating their activities into national e-strategies within national poverty reduction programmes.

**INITIATIVE TO REVIEW AND UPDATE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL,  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY STRATEGIES AND  
POLICIES<sup>12</sup>**

55. The item was introduced by the Secretariat, which provided an overview on FAO assistance in updating national agricultural and rural development strategies and policies since the World Food Summit as part of an effort to assist Member Nations in setting strategies for attaining their WFS commitments. It was stressed that twenty Member Nations had received assistance in formulating agricultural and rural development strategies since 1993. The primary focus of assistance had been technical capacity building for formulation of sustainable agricultural and rural development policies within the overall framework of EU accession and Poverty Reduction Strategy Policies.

56. The Conference welcomed this document outlining FAO's important role in providing policy advice to governments and administrations of the region.

57. The Conference requested FAO to continue its activities focussing on long-term capacity building for technical matters and policy formulation.

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<sup>12</sup> ERC/04/INF/7

## **DATE, PLACE AND MAIN THEME(S) OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**

58. The Conference welcomed the renewed offer extended by the Delegation of Latvia to host the next Conference. The Conference also welcomed the offer extended by the Delegation of Austria to host the 26<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference for Europe. The Conference agreed that both offers should be conveyed to the Director-General for decision in consultation with the Members of the Region.

59. The Conference unanimously endorsed the statement made by the Delegation of Ireland to the effect that, given the recent enlargement of the European Union and the changes taking place within the wider region, the European Community and its twenty five member states were of the opinion that it was now opportune to reassess the objectives and format of the Regional Conference for Europe as well as of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA), the technical preparatory body for the regional conference.

60. The Conference agreed that the Executive Committee of the ECA be mandated to examine how future conferences should be organized, with a view to presenting proposals for changes for the consideration of the European Regional Group during the preparation for the next (25<sup>th</sup>) FAO Regional Conference for Europe.

61. The Conference further agreed that the Executive Committee should consider how the European Regional Conference could best meet the needs of the membership and increase its relevance to the changing situation in the European Region. The Regional Conference for Europe should continue to facilitate debate on themes of relevance to the entire European Region and attract a high level of participation.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

62. The Conference welcomed the organization of two side-events organized by the host government related to two technical items on its agenda<sup>13</sup>.

63. The Conference also welcomed the organization of information sessions on the FAO field programme<sup>14</sup>.

### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

64. With some amendments, the text of the draft report was approved by the Conference.

### **CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE**

65. On behalf of the Director-General, the Regional Representative for Europe thanked the host government for the welcome extended to all delegations. In particular, she

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<sup>13</sup> Side-event linked to Item 6: 'Food Quality and Sustainable Development'

Side-event linked to Item 7: 'Agricultural Research at the Service of Sustainable Rural Development'

<sup>14</sup> (i) Presentation of the project 'Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions (SARD-M)'  
(ii) Field programme on current projects in the Western Balkans and future approach (Serbia and Montenegro and the FYR of Macedonia)

expressed deep appreciation to the staff of the Ecole National Supérieure Agronomique de Montpellier (ENSAM) for the excellent facilities provided which contributed to the smooth and efficient conduct of the Conference.

66. On behalf of the Government of France, the Chairperson paid tribute to the active participation of all delegations and especially of the ten representing the countries newly admitted to EU membership. He also made reference to the vigorous efforts undertaken by the other countries of the South eastern sub-region which would permit them to adhere to EU membership in the future years. The Chairperson wished to place on record his appreciation of the generous contribution extended by the ENSAM, INRA, CIRAD and Agropolis.

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**APPENDIX A  
ANNEXE A  
APENDICE A**

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS  
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS  
LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES**

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Chairperson<br/>Président<br/>Presidenta</b>  | France                       |
| <b>Vice-Chairpersons<br/>Vice-Président(e)s<br/>Vicepresidentes</b>  | Ireland<br>Turkey<br>Ukraine |
| <b>Rapporteur</b>  | Spain                        |
| <b>Independent Chairman of the FAO Council<br/>Président indépendant du Conseil de la FAO<br/>Presidenta Independiente del Consejo de la FAO</b> | Aziz MEKOUAR (Morocco)       |

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**APPENDIX B**

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**AGENDA****I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur: *for decision*
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable: *for decision* (ERC/04/1-Rev.1 and ERC/04/INF/2-Rev. 1)

**II. STATEMENTS**

4. Statement by the Director-General (ERC/O4/INF/4)

**III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

5. Follow-up to the World Food Summit and *World Food Summit:fyl* : Regional Dimensions: *for discussion* (ERC/04/3)
6. Food Safety and Quality in Europe: Aspects concerning in particular quality, nutritional balance, the importance of agricultural land and cultural heritage (“terroirs”) (Outcome of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the European Commission on Agriculture): *for discussion* (ERC/04/4, ERC/04/INF/10 and ERC/04/LIM/1)
7. Agricultural Research: its role and contribution to sustainable rural development: *for discussion* (ERC/04/5 and ERC/04/5-Sup.1)
8. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture in the Region: Focus on Rural Poverty: *for discussion* (ERC/04/6)
9. Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2002-03: *for discussion and/or information* (ERC/04/2)
10. International Year of Rice, 2004: *for information* (ERC/04/INF/5)
11. Programme for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide to reduce Food Insecurity and Poverty: *for information* (ERC/04/INF/6)
12. Initiative to Review and Update National Agricultural, Rural Development and Food Security Strategies and Policies: *for information* (ERC/04/INF/7)

**IV. OTHER MATTERS**

13. Date, Place and main theme(s) of the Twenty-fifth FAO Regional Conference for Europe: *for decision*
14. Any other business
15. Adoption of the Report
16. Closure of the Conference

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## APPENDIX C

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### STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

*Mr Chairman,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Honourable Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

#### **(Introduction)**

It is a great pleasure to address the Twenty-fourth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which is being held in France for the first time, in this modern and dynamic city of Montpellier. On behalf of the Organization and of all of you, I should like to express my profound gratitude to the French Government and to the authorities of the Languedoc-Roussillon region for hosting this Conference and for their warm welcome.

#### **(State of food and agriculture in the world)**

During the first half of the 1990s, the number of undernourished people in the world declined by 37 million. In contrast, during the second half, it increased by 18 million. Positive achievements in many countries were countered by setbacks in many others. In 1999-2001, there were 842 million undernourished people in the world, including 798 million in the developing countries, 34 million in the countries in transition and 10 million in the industrialized countries. At this rate, the World Food Summit's objective of halving the number of hungry people by 2015 will only be achieved in 2150.

In 2003, world cereal utilization totalled some 1 970 million tonnes, exceeding production by 100 million tonnes.

The prices of many export commodities from developing countries are now lower than ever. Coffee is one of the most spectacular examples, but the same has occurred for cocoa, sugar and banana. Moreover, 43 countries earn more than 20 percent of their total export revenue and more than 50 percent of their total agricultural revenue from just one commodity. After the failure of the Cancun Ministerial Conference, negotiations have resumed following the meeting of the General Council of the World Trade Organization in December 2003. Commitment to achieving the Doha Development Agenda for the agricultural sector was confirmed at the Round Table held on this subject during the Thirty-second Session of the FAO Conference, for a fair trading policy essential for rural development and food security. In this context, the role of FAO's Committee on Commodity Problems is more important than ever. It is with this in mind that I wish to invite representatives of the Ministries of Trade to the next session of this Committee in February 2005.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations should promote agricultural development and protect the income of farmers in all countries of the world. FAO should support all actions that defend the parity of farmers' incomes with those of workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors. Related measures should not however cause distortions in the

international agricultural commodity market, with a resulting deterioration of living conditions of farmers in developing countries, as has happened with cotton.

At constant 1995 prices, external aid to agricultural development fell from US\$27 billion to between US\$10 and 15 billion during the 1990s, whereas the amount should be doubled and agriculture's share of national budgets should be increased if there is to be accelerated progress in reducing undernourishment.

**(Round tables on financing for agricultural development)**

For the purpose of mobilizing such financial resources, FAO has decided to organize, with the regional development banks, round tables on financing for agriculture alongside each of its 2004 Regional Conferences in the developing regions.

**(World Food Summit: five years later)**

During the June 2002 *World Food Summit: five years later* held in Rome, the Heads of State and Government resolved to hasten implementation of the Summit's Plan of Action and called for an International Alliance Against Hunger.

National alliances are thus being formed in member countries to mobilize governments, parliaments, NGOs, civil society, the private sector and agricultural organizations.

**(Agriculture)**

The developing countries need to take up the challenge of agricultural productivity and market competitiveness in order to improve their food security.

Soil degradation is accelerating, affecting 21 million hectares of arable land. In the arid and semi-arid areas that make up 45 percent of the world's land surface, the integrated management of land, water and fertilizer can significantly mitigate this situation.

Urban and periurban agriculture and home and school microgardens would help rapidly improve the nutritional status of poor population groups with relatively modest levels of investment. FAO has undertaken such projects in all the regions of the world, notably with Technical Cooperation Programme resources and TeleFood funds.

Livestock sustains some 800 million rural poor and meets 30 to 40 percent of total food requirements.

Transboundary animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease, haemorrhagic fever, Rift Valley fever, swine fever, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and avian influenza, are sources of concern for trade and public health. Yet, real progress has been made in this domain. The battle against old and new epidemics is a major challenge that FAO and its partners are striving to meet under the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES).

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has already been ratified by 48 countries, including 12 European countries, and will come into force on 29 June 2004.

**(Forestry)**

A ministerial meeting on forestry will be convened in Rome in 2005 to study the recommendations of the Regional Commissions and to make strategic decisions on the future of the sector, especially to strengthen measures against forest fires.

**(Fisheries)**

In the fisheries sector, almost 10 percent of the world's fish stocks are depleted and 18 percent are overexploited, mainly because of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, more efficient new technologies and excessive fishing capacity. The situation is aggravated by the absence of monitoring and surveillance of vessels employing satellite transponder technology, in particular.

FAO will therefore be convening a meeting of Fisheries Ministers at its Headquarters in 2005 to add renewed impetus to actions needed in this sector.

**(Sustainable agricultural development)**

As regards sustainable agriculture and rural development, FAO is formulating a four-year project for mountain regions.

The International Conference of Small Island Developing States will be held in Mauritius in August 2004. FAO is actively involved in this initiative and will organize a Ministerial Conference on the Development of Agriculture in Small Island States in Rome in 2005.

Although women account for 60 percent of agricultural production in developing countries, they still have unequal access to productive resources. FAO is striving to tackle this problem, devising specific indicators for appropriate policies.

**(Emergency situations)**

At the end of 2003, 38 countries were faced with serious food shortages requiring international assistance. Food aid in cereals fell to 7.4 million tonnes in 2001-2002, down 23 percent from 2000-2001.

Eight million small farmers and agricultural workers died from HIV/AIDS between 1985 and 2000 in the 25 most affected countries. FAO is involved in the fight against this pandemic, conducting surveys of its impact on food security and developing agricultural production techniques that are less labour intensive.

**(State of food and agriculture in the region)**

*Mr Chairman,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Honourable Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

This Conference meets at a historic moment for Europe as ten more countries have just become members of the European Union.

Europe is a very diversified region. It includes some of the most advanced countries of the world as well as others that have high levels of poverty. Factors fuelling poverty in the past fifteen years include the difficulties associated with moving from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, declining production in agriculture and the agrifood sector and resulting unemployment. In the Balkans, the situation has been further exacerbated by conflict.

The level of poverty in the region based on a poverty line of less than US\$2 per day stands at 21 percent and 5 percent of the population are affected by food insecurity. Such levels are lower than in most other parts of the world but significant differences exist among the countries.

Agricultural production in the region as a whole fell by about 0.5 percent per year between 1998 and 2003. Agricultural production gained in the so-called "transition" countries that were able to complete their land reform rapidly or that did not need to restructure their agricultural sectors as farms were already in private hands.

Agriculture accounted for 12 percent of the region's Gross Domestic Product in 2001. Agricultural exports represented 7.4 percent of total exports in 2002, for a value of US\$211 billion, against agricultural imports of US\$222 billion. The 25 countries of the European Union account for more than 90 percent of these figures.

The year 2003 was unfortunately not a good year for agriculture in most countries of the region. Drought, frost, flooding and other problems, such as locust and rodent infestation, led to a sharp decline in agricultural production, especially in Armenia, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine.

During the last biennium, six countries of the Balkans and Commonwealth of Independent States received emergency assistance from FAO to deal with crises in their agricultural sectors, for a total of some US\$15 million, including US\$2 million under the Technical Cooperation Programme. FAO also helped prepare the agricultural components of the United Nations Consolidated Appeals in the region.

**(The Conference agenda)**

*Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

**(Quality of food products)**

Improving the safety and quality of food products remains a key objective of governments, private sector and civil society organizations of all the countries of the region. Such improvement will help safeguard public health, meet consumer expectations and encourage local and international trade.

**(Role of agricultural research in sustainable rural development)**

The transfer and adoption of appropriate technology is essential for the sustainable intensification of agricultural systems. Very important to Europe in this connection are the

promotion of exchanges, the existence of regional and global partnerships and the strengthening of linkages between public and private research, extension, education and communication institutions.

**(Follow-up to the World Food Summit)**

The Conference will be reviewing the follow-up to the World Food Summit and the initiatives taken to achieve the Summit's objectives and the Millennium Development Goals. It will also be looking at the measures that have been taken under the Anti-Hunger Programme, the Right to Adequate Food and the International Alliance Against Hunger.

**(Main challenges and priorities for the future)**

*Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Special attention needs to be paid to the poorest countries of the region, especially those of southeast Europe and the Community of Independent States, to help resolve their problems of food insecurity and rural poverty.

FAO must continue to pursue its long-term priorities for Europe which extend until 2007 and which were determined at its Twenty-second Regional Conference for Europe four years ago. The region must take up the challenge of poverty and concentrate on strengthening sustainable rural livelihoods and food security. It also needs to improve food safety and quality and the management of natural resources. Lastly, it needs to strengthen its institutions and facilitate transition to a market economy, especially in the agricultural sector.

FAO is seeking to meet these challenges by working in close collaboration with its development partners in the region and with individual governments in order to address national priorities as defined in their poverty reduction policies and strategies and related programmes.

Through its Investment Centre, FAO is working with the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other financial institutions in establishing pilot technical cooperation projects. These could serve as models for the sustainable development and modernization of the agricultural sector and subsequently evolve into programmes that are much broader in scope.

I am confident that a determined Europe can meet the challenges of poverty and food insecurity. FAO, for its part, will continue to support governments and regional partners for the implementation of coherent and effective programmes and for the mobilization of domestic and external financing.

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



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**APPENDIX D**

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**GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NGOs/CSOs  
CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE *WORLD FOOD SUMMIT:  
FIVE YEARS LATER* AND ON THE PROMOTION OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD****Declaration**

Referring to the *World Food Summit: five years later*'s call for more political will and financial resources to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, the organizations taking part in the FAO/NGO-CSO Regional Consultation for Europe, held before the Twenty-Fourth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, put forward the following viewpoints and challenges to the governmental delegations participating in the FAO Regional Conference.

**1. End hunger and malnutrition**

*We request that the governments fulfil their obligations to secure everyone's right to food.*

It is unacceptable that 842 million people in the world and 13.8 million people in Europe are undernourished or starving. It is possible to end hunger and undernourishment quickly. What is lacking is the political will of the governments. We request that the governments of Europe immediately end undernourishment in Europe and do whatever is possible to contribute to ending hunger in the world.

**2. The principle of *food sovereignty* has to be recognized and adopted**

*We challenge the governments to recognize and adopt the principle of food sovereignty. We ask the delegates to recommend that FAO make a report on the concept and on the consequences of adopting the principle of food sovereignty.*

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant; to restrict the dumping of products in their markets; and to provide local fisheries-based communities the priority in managing the use of and the rights to aquatic resources. Food sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather, it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production.

There are many positive initiatives and encouraging examples of sustainable farming in Europe, but the development of agriculture in all European countries is going in the wrong, unsustainable direction. Industrialized agriculture - with increasingly bigger farms, the use of huge amounts of chemical fertilizer and pesticides, monocultures, heavy machinery, tapping of ground water and less and less varieties - is not sustainable. The rapid closing down of

small farms in all European countries is alarming, and the trend has to be reversed. Family farms with low input and diversified production mainly for local and domestic markets represent the future of farming and should be strongly supported by all governments.

The unsustainable development of agriculture in Europe is closely linked to the trade policy, which is not based on the needs of people and the environment but on the greed of the multinational companies.

The NGOs and CSOs want to underline that food sovereignty is the most important and basic principle for an agricultural policy to end hunger and to develop a sustainable agriculture.

### **3. More and better development assistance**

*We request that the level of official development assistance (ODA) from the OECD countries in Europe increases drastically, and we challenge the governments to cooperate with the NGOs and CSOs in Europe and our partner organizations in the developing countries to improve the quality of development assistance.*

We cannot accept that less than 15 percent of the ODA from the OECD countries goes to agriculture. Between 60 and 90 percent of the population in the developing countries are living in the countryside and are directly dependent on agriculture. About 75 percent of the undernourished people and people living in extreme poverty are farmers.

Development assistance is not only being used to eradicate hunger and poverty, and to promote sustainable development, but also to push policies that will increase poverty and hunger, reducing biodiversity and causing other environmental harm. An example of this is the push for GM-food in development aid. We therefore underline that the increase of development assistance for agriculture and rural development and the improvement of the quality of development assistance have to go hand in hand.

Better aid supports local communities and community-based organizations, particularly in building political empowerment, the capacity of people to articulate their views, implement their own development models, and participate meaningfully in development processes. It recognizes that the needs and realities of rural communities are at the core of solutions to solve hunger and poverty. Development assistance has to build on local and traditional knowledge and real participation.

### **4. Agrarian reform and access to natural resources**

*We ask the governments in Europe and FAO to support the work of social movements, NGOs and governments for agrarian reform and to secure farmers the right to and access to land, water, seeds and other productive resources.*

To eradicate hunger, undernourishment and poverty, it is necessary to undertake agrarian reform in many of the developing countries, and to secure farmers the right to and access to land, water, seeds and other productive resources, but the policies of some governments and international institutions are working in contradiction to this. There is an urgent need to change this. Most urgently, we call on the EU-member states, which are about to adopt Land Policy Guidelines for Development Cooperation, to involve NGOs/CSOs by means of broad

regional consultation, in order to guarantee real redistributive effects of land reform, and a pro-poor focus on vulnerable groups and their human right of access to land.

## **5. Civil society's role in ending hunger and a new governance model for the UN System**

The *WFS: fyl* has recognized the fundamental role of CSOs in meeting the objective of ending hunger. FAO has recognized the autonomy and the self-organization principle in its relations with CSOs and in particular with the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty.

Building on this process, FAO must ensure structural inclusion of CSOs in the normative and operational activities of the Organization. FAO must allow CSOs to participate in all the decision-making processes of the Organization in order to achieve a new governance in the UN system.

## **6. Promoting the right to food**

### **Regarding the fact that**

- most of the states present in the Regional Conference are parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and as such agreed to comply with its duties and obligations;
- they have in particular taken on responsibilities for the realization and full enjoyment of the Right to Food for every person in their territory;
- States have also agreed to work in close cooperation with other states for the full realization of these rights in all countries;

### **Regarding the fact that**

- in the Final Declaration of the *World Food Summit: fyl*, member states of FAO have agreed to develop 'Voluntary Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Food' (VG);
- the current draft under negotiation includes opportunities to strengthen the right to food and abolish hunger and malnutrition, but it still has weaknesses;

### ***We, the participants of the FAO/NGO-CSO Regional Consultation for Europe in conjunction with the 24th FAO Regional Conference,***

- Denounce the positions of states which try to weaken the language, objectives and scopes of the VG negotiation process;
- Regret that the EU, until now, has not undertaken any efforts to set limits to these tendencies. We call on all the European states to strongly support the implementation of the right to food, especially related to *the following elements*:

### **Elements:**

- States have to refer explicitly in the VG to the states' obligations to respect, protect, fulfil and comply with their obligation of progressive realization of the right to food.

- There must not be any retrogression in the already agreed language of existing international law. No phrase of the Voluntary Guidelines should deny the justiciability of the right to food as a basic principle. The right to food also poses extraterritorial obligations to states, which must be recognized.
- The Voluntary Guidelines should make a distinction between the countries that are states parties to the ICESCR and others.
- National strategy must be based on the assessment of causes of hunger.
- National strategies have to contain minimum elements, including the identification of vulnerable groups, improved access to productive resources (such as land, water, seeds and fishing resources), facilitated access to judicial procedures for all persons, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- Other national strategies (e.g. poverty reduction, rural development...) should not hinder or limit states in implementing the right to food. States should also provide for the participation of CSO/NGO in the elaboration and monitoring of the national strategy.
- States must not contribute to violations of the right to adequate food. States have to regulate and control the activities of third parties to prevent them from violating the right to adequate food of persons living on their territory.

**International obligations** in the Voluntary Guidelines have to be recognized by the European countries which are members of the FAO:

- As such, negative impact of states' policies on third states in relation to the right to food must be avoided.
- State parties in different international organizations should ensure the consistence of policies and programmes of these organizations so that they do not deprive citizens of other countries of their right to adequate food. If conflicting obligations occur, the VG should make clear that human right obligations (the right to adequate food) are the primary obligations of state parties.
- The VG should duly recognize that the right to water is an essential component of the right to adequate food and the right to health.
- Possible hazards of trade must be recognized and its negative impact on the implementation of the right to food have to be addressed.
- Also, international sanctions must not affect the right to adequate food of any particular country.
- Finally, the monitoring of the implementation of the VG should be explicitly provided for.

**We strongly call on the European states** for a final text of the Voluntary Guidelines, in which these topics are duly taken into account.

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## APPENDIX E

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### **GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NGOs/CSOs CONSULTATION ON FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY IN EUROPE**

We, consumers, farmers and representatives of the rural world, of environmental organizations and of international solidarity organizations from throughout Europe, have discussed, during the course of intense debate, the very relevant but also extremely broad topic of food quality and safety.

In accordance with the document put before you by FAO, we define quality as aligning the characteristics of a product with the stated or implied, objective or symbolic requirements of the consumer.

Access to a sufficient quantity of quality food is a basic right. We solemnly ask that these rights, the right to food and the right to food sovereignty, be recognized and defended by FAO and its European members.

Each country, or group of countries, has the duty to provide its inhabitants with the food they require. Evoking the principle of food sovereignty, we declare that each nation has the right to decide its procurement in terms of origin, means of production, and social and environmental standards. The duty of the government authorities – your duty – is to put in place the policies and instruments that are needed to satisfy these demands.

#### **1. A EUROPEAN MODEL OF CONSUMPTION**

We call for a European model of consumption that is based on quality and diversity, inherited from farmer know-how, from tradition and from cultural heritage. We also note that the prevailing agricultural model does not always correspond to our expectations.

The current norms of food processing and distribution that are determined under the influence of market oligopolies lead to the deterioration of flavour, the disappearance of product diversity and the standardization of consumption patterns, with a negative impact on the wellbeing and health of consumers.

In addition, trade and agricultural policies implemented under the impetus of the WTO tend to align agricultural commodity prices with those of the global producers that can offer the lowest prices and that exploit labour and the environment. These prices are widely applied to European farmers but they do not remunerate their work. Resulting falling prices cause certain agroindustrial enterprises to seek ever lower prices and, in doing so, to adopt dangerous policies that cannot meet consumer expectations but that can endanger their health.

We ask Member States and FAO:

- that producer and consumer organizations be involved in determining Codex Alimentarius standards and in defining European, national and regional food standards;
- that you support all education and information actions that can foster direct dialogue between consumers and farmers;
- that every means be deployed for food labelling to be clearer and more relevant to the consumers of all European countries, so that they may make informed choices and thus influence modes of production by their purchasing behaviour;
- to ensure that geographical specifications and designations of origin are protected at international level. They are one of the strong components of the European food model and the reflection of our culture, of our history, of our territories and of the men and women that keep them alive.

## **2. THE MODEL OF FAMILY FARMING**

We ask that you defend family farming as the only model capable of meeting the requisites of the food production system we advocate. This means introducing agricultural policy based on regulation of supply to match domestic consumption, on protection at borders to guarantee producers remunerative prices and on halting the export of subsidized products that depress developing-country markets. In recognition of the principle of food sovereignty, we ask that such a policy be placed within the scope of any country or group of countries.

In addition, for the export crops (coffee, cocoa, cotton, sugar, banana...) that enable the least advanced countries, notably the ACP countries, to earn the financial resources they need for their development, we ask that import quotas at guaranteed remunerative prices be maintained or established.

That is the only way that you will achieve your set objective of eradicating hunger from the world.

## **3. A REMUNERATIVE PRICE POLICY**

A remunerative price policy would be the best means of ensuring harmonious expansion that was considerate to the new members of the European Union, as it would help secure the financial resources needed to develop infrastructure and the economy and to support family farms and local processing industries.

A price policy is also feasible for consumers: a 25 percent increase in agricultural prices would only mean a surcharge of one to two percent for the consumer. This simple observation causes us to question the distribution of added value within the agricultural supply chain and to ask whether producers and consumers are not hostages to the interests of large-scale distribution. We ask the public authorities to restore a state of balance in market relations.

#### **4. THE REFORM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

The organizations participating in this consultation are particularly unhappy with the actual trends of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy. The reform adopted in Luxembourg in June 2003 runs counter to the model that we defend. The fall in prices, with decoupled support, is a negation of the value of the work of small farmers. This reform is also a cover to continue dumping products on domestic and international markets. It will also undoubtedly lead to desertification and to irreversible loss of agricultural land and know-how in the less developed parts of the European Union.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

If the diversified European food and agriculture model is to continue to exist, the young must be encouraged to take up farming and must be given long-term prospects of proper income and social recognition.

The only policy that can combine all these advantages must necessarily be defined together with the consumers, the farmers and the representatives of the rural world, of environmental organizations and of international solidarity organizations of the whole of Europe. Only so can our respective demands be reconciled.

That is the policy we propose and earnestly call for.

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**APPENDIX F**

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**GENERAL STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
NGOs/CSOs CONSULTATION ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND  
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**

Agricultural research in Europe is largely reductionist and geared towards industrial agriculture and food production. The need for standardization, economies of scale and economic returns has distanced farmers from consumers. Such research is largely oblivious to the environment. The technical choices are harmful to health and the environment, and there is no monitoring of risks. The European legislative framework for GMOs needs to be unified and enhanced by including regulations on the responsibility of patent holders and of government authorities that have authorized GMOs.

The world will not be fed by industrial agriculture. There is an urgent need, rather, to maximize benefit from the diversity of local environments, cultural heritage and farmer practices, the diversity of life forms and the diversity of human societies. This is where smallholder farming, breeding and innovation play a central role. Small-farmer know-how is today restricted by intellectual property regulations (UPOV and patents) and mandatory registration in the catalogue of distinct, homogeneous and stable seeds (DHS). This know-how needs to be rehabilitated, disseminated and shared within societies. This is where research can play an enabling role for the dissemination of small-farmer know-how, adopting a holistic, participatory approach that involves farmers, consumers, the scientific third party of associations with acquired competence, and the other social actors.

European agricultural research is now dominated by biotechnology. Through the GEF, the World Bank favours a liberal approach to GMOs in the legislative frameworks of the countries of East Europe and of the South.

It seems impossible to reform the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) from within, as it is designed and structured to support the development of an industrial approach to agriculture. This institutional rigidity seems to be reinforced by the rigidity of scientists and technicians, who are overly specialized in training and ill-equipped to face the complexities of reality. We also note a strong reluctance on the part of the scientific community to break out of this mould.

There is a very wide range of alternative initiatives and projects to the prevailing industrial system, especially as regards agroecology. These activities testify to the success of small-farmer agriculture but have not received capital investment or been publicized. The formation of multisectoral research teams pursuing a holistic approach is essential for the fostering of agroecological (which includes organic) and small-farmer agriculture if it is capable of involving all the actors.



**Civil society concludes by firmly requesting the following of governments and FAO:**

1. The results of agricultural research should not be patented and no priority should be given to genetic engineering technologies.
2. FAO should establish a reference framework for international agricultural research that is based on small-farmer know-how and on a holistic, participatory approach that includes farmers, consumers and the other social actors.
3. Governments should give financial priority to the realization of these programmes.
4. FAO wishes to broaden its sphere of governance. Organized civil society calls for this to be extended to agricultural research. FAO seems to be the only UN agency capable of leading a new orientation of agricultural research that is holistic, small-farmer centred and conducted along genuinely participatory lines.
5. A budget line allocated to agroecological agriculture to serve as a means of entry to this new approach. The sharing of experiences, information and training should be integrated into a capacity-building strategy.
6. With regard to agricultural research, FAO should promote the issue of agriculture and food sovereignty in all multilateral agreements on the environment and in strategic plans to reduce poverty.
7. FAO needs to protect small-farmer research and biodiversity against the restrictions imposed by the WTO agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). As for implementation of the International Treaty on Plant and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, governments need to ensure that genetic resources are not patented and remain freely available to farmers.

*FAO members in the European Region (November 2003)*

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|   |             |                       |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|
| Albania                                     | France      | Norway                |
| Armenia                                     | Georgia     | Poland                |
| Austria                                     | Germany     | Portugal              |
| Azerbaijan                                  | Greece      | Romania               |
| Belgium                                     | Hungary     | San Marino            |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina                      | Iceland     | Serbia and Montenegro |
| Bulgaria                                    | Ireland     | Slovakia              |
| Croatia                                     | Israel      | Slovenia              |
| Cyprus                                      | Italy       | Spain                 |
| Czech Republic                              | Latvia      | Sweden                |
| Denmark                                     | Lithuania   | Switzerland           |
| Estonia                                     | Luxembourg  | TFYR of Macedonia     |
| European Community<br>(member organization) | Malta       | Turkey                |
| Finland                                     | Moldova     | Ukraine               |
|   | Monaco      | United Kingdom        |
|   | Netherlands |                       |

*Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe*

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| First         | - | Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1949                   |
| Second        | - | Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1960                   |
| Third         | - | Rome, Italy, 8-13 October 1962                    |
| Fourth        | - | Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964             |
| Fifth         | - | Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966                 |
| Sixth         | - | St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968           |
| Seventh       | - | Budapest, Hungary, 21-25 September 1970           |
| Eighth        | - | Munich, Germany, Fed.Rep.of, 18-23 September 1972 |
| Ninth         | - | Lausanne, Switzerland, 7-12 October 1974          |
| Tenth         | - | Bucharest, Romania, 20-25 September 1976          |
| Eleventh      | - | Lisbon, Portugal, 2-7 October 1978                |
| Twelfth       | - | Athens, Greece, 22-27 September 1980              |
| Thirteenth    | - | Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982                 |
| Fourteenth    | - | Reykjavik, Iceland, 17-21 September 1984          |
| Fifteenth     | - | Istanbul, Turkey, 28 April-2 May 1986             |
| Sixteenth     | - | Cracow, Poland, 23-26 August 1988                 |
| Seventeenth   | - | Venice, Italy, 3-7 April 1990                     |
| Eighteenth    | - | Prague, Czechoslovakia, 24-28 August 1992         |
| Nineteenth    | - | Killarney, Ireland, 6-10 June 1994                |
| Twentieth     | - | Tel Aviv, Israel, 29 April-3 May 1996             |
| Twenty-first  | - | Tallinn, Estonia, 25-29 May 1998                  |
| Twenty-second | - | Porto, Portugal, 24-28 July 2000                  |
| Twenty-third  | - | Nicosia, Cyprus, 29-31 May 2002                   |
| Twenty-fourth | - | Montpellier, France, 5-7 May 2004                 |