



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

INSIDE FAO

—
A TRULY
GLOBAL
FORUM

**PUBLICATION PREPARED BY FAO OFFICE
FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
PUBLICATIONS BRANCH**

FAO. 2019. *Inside FAO – A truly global forum.* Rome.

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ISBN 978-92-5-131470-8

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INSIDE FAO

A T R U L Y
G L O B A L
F O R U M

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Inside FAO – A Truly Global Forum was prepared by FAO's Office for Corporate Communication. The editorial project was led by Pedro Javaloyes. The Art Director was Fabrizio Puzzilli. Andrea Palumbo wrote and revised the original text. The English version of the publication was edited by Lynette Hunt and Shane Harnett. Production was coordinated by Laura Galeotti. The FAO photography team, led by Sherri Dougherty, produced and digitized the images from FAO's archives. We wish to thank Sergio Ferraro for his contribution in reviewing the content.

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INTRODUCTION

At the United Nations Conference of 1943, in Hot Springs, Virginia, a specific plan was drawn up for the establishment of a permanent organization in the field of food and agriculture. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was founded a few years later, on 16 October 1945 in Quebec City, in Canada, and then temporarily established in Washington, D.C., in the United States of America. On 29 November 1949, the FAO General Conference established that the new permanent headquarters would be located in Rome, Italy. Rome had been the headquarters of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) since 1905, and the newly established Organization took over its duties from 1945. The Government of Italy provided a building from the 1930s, in the heart of Rome, which had been designed to host the Ministry of Italian Africa. Between 1950 and 1993, five new buildings were constructed adjacent to the first one, forming the architectural complex that you see now.

Today, around 11 000 people work for FAO, from almost all of the 194 Member Nations. Over 3 500 staff are based in Rome, and the rest are located in FAO's network of offices throughout the world. They include agronomists, ichthyologists, and experts in food security and forestry, as well as in politics, law, economics and social development.

The purpose of this book is to recount the Organization's history, its mission and its day-to-day work in achieving its mandate: to eradicate hunger,

food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide; eliminate rural poverty; promote the sustainable use of natural resources and encourage the development of more efficient and inclusive agricultural and food systems, through the definition of agreements and standards.

FAO, the largest specialized United Nations agency, is a global forum open to the different cultures of the Members. This is demonstrated by Organization's meeting rooms, named after the donor countries, and which you will read about in this book. Thanks to stunning photographs, informative text and explicative captions, this book describes the main rooms where world leaders and the top experts in food and agriculture gather to discuss some of the most important challenges facing our planet. The book also showcases a collection of extraordinary artworks, present throughout the 100 000 square metres of the architectural complex, donated by the Members and reflecting the talent of the international artists and cultural heritage from all corners of the globe.

Walking down the street from the Colosseum to the Baths of Caracalla, or leaving the Tiber river behind you and heading towards the Circus Maximus, passers-by might look up and wonder what is inside the imposing buildings on the Aventino Minore. This book opens FAO's doors to inform people about the archaeology and the history of its vast architectural complex, and to reveal the places where people are fighting global hunger.

CONTENTS

THE HISTORY

From Roman settlements to the origins of the architectural complex

The history of the site	8
The origins of the complex	20
FAO today	26



INSIDE FAO

Discovering the Organization's most prestigious spaces

34	The Entrance
42	The Atrium
46	The Sheikh Zayed Media and Knowledge Centre
50	The Flag Hall
52	The David Lubin Memorial Library
60	The China Lounge
64	The Plenary Hall
72	The Belgian Lounge
76	The Caribbean Lounge
82	The Thailand Lounge
84	The Japan Lounge



THE ROOMS

The meeting spaces of the global forum

- 88 A global and neutral forum
- 90 The Green Room
- 94 The Red Room
- 98 The Nordic Lounge
- 100 The Ethiopia Room
- 104 The Malaysia Room
- 108 The King Faisal Room
- 112 The Nigeria Room
- 114 The Philippines Room
- 116 The Mexico Room
- 118 The Iraq Room
- 122 The German Room
- 124 The Iran Room
- 126 The Lebanon Room
- 127 The Austria Room
- 128 The Pakistan Room
- 129 The Cuba Room
- 130 The Queen Juliana Room
- 131 The Canada Room
- 132 The India Room
- 134 The Azerbaijan Room
- 136 The Sudan Room
- 138 The Australia Room



MORE TO SEE

Rooms, spaces and works of art not to be missed

- The Indonesia Room 142
- The Morocco Room 144
- Angola Radio and Television Centre 148
- Korean Conference Service Centre 152
- UEMOA Room 153
- Espace Gabon 154
- Turkish Registration Centre 155
- Slovak Delegates' Lounge 155
- Other artworks 156
- The terrace 168

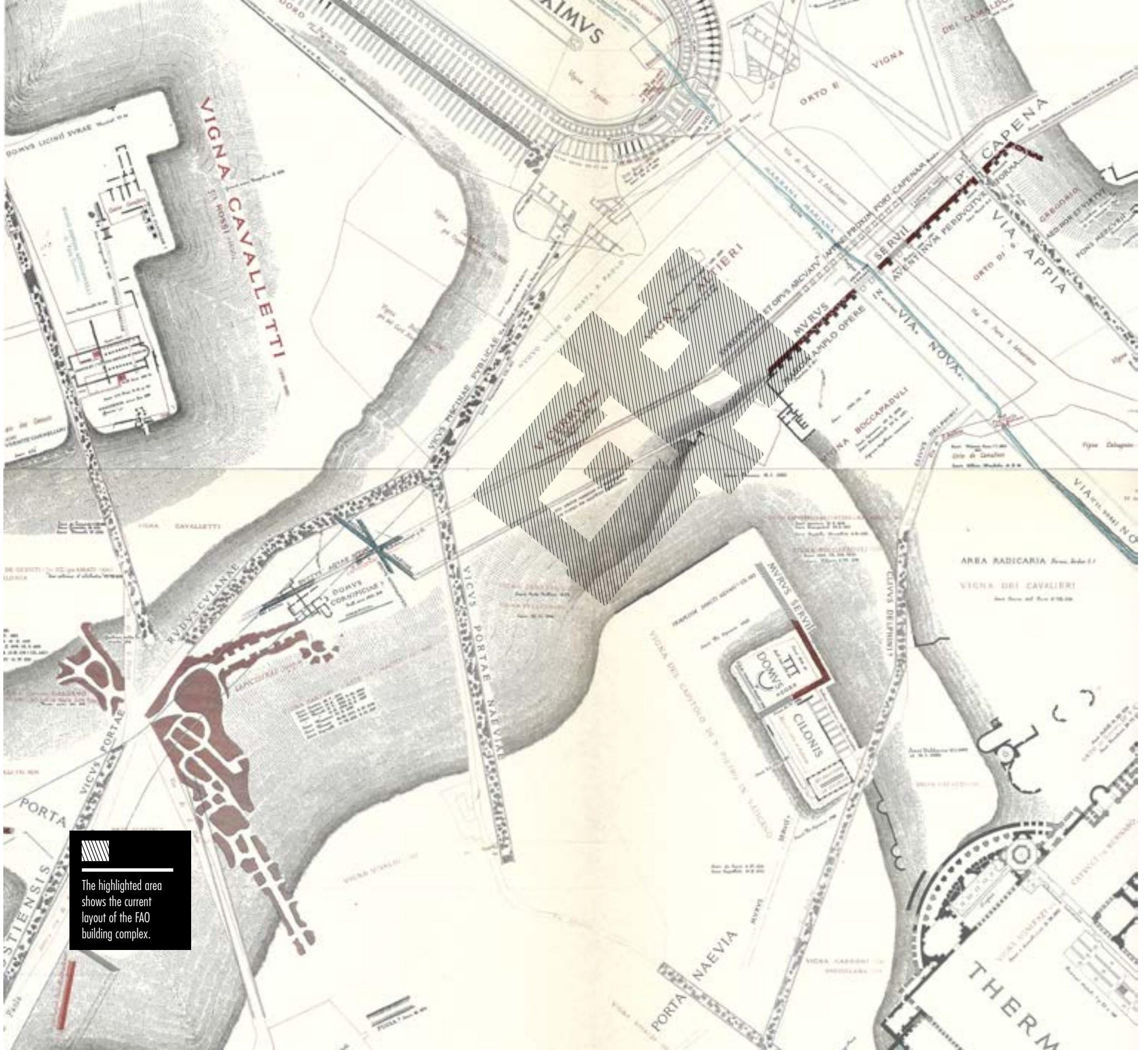
T H E H I S T O R Y

THE HISTORY OF THE SITE

The current FAO headquarters are located in an area of land created by a structural depression formed in the late geological history of the region between the main, broader part of the Aventine Hill towards the north, and one of its offshoots to the south, previously known as *Saxum* or *Aventino Minore*. In fact, over time, particularly during the modern era, the whole of Rome's topography (more specifically, the rise and fall of the land) has changed significantly. The tuff plane (i.e. the area of flat land) that characterizes all of south-western Rome has been carved over the course of time by small tributaries of the River Tiber (the banks of which lie a little further to the north), causing the formation of what we have come to know today as the hills of Rome. Thus, the entire valley in this area, the flat zone of the Circus Maximus and the current Viale delle Terme di Caracalla corresponds to the course of the tributary known as the *Aqua Mariana* (commonly referred to as *Marrana*), which, having risen in the area of San Giovanni in Laterano, separated the Palatine Hill from the Aventine. The current Via Gregorio Magno, leading towards the Colosseum, follows the course of another tributary, the line of which separated the Caelian and the Palatine Hills. Finally, what is now Viale Aventino follows the course of another body of water, which divided the Aventine Hill in two and flowed onwards into the Tiber in the area of what is now Porta Portese.



Below: Current view towards the Palatine Hill from the building C terrace. **Right:** The northern side of the Aventine Hill in ancient times, in Rodolfo Lanciani's late nineteenth century archaeological map of Rome. The map has been reworked to include the schematic plan of the current FAO buildings (R. Lanciani, *Forma Urbis Romae*, Milan 1893–1901, tables 35 and 41).



The highlighted area shows the current layout of the FAO building complex.



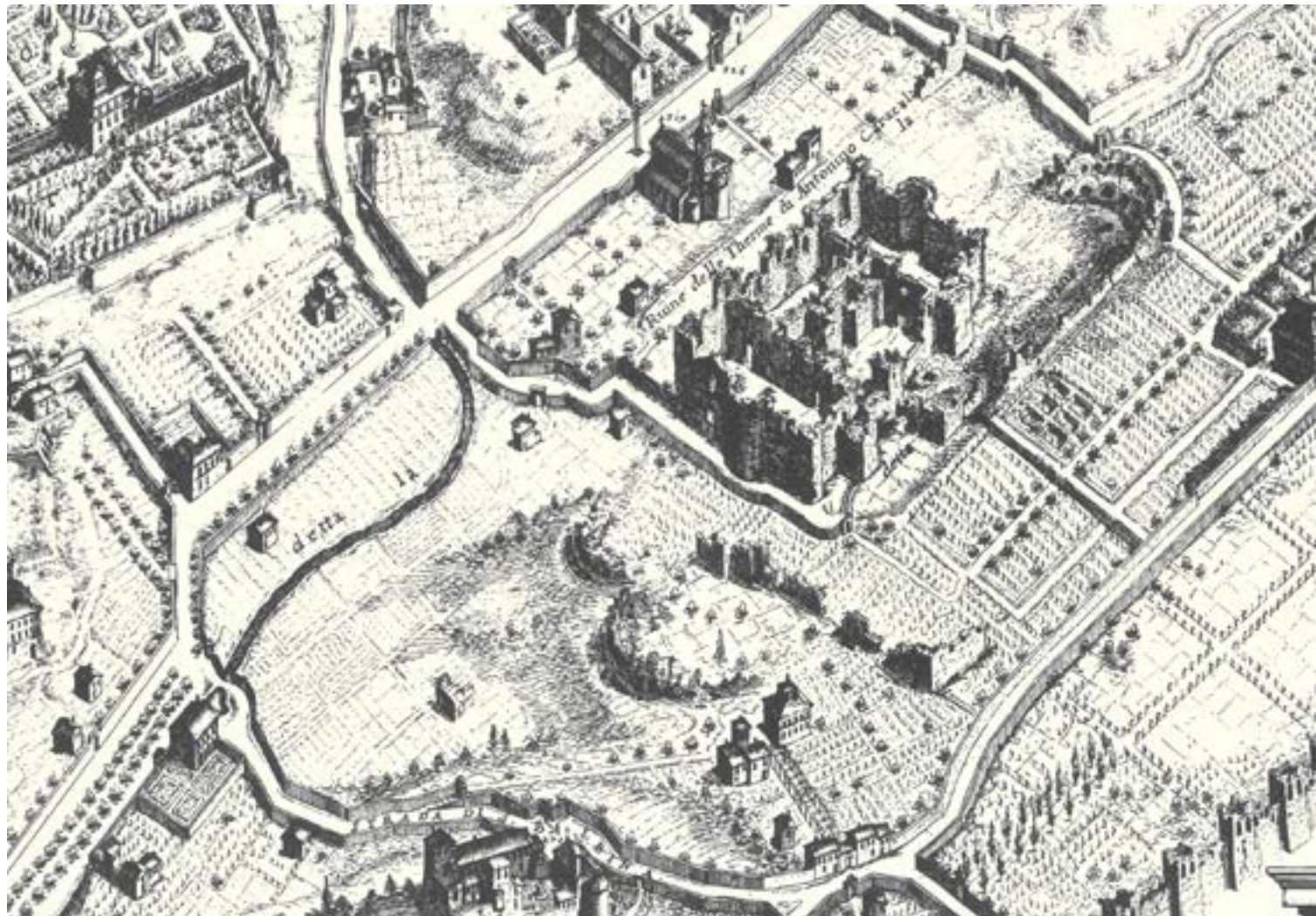
Roman terrace wall made of tuff and travertine in *opus quadratum* format from the second century BCE visible behind building C in the FAO complex.

Over the course of centuries, the ancient valley floors were gradually built up, causing the once steep and precipitous slopes of the hills to become barely recognizable. Nevertheless, behind the FAO building itself, a clear difference can still be seen in the level of the terrain to the rear, where an ancient terrace wall from the age of the Roman Republic divides the higher ground of the tuff from the ancient watercourse. The area surrounding the current FAO headquarters lies within the first historical limits of the city and was enclosed within the first circuit of walls built in *opus quadratum* format. This was known as the “Servian Wall”, because literary tradition traces its construction back to Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, although in reality it stems from the era of the Roman Republic and can be

dated back to the first half of the fourth century BCE. The city of Rome probably already had around 100 000 inhabitants at this point. Various sections of the wall can still be seen within the area: one, in particular, is incorporated into the complex of the Istituto Santa Margherita, while another lies in the field directly in front of it. The first section was discovered in 1884 during reconstruction work on the complex, while the second was found during excavation works carried out in the Institute’s garden in 1983. The finds made it possible to trace, albeit still hypothetically, the line of the wall in an east-westerly direction during the age of the Republic, as well as the probable location of the *Porta Naevia*, a gate marking the start of a road heading south (*Vicus Portae Naeviae – Via Ardeatina*) that crossed this very area.

Ruins of the *Thermae Antoninianae* baths, erected from 212 by Emperor Caracalla (211–217). A new aqueduct (*Aqua Antoniniana*, a branch from the *Aqua Marcia*) was built to supply them; the storage tanks held up to 80 000 cubic metres of water. **Right:** current view from above (Google 2019). **Below:** as they appear in Giovambattista Falda's map of Rome from 1676 (from A.P. Frutaz, *Le piante di Roma*, III, Rome 1962, figure 360).

The current road layout in the area surrounding the FAO headquarters does not differ greatly to that of ancient times, when the main road axis was formed by the *Via Appia*, which ran directly towards the south-east in the urban area between the Caelian and Aventine Hills. At the height of the Imperial Age, this was flanked to the south by the *Via Nova*, which ran parallel and absorbed the traffic heading towards the Baths of Caracalla, also known as *Thermae Antoninianae*. The construction of the Baths of Caracalla (212–216 CE) changed the topography of the terrain, cutting off the most southerly point of the Aventino Minore. The building, which was the biggest in Rome at the time (although it would be surpassed in size as early as the third century by the Baths of Diocletian), was able to accommodate almost 2 000 people at once, and received between 6 000 and 8 000 people every single day. The valley that separated the Aventino Minore from the greater Aventine Hill, however, was traversed by the *Vicus Piscinae Publicae*, a road that was probably not too different to today's Viale Aventino (known as Viale Africa before the Second World War). Along its extension towards the west (the *Vicus Portae Raudusculanae*, which merged with the *Via Ostiensis*), it met the *Vicus Porta Naeviae*, which climbed back up the hill to the south-east along a route that corresponds to the current Via Aventina. Finally, on the western side lay the *Clivus Delphini*, which corresponds to the current Via di Santa Balbina, the first part of which has now been replaced by the Viale Guido Baccelli.



During the Imperial Age of Rome, the whole area was residential, with ancient sources and archaeological finds leading us to assume that it typically featured noblemen's townhouses. Its proximity to the political centre of the city, the Palatine Hill, which was the seat of the Emperor, meant it was a privileged location for luxury homes and, most significantly, for important people with links to the Emperor's family. According to the administrative division of the city into *regiones* (districts), as dictated by Augustus at the end of the first century BCE, the site where the FAO complex now stands was part of the *Regio XII Piscina Publica*, which takes its name from the presence of an artificial basin for water collection, although the precise position of this remains unknown. The sources also cite another important public building in the vicinity: the temple of *Bona Dea Subsaxana*, although no definitive archaeological remains of this have been found. Nevertheless, the very name given to an area along the western slopes of the Aventino Minore, beneath its highest slope and known as *Saxum*, leads one to suppose that the remains of the structure may lie there. There may also be another clue in the remains that the archaeological maps of the last century suggest lie beneath the ancient monastery connected to the Basilica di Santa Balbina, and now occupied by the current Istituto Santa Margherita, situated at the summit of the hill. The precise year in which this pagan sanctuary was founded is also unknown, although it was certainly during the age of the Republic, being restored upon the orders of Livia, the wife of the first Emperor Augustus (as well as later on by the Emperor Hadrian during the first half of the second century CE). The monumental *opus quadratum* wall – made from travertine and tuff from the Grotta Oscura quarry – dating back from the second century BCE and gradually modified over time according to historical maps, remains preserved and visible at FAO's site. It is thought that it was constructed to enclose a sacred area of great significance, hence there is a connection with the sources on the sanctuary dedicated to *Bona Dea*.



The Santa Balbina complex, immediately to the north-east of the FAO site, once home to a mediaeval monastery. The defensive tower dates from the twelfth century (photo by the authors).



Remains of Roman *opus reticulatum* walls of structures believed to be *tabernae* (shops, workshops and commercial premises), currently visible in the building A car park.

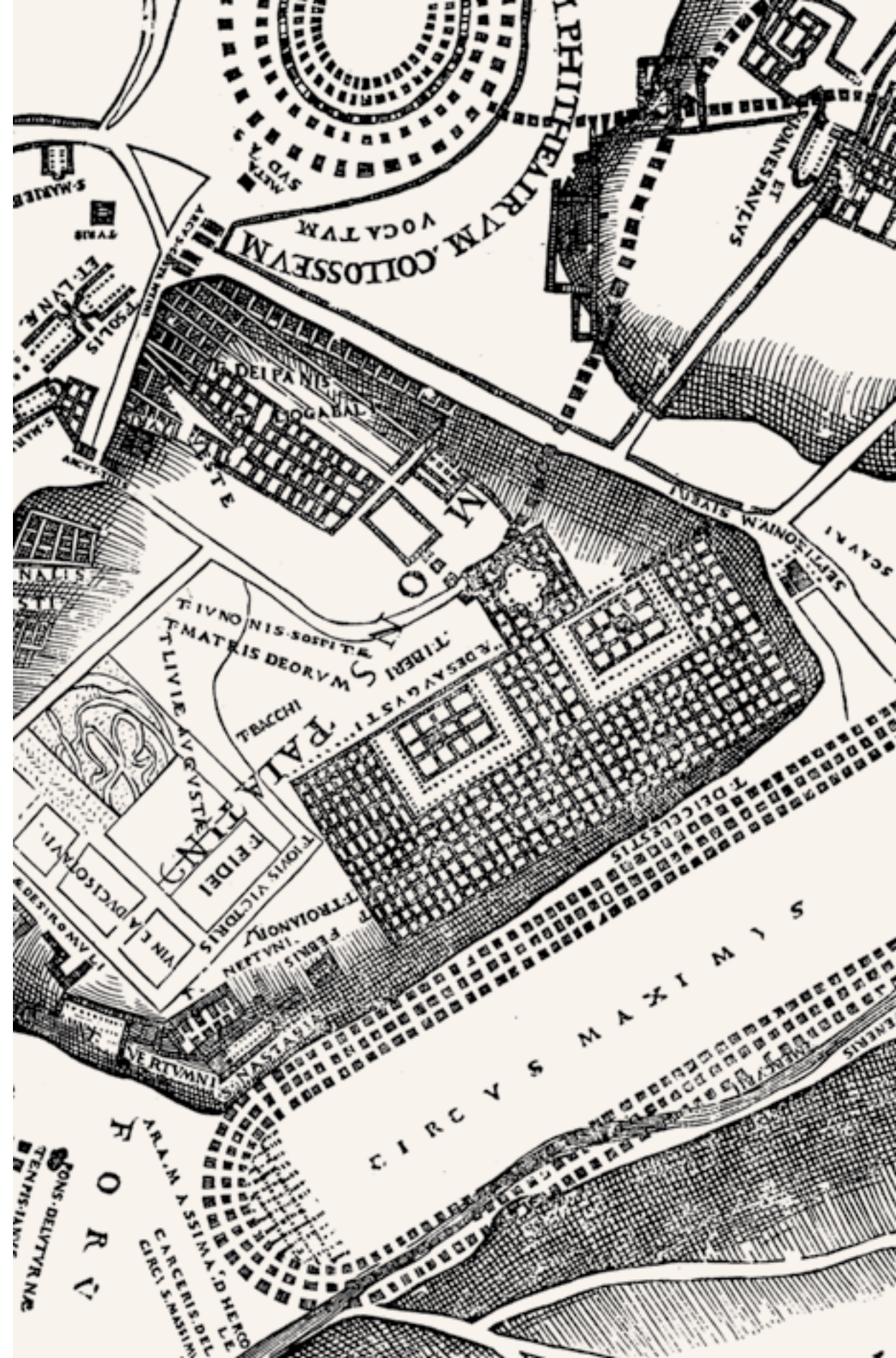
All findings suggest that there were a great many residential buildings, mainly *domus* (homes occupied by upper classes) and private villas (*horti*), here during the Imperial Age in particular. Sources attest to the *horti* of *Asinius Pollio* and the *Horti Serviliani*, and between the first and second centuries CE the buildings included the *Privata Traiani* and the *Privata Hadriani* (estates and land belonging to the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian, but that formed part of their private family property). Another feature was the *domus* of Lucius Fabius Cilo, the remains of which were identified among the structures discovered in the mid-nineteenth century when significant restoration work was being carried out on the complex of the former Santa Balbina monastery. This Roman public servant, who was made consul in 193 and 204 and reached the rank of *Praefectus Urbi* (the highest civil office in the city), received the *domus* as a gift, probably from the Emperor Septimius Severus, and it may have also formed part of the building and property in this area that once belonged to Hadrian. At that time the population of the city of Rome is estimated to have stood at more than 1.5 million, including both those living and serving in the houses.

It was the collapse of one part of these Imperial Age buildings – located on the summit of the Aventino Minore – that resulted in the impressive remains in Roman concrete with brick cladding, or *opus caementicium*, that were traced during excavations carried out along the southern slopes of the hill, opposite the FAO complex. The structures date back to the second century CE, however new layers of ground were built on top of each other over time and the structure partially collapsed during the fourth century CE, probably due to a naturally-occurring event.

It is in precisely this area that the map of Rome produced by Leonardo Bufalini in 1551 depicts structures identified as “Terme Deciane”, although these are probably more likely to be linked to another documented set of monuments that was rediscovered in two different phases: firstly during the construction of the foundations for the new headquarters of the Ministry of Italian Africa (1938), and later during the construction of building C (1961), one of the buildings of the complex that now houses FAO. It was the construction of this building that unearthed some of the archaeological finds displayed in the entrance of the first part of the complex (building A). During the works carried out in 1938, a long *opus reticulatum* brickwork wall was uncovered and found to be supporting the embankment behind it, and may also be linked to certain short stretches of wall still preserved today in the area of the FAO car park: backing onto these are brick buttress walls that form structures thought to have been workshops.

A considerably more impressive discovery were the baths that once occupied the area where the current building stands. We believe this complex – examined and documented during the construction of the modern buildings – can be linked to the ruins that lie to the north of the slope of the Aventino Minore and that are marked in both historical maps and photographs. These same baths are probably also linked to findings made during the construction of building C, for which a date between the third and fourth centuries CE has been proposed. Its position relates to a more ancient man-made fill likely to date to the first century CE, with the level of the foundations thought to be at the same depth as the monumental *opus quadratum* wall made of travertine and Grotta Oscura tuff, which dates back to the second century BCE and remains preserved along the northern slope of the Aventino Minore.

The area where the FAO site now stands, as shown on Leonardo Bufalini's map of Rome from 1551 (from A.P. Frutaz, *Le piante di Roma*, III, Rome 1962, figures 203 and 204).

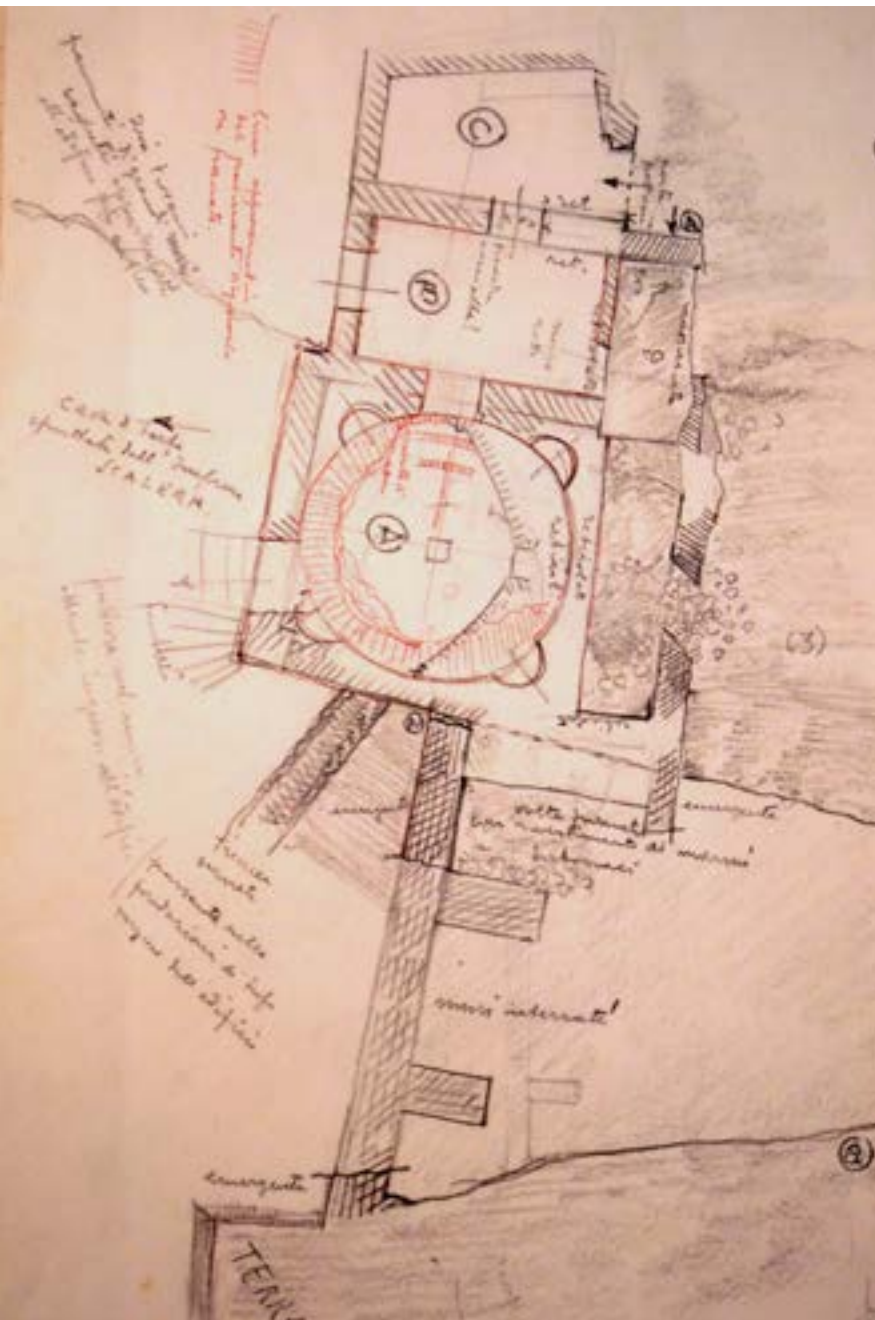


After the Imperial Age of Rome, people gradually began to abandon the entire area, and as such the structures began to inevitably decay. In spite of this, one of the first Christian parishes (*tituli*) took root on the Aventino Minore. According to certain scholars, the origins of the Paleochristian Basilica di Santa Balbina actually lie in the *domus* of Lucius Fabius Cilo, however the creation and development of this building has proven to be so complex and contentious that it has not been possible to reconstruct the original structure or establish a date on which scholars can unanimously agree. One of the hypotheses put forward for when the basilica was first built maintains that the hall of worship corresponds to the hall of the Imperial-Age residence – a theory we are not inclined to agree with, since we tend to think that although it does indeed recycle remains from an earlier age, the structure as it currently stands cannot date from before the sixth century. This would concur with the first documentary evidence of the Synod of 595, the signatures for which include the *Titulus Sanctae Balbinae*. Nevertheless, a different interpretation of the ancient sources might recognize the basilica under the *Titulus Tigridae* mentioned at the Synod in 499. During this period the population of the city fell rapidly to around 650 000 inhabitants (mid-fifth century) and ultimately reached around 100 000 in the second half of the sixth century after the Gothic War.

The connections between the ecclesiastical building and the preceding structures from the Imperial Age are nevertheless undeniable, as demonstrated by the rediscovery of important structures from the Roman period at a lower level, immediately adjacent to the apse of the basilica. These comprise *opus reticulatum* tuff stonework (preserved to a notable height) and pillars. The structures can be traced back to the start of the Imperial Age and seem to run in parallel on an east-westerly basis with the line of the current Via di Santa Balbina, which is thought to lie along the ancient *Clivus Delphini* road.



Above: Santa Balbina basilica, founded in the fifth century, on today's Via Baccelli. **Left:** Roman *opus vittatum* walls on the east side of the courtyard between the basilica and the monastery. The entire complex stands on a large expanse of Roman remains, some still visible, of a large *domus* owned by Lucius Fabius Cilo, consul in 193 and 204, a friend of Emperors Septimius Severus (193–211), Caracalla (211–217) and Macrinus (217–218). The Santa Balbina complex (the basilica and monastery that was later added) was of great importance, as for centuries it was the only inhabited monumental settlement in the area, which had become deserted and reduced to countryside as early as the sixth century (photo by the authors).



Drawing of the ruins of the baths, from the third and fourth centuries, examined in 1938 during construction of the Ministry of Italian Africa (ACS, G. Gatti archive, Maps, Region XII, sheet 13, sub-sheet 6, "Viale Aventino già viale Africa" [Viale Aventino, formerly Viale Africa], 1938–1939, map 4728).



The structures that came to light in 1938 during construction of the Ministry of Italian Africa (FAO archive).

In the Middle Ages, following the construction of the Paleochristian cult building, the ruins of the Imperial Age buildings at the summit of the hill show that there was also a monastic settlement here. Although there are no precise records as to the origin or when the monastic complex was first built, it can be verified that at the height of the Middle Ages the monastery, which was inhabited by Benedictine monks from the eleventh century, became the only building of significance in the entire area, which had by then been largely abandoned and reduced to countryside. By this point Rome was home to no more than 40 000 inhabitants, all of whom lived in the Campo Marzio along the banks of the Tiber. The building became something of a fortified settlement, complete with a 22-metre high signalling and lookout tower that still exists today. Recent research has led us to presume this was built in the thirteenth century, with

its construction likely linked to the extension of the monastery that took place during that period; it is the only element still remaining from the fortified structure of the old monastery. Historical maps from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries show the basilica and the isolated monastery, surrounded by vineyards and pastureland, in a setting that now forms part of Rome's suburbs. After various incidents, including the suppression of the monastery with the proclamation of the Roman Republic on 15 February 1798, the complex is now home to the Santa Margherita Public Institute for Aid and Charity (IPAB), which provides care and services to elderly people. This part of the hill has remained virtually unchanged since the medieval period, albeit with the addition of the modern Viale Guido Baccelli, which cuts across and modifies the old Via di Santa Balbina that dates back to Ancient Rome.

By contrast, the area where the FAO buildings are situated, and which corresponds to the ancient *Via Nova*, underwent a series of notable transformations between the end of the nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century. Numerous drawings and photographs show the area before these interventions. The current geographical layout is the result of upgrading work that took place as part of the “Restricted Roman monument zone” project (1887), known as the “Archaeological Walk”, which profoundly altered the urban fabric and landscape of the area through various phases of the project up until the first few decades of the twentieth century (1917, although further work was carried out until 1930). These included building new roadways (Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Viale Aventino, Viale Guido Baccelli) and demolishing layer upon layer of archaeological sites and architectural features at such a rapid rate that they were, as far as we know, barely documented. Amid all the destruction, however, there was one example of conservation, namely that of a little sixteenth-century house, the so-called Vignola, which was dismantled at its original site on the slopes beneath Santa Balbina in 1911 and reconstructed at the start of the Archaeological Walk. In 1937 the Via delle Terme di Caracalla was incorporated into the Via Imperiale construction project (a prestigious thoroughfare for the capital of the Empire, intended to lead from Piazza Venezia to EUR) and was significantly widened. At the initial section in Piazza di Porta Capena, the Obelisk of Axum (a 24-metre high monolith, depicting an 11-floor house and dating back to the fourth century CE) was incorporated. The obelisk, erected on 28 October 1937 on the fifteenth anniversary of the March on Rome, originally came from Axum in Ethiopia, the holy city for Ethiopian Copts, which had been occupied two years earlier by the Italian army.



Left: The Circus Maximus from the air, 1936. The Circus was built for chariot racing, the tradition of the time, in the reign of Etruscan King Tarquinius Priscus (in the mid-sixth century BCE) in the *Vallis Murcia* between the Palatine and Aventine Hills, where the River Euripus flowed towards the Tiber. It was expanded significantly at the end of the Republican period and under Emperor Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE), reaching a length of 621 metres and holding up to 150 000 spectators (ICCD, *Aerofototeca*, Italian Air Force), 95136; from D. Manacorda and R. Santangeli Valenzani, *Il primo miglio della via Appia a Roma* (The first mile of the Appian Way in Rome), Rome 2011, p. 19, fig. 10.



Below: The area currently occupied by the FAO complex during the works to build the Archaeological Walk (photo E. Van Deman, 1912, from *Fotografia Archeologica 1865–1914*, ed. K. Bull – Simonsen Einaudi, Rome 1978, pp. 40–41).



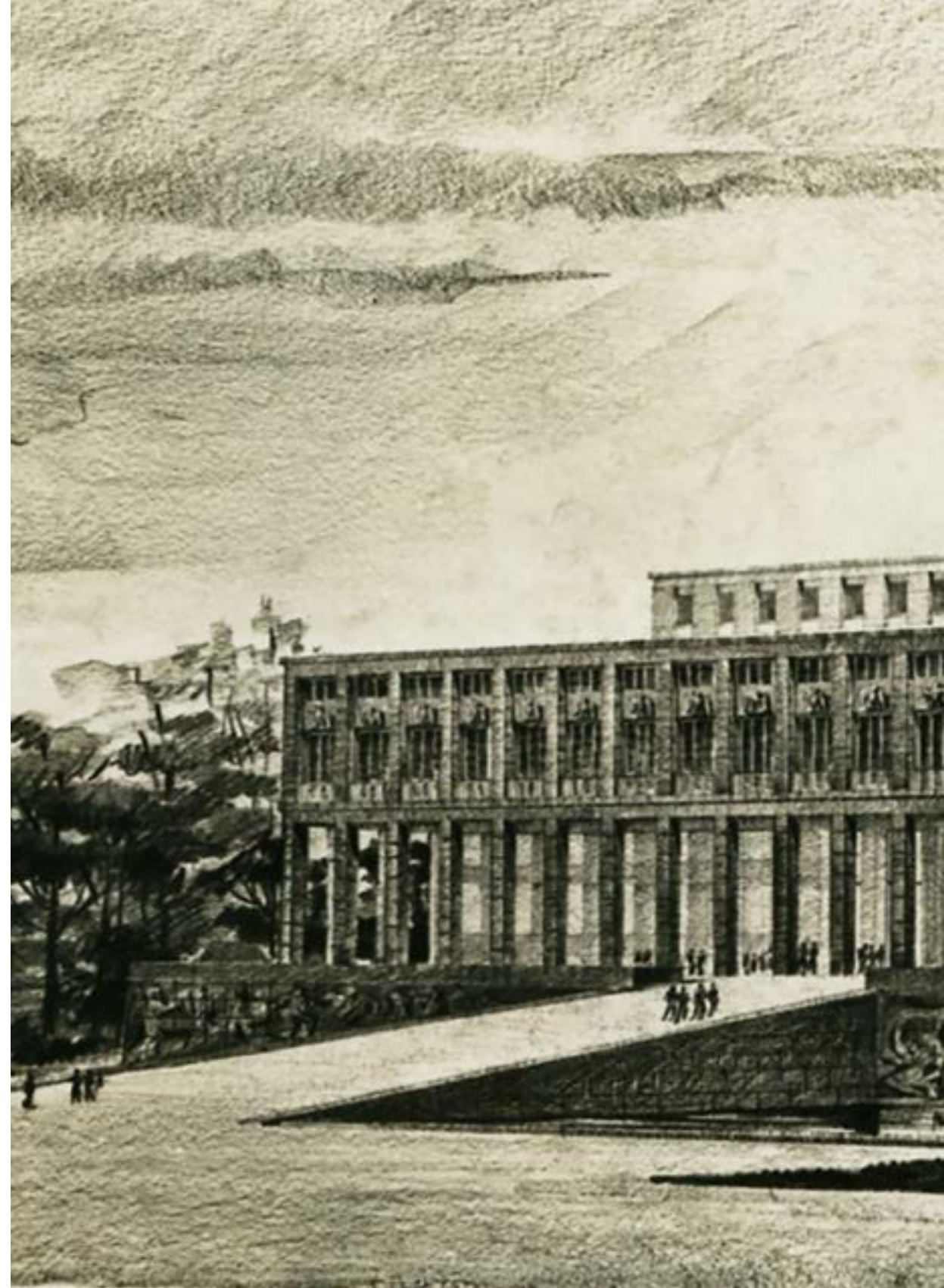
The highlighted area shows the current layout of the FAO building complex.

The entire south-eastern sector of the city, with the Aventine Hill at the centre, in an aerial photo from 1919 (from A.P. Frutaz, *Le piante di Roma*, III, Rome 1962, figure 578).

THE ORIGINS OF THE COMPLEX

In 1937 the Ministry of Public Works launched a tender for the “Project to build the new headquarters of the Ministry of Italian Africa to be erected in Rome between the Via d’Africa (what is now the Viale Aventino) and the Archaeological Walk”. The commission for the definitive project was granted in 1938 to a team formed by the architects Vittorio Cafiero, Alberto Legnani, Mario Ridolfi, Wolfgang Frankl, Ettore Rossi, Armando Sabbatini and Giulio Rinaldi. The building, which corresponds to today’s building B in the current complex occupied by FAO, was never actually used as the Ministry’s headquarters owing to military developments and the consistent loss of colonial possessions. In 1938, work also began on the construction of line B of the Rome subway in view of the opening of the EUR development in 1940, later cancelled due to World War II. It was not until 1955 that the subway line, with its Circus Maximus station located right in front of the FAO complex, was completed all the way to the EUR district and fully inaugurated.

A view of the Ministry of Italian Africa, now the FAO headquarters in Rome, from the final plan by architect Vittorio Cafiero in 1950. Archive of the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Ridolfi-Frankl-Malagrizzi fund, 1947–1951.









On the opposite page:
The site from above during construction of building A.
Top left: The FAO complex during construction of building A.



A view of Piazza di Porta Capena with the Obelisk of Axum (fourth century) erected in 1937 to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the March on Rome and returned to Ethiopia in 2005 as a gesture of friendship and reparation.

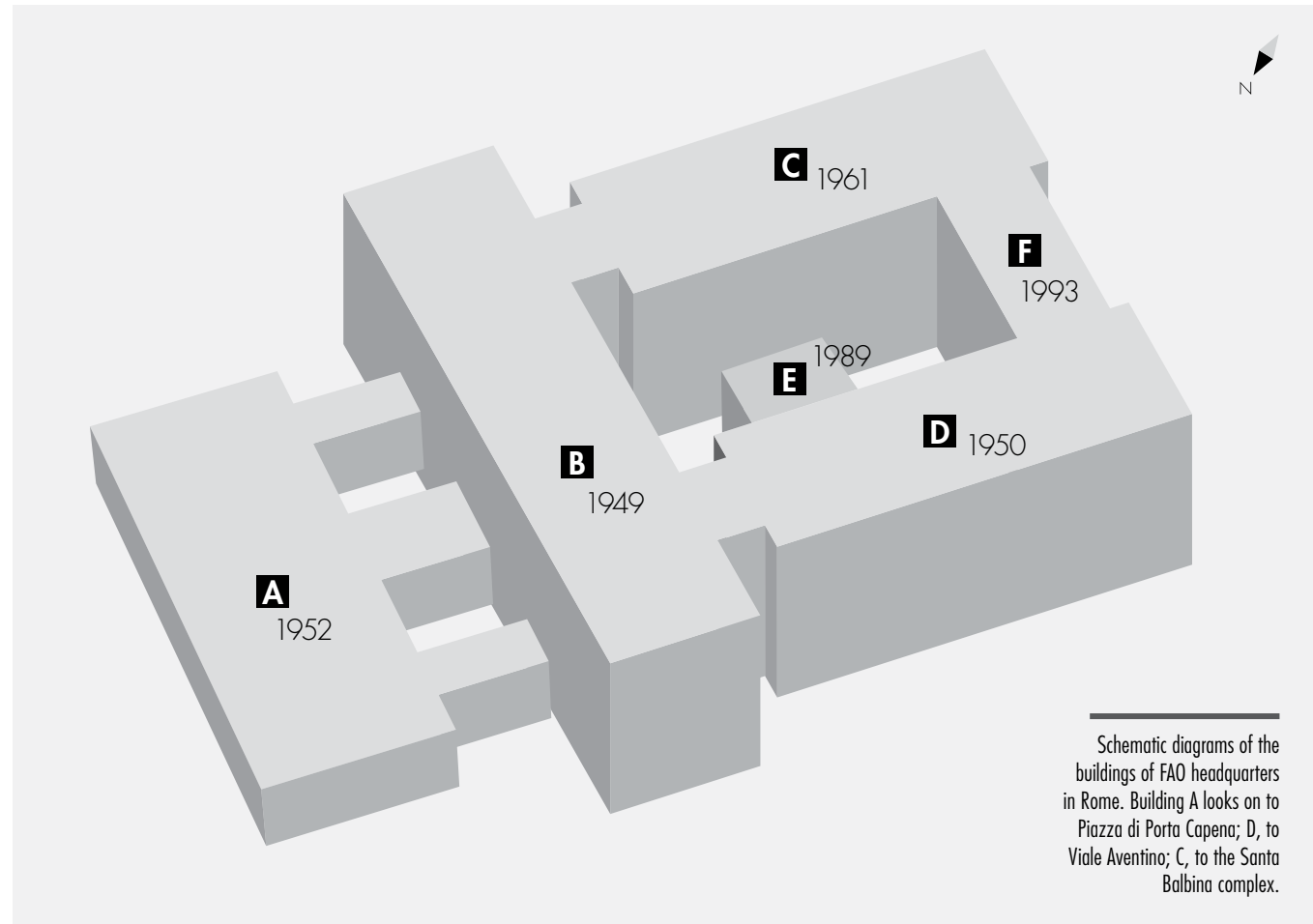
The excavations for the construction of building B revealed some of the materials currently preserved in the entrance of building A, which provides access to the rest of the complex.

During proceedings of the Fifth Session of the FAO General Assembly, which took place in Washington D.C, it was decided that the Organization's primary headquarters should be relocated. With 30 votes in favour of Italy and 28 for the United States of America, on 29 November 1949 the Conference decreed that FAO's new permanent seat would be in Rome. The Italian Government initially provided building B – which was already available in the capital and was located at the start of the Archaeological Walk – at a symbolic lease of one dollar a year. Following this decision, the Roman Office of Public and Construction Works joined forces with the architect Vittorio Cafiero, who had designed the project, to carry out the work to adapt the existing structure and to construct the new building A in front of it. In the original plans for the Ministry of Italian Africa, this area had been earmarked to house the reception hall and meeting rooms, but the construction of these had never gone beyond laying the piles for the foundations.

In 1950, the plans for completing the building – entrusted solely to Vittorio Cafiero – were presented and examined. Work began the following year on a structure built using reinforced concrete on piles also made of reinforced concrete, with the upper floors made of a combination of reinforced concrete and brick. At the end of the same year, the building was partially handed over to FAO's Director-General by the President of the Italian Republic so that it could be used for the Sixth Session of the Conference. Work recommenced at the beginning of 1952 immediately after the closure of the Sixth Session of the Conference and was completed during the course of the same year.

The area surrounding the FAO site has changed greatly over time — it was home to the Circus Maximus from around the sixth century BCE until late antiquity, and the Baths of Caracalla in the Imperial Age. In the centre, on the 'Little Aventine', the only surviving evidence of settlement from the Imperial Age is the early-Christian Basilica of Santa Balbina. The archaeological finds and neighbouring structures are an ever-present reminder of the history that pervades the FAO buildings.

- C. SIXTH CENTURY BCE** Circus Maximus is built.
- FOURTH CENTURY BCE** First ring of Servian walls (visible in the FAO complex) is completed.
- FIRST–THIRD CENTURY CE** Lucius Fabius Cilo's domus, known as the Baths of Decius, is built.
- 212 CE** Construction begins on the Baths of Caracalla.
- FIFTH CENTURY CE** One of the earliest Christian parishes, the Basilica of Santa Balbina, is built on the Little Aventine.
- 1887–1930** The Archeological Walk is completed, which is now Via delle Terme di Caracalla
- 1937** Viale delle Terme di Caracalla is incorporated into the Via Imperiale project. The Obelisk of Axum is placed in Piazza di Porta Capena. Tender to develop Ministry of Italian Africa headquarters (now building B) is launched. Construction begins on Line B of Rome's metro.
- 1938** Construction of Ministry of Italian Africa headquarters is commissioned. Baths of Decius are uncovered.
- 1949** FAO's new permanent seat is assigned to Rome. Construction begins on building A.
- 1950** The Post and Telecommunications Ministry is built — this building will go on to become building D, assigned to FAO in 1976 and extended in 1987.
- 1951–1952** Building A is completed, and two connecting bridges to Building B are built.
- 1961** Building C is built: it will be completed in 1965.
- 1965** Building E is erected as a prefab structure — later demolished and rebuilt in 1989.
- 1993** Building F and the third connecting bridge between buildings A and B are built.
- 2005** The Obelisk of Axum is removed and returned.



Between 1951 and 1952 two connecting bridges were also constructed between buildings A and B (the third bridge now in place was built only in 1993), to link the two buildings on the second and third floors.

Another building — built by the Roman Office of Public and Construction Works on behalf of the Ministry of Public Works — was also built between 1945 and 1950. The building also faced onto the Viale Aventino

(which is now building D) and became the home of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications. In 1963 the Twelfth Session of the Conference asked the Italian authorities to consider making this building available to FAO. In 1966, after approval of the proposed legislation allocating 20 billion lira to construct a new building for the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications close to the EUR lake (in the area bordered by Viale America and Viale Europa), the lengthy process of assigning

building D to FAO began. Substantial modifications were planned for the structure, including construction of an eighth floor, and after some years, the Italian Government approved the funding to restructure the building in 1976. Work began and the building was gradually occupied and put to use, although approval processes and amendments to the plans meant that the eighth floor was not built until 1987.

In the meantime, building C was constructed in 1961, with the structure facing the slopes of the Aventino Minore, looking out towards the Santa Balbina site. The works also brought to light new archaeological finds, of which some structures remain visible, and a number of items are displayed in the entrance to building A. After completion, it was handed over to FAO in 1965.

The same year saw the handover of building E, a prefabricated structure originally intended to be temporary and located in the courtyard between buildings C and D. In 1989 the building was demolished and reconstructed in the same position. Finally, in 1993, the eight-storey building F was constructed between buildings C and D.

In concluding this first part, it is worth noting that in 2005, after having stood in the Piazza di Porta Capena behind the FAO complex for 68 years, the Obelisk of Axum was removed so that it could be returned to Ethiopia as a symbol of reparation and friendship.

Dismantling the Obelisk of Axum (fourth century) in Piazza di Porta Capena to return it to Ethiopia in 2005 (photo CC-BY-4.0 Wikipedia).



FAO TODAY

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the largest of the United Nations' specialist agencies. Its mission is to combat hunger, promote sustainable systems of food production, and ensure everybody has access to a balanced diet.

The Organization's general aims are reflected in the three global objectives defined by its Members:

1. To defeat famine, food insecurity and malnutrition, so that everyone in the world can have access to sufficient quantities of safe, nutritious food to be able to lead active, healthy lives.
2. To eliminate poverty, especially in rural areas, and to advance economic and social progress for everybody by increasing food production and promoting agricultural development and a sustainable way of life.
3. To promote the sustainable use of natural resources, including soil, water, air, the climate and genetic resources, to benefit present and future generations.

FAO was founded in 1945 thanks to the joint efforts of 44 governments to create a permanent intergovernmental organization dedicated to food and agriculture. It now comprises 194 Member Nations, two Associate Members (Faroe Islands and Tokelau), and one Member Organization (European Union). It is headquartered in Rome, and with its various types of offices and agreements, it is represented and present

in 152 countries. This global network of local offices is developing continuously in order to respond to the new demands and development priorities of the various countries and to increase the impact of the Organization in the field at national, regional and subregional levels.

The five Regional Offices enable FAO to respond in a multidisciplinary way to ensure greater food security and to pursue the priorities for agricultural and rural development in the geographical areas of competence. Furthermore, they also play a fundamental role in defining FAO's political agenda through management of the Regional Conferences.

The ten Subregional Offices provide cutting-edge advice in response to requests from governments. They are the first points of reference for technical assistance, which might be advice on policy or the development of competences and specific projects in the respective geographical areas.

The National Offices are the first line of action in combatting all forms of famine and in developing resilience among the population to the negative effects of climate change and other global challenges. It is here that FAO reaches its maximum potential, providing strategic policies and making its technical competence available in the field.

A wide aerial view with FAO headquarters in the foreground and the monuments of Rome in the distance. Clockwise from left: The Vittoriano, Viale dei Fori Imperiali, the Colosseum, the Arch of Constantine, the Palatine Hill and the Circus Maximus. FAO headquarters now comprises six buildings; the last two were added in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The eight-storey complex spans more than 100 000 square metres across a total area of four hectares.







auditorium →



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Left: FAO headquarters from Viale Aventino. **Right:** An aerial view of the FAO buildings, flanked on the right by Viale Aventino.



The localized network of FAO includes six Liaison Offices (located in Brussels, Geneva, Moscow, Tokyo, New York and Washington) and two Information Offices (in Spain and Portugal).

The Organization's primary governing body is the Conference, which involves all FAO Members. The Conference meets every two years, and during the biennial session the 49 Members of the Council act as executive guarantors of the Organization's activities.

Every day, around 11 000 people are working for FAO, of whom more than 3 500 are based in Rome, with the rest distributed among the offices throughout the rest

of the world. They include agronomists, ichthyologists and experts in food security and forestry, as well as in politics, law, economics and social development. Eighty-six percent of the 194 Member Nations are represented equally; furthermore, since 2012 the percentage of women employed in qualified professional roles has risen from 36 percent to 43 percent.

FAO provides for the collection of data, analysis, and publication of a broad range of statistics. Its FAOSTAT database provides chronological and inter-sectoral data on food and agriculture from more than 200 different countries. The statistics include data on agricultural, timber and food production, on trade and



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The FAO complex by night from Via del Circo Massimo, lit up in blue for World Oceans Day, 7 June 2017. On the left, the cobble road reflects the images projected by the LED wall: installed in 2015, it displays FAO's communications campaigns in the six official languages of the United Nations, along with Italian.

the supply of agricultural products, on greenhouse gas emissions resulting from agricultural refuse, on indices of prices obtained from agricultural producers, and a series of other indicators. FAOSTAT is the world's largest and most complete database for matters relating to agriculture, food, fishing, food aid, land use and populations.

The information the Organization supplies facilitates dialogue between those who have the knowledge and those who need it, laying the foundations for taking the appropriate action in the field and the stimulation of exchange between governments, development organizations (international financial institutions, foundations), civil society and the private sector.

FAO is directly involved in eight of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by 193 Members of the United Nations. The Organization provides assistance in the development of policies and the consolidation of alliances, projects and programmes that will enable them to reach their objectives.

With regard to the 2030 Agenda, FAO is overseeing 20 of the 230 global indicators included in the Sustainable Development Goals. The Organization is responsible for monitoring the progress achieved by countries, gathering data from national sources, supplying and updating documentation on each indicator, and coordinating checks and fine-tuning processes with other international organizations.

THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- | | |
|---|---|
| Goal 1: No poverty | Goal 10: Reduced inequalities |
| Goal 2: Zero hunger | Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities |
| Goal 3: Good health and well-being | Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production |
| Goal 4: Quality education | Goal 13: Climate action |
| Goal 5: Gender equality | Goal 14: Life below water |
| Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation | Goal 15: Life on land |
| Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy | Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions |
| Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth | Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals |
| Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure | |



FAO'S REGIONAL OFFICES

Above, clockwise from left: The Regional Office for Africa (Accra, Ghana); the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand); the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile); the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (Cairo, Egypt); and the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (Budapest, Hungary).



INSIDE FAO

THE ENTRANCE

After completing the registration and security procedures and leaving the FAO gardens on the left, you access the main building of the Rome Headquarters of FAO. The area outside building A, currently gated and secured, was once simply a public space.

Upon entering building A, the Organization's mandate is immediately clear. Running along the right wall to welcome staff and visitors is the Preamble to the Constitution of FAO, carved in marble and in the United Nations' six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

The official English version reads:

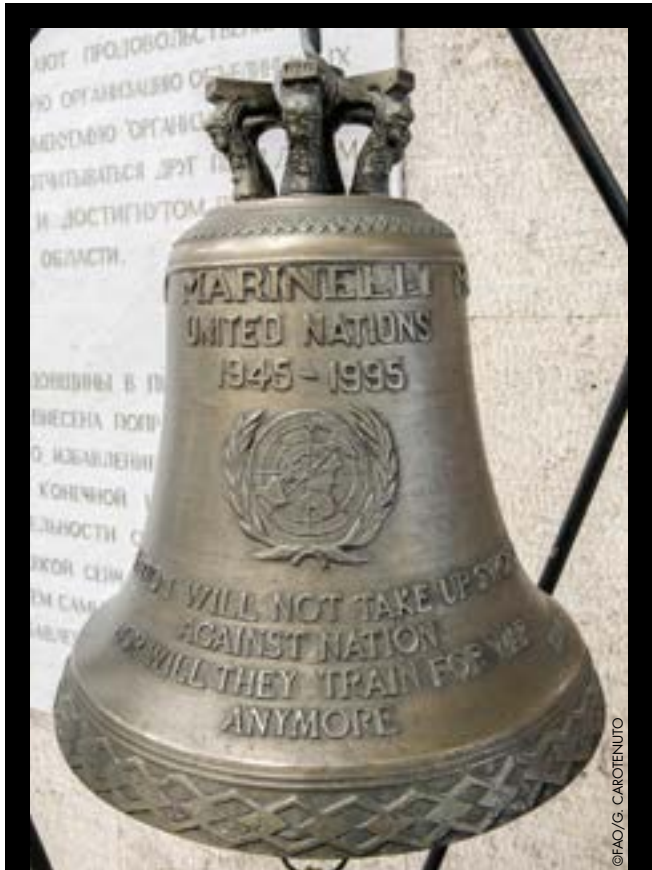
"The Nations accepting this Constitution, being determined to promote the common welfare by furthering separate and collective action on their part for the purpose of:

- raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions;
 - securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products;
 - bettering the condition of rural populations;
 - and thus contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger;
- hereby establish the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as the "Organization", through which the Members will report to one another on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the field of action set forth above".*



Below left: a copy of the memorial plaque of the United Nations Conference held from 18 May to 3 June 1943, which laid the foundation for the idea of a United Nations agency for food and agriculture.

Below right: a copy of the memorial plaque of the first FAO Conference, held on 16 October 1945 in Montreal, when the FAO Constitution was signed.



THE PEACE BELL

Standing next to the Preamble is the Peace Bell made by the pontifical Marinelli Foundry, and donated in 1995, when on FAO's 50th anniversary, the 28th FAO Conference delegates visited the Holy See, continuing a tradition dating from the establishment of FAO in Rome, and repeated at each Conference meeting. Karol Wojtyła, known as Pope John Paul II, was the pontiff at the time. During the papal audience with the Director-General and the delegates and representatives of the Members Pope John Paul II emphasized how the Organization reflected "a world which, in spite of often painful divisions, has an increasing need to unite around common objectives". The 50th FAO anniversary provided "a suitable occasion to reflect on the international community's commitment to a fundamental good and duty: the freeing of human beings from malnutrition and the threat of starvation".





The entrance of building A welcomes visitors with a plaster copy of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* on the right. At the top of the stairs, in plain view, is the Peace Bell donated by Pope John Paul II, and the Preamble to the FAO Constitution.

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Upon entering building A, you can admire a plaster copy in bas-relief of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* on the right: it shows the goddess Tellus (in Latin *Tellus Mater*, meaning Mother Earth) and comes from the Museum of Roman Civilization. The artwork shows the goddess Tellus sitting between rocks and wearing a crown of flowers from which a veil flows. There are two meek animals sitting at her feet, an ox and a lamb as symbol of peace. The goddess's lap is full of fruit, such as bunches of grapes and pomegranates; she is holding two babies in her arms, one is clinging to her breast, the

other one is offering her a fruit. By her side are two young nymphs: one is sitting on a swan, the other one on a sea dragon, symbolizing the favourable winds from the land and the sea. The landscape is rich with allegorical elements: observing the scene from left to right you go through a riverine landscape to a stony one and end up at the sea. Indeed, you can see a river flowing among marshy reeds, a vase with flowing water, rocks, flowers, animals and then the sea. The elements of water, air and soil converge, giving life to all creatures and attributing to the goddess the image of fertile nature.



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Across from the preamble and the bell, there's an exhibit of archaeological findings, mostly in marble. There are essentially two different groups of exhibits. The first group consists of artefacts found during construction work of building C in the 1960s and granted on temporary loan in 1990. Among these, some have a particular value, such as the white marble fragment of a leg belonging to a male statue, found with a fragment of a statue of Heracles, which includes a leg, the leontè (Heracles' first trophy: the Nemean lion skin) and the sculpture's supporting beam. The detailed work on the surfaces dates them back to the Hadrian Era (117–138 BCE). Two column fragments come from the same archaeological find: a fluted pillar in white marble and a fragment in Cipollino marble, both dating back to Imperial Rome. There is also a fragment of a Proconnesian marble cornice decorated with acanthus leaves and dating back to the 3rd century CE.

On the opposite page: the display case with the archaeological artefacts dating back the Roman Imperial Age (II–III century CE), discovered during the construction of building C. From left to right: a fragment in Cipollino marble; a fluted pillar in white marble; a fragment of a cornice in Proconnesian marble; fragment of a statue of Heracles' and a fragment of a leg belonging to a male statue. **Left:** detail of a statue of Heracles, dating from the era of Emperor Hadrian (117–138 CE).



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Roman artefacts from the Imperial Age, discovered in 1938 during road works, concurrent with the first phase of the construction of buildings A and B. **From left to right:** a female statue with a cloak wrapped around the hips; a headless male bust with drapery; the supporting beam of a statue with armour and a burial urn.

The second group of antiquities is on temporary loan from the Capitoline superintendence and was used to decorate the area on occasion of the World Food Summit in November 1996. The items, previously housed at the municipal antiquarium, came from the 1938 construction site of the then Ministry of Italian Africa (the original building) and specifically from the adjacent roadworks built by the Municipality of Rome.

Among them, generally ascribed to the Imperial Rome period, is an cinerary urn decorated with the head of Jupiter Ammon (recognizable by the horns on the temples); another urn, adorned with vegetation; the supporting beam of a statue with armour; a headless male bust with drapery; a fragment of a female statue with a cloak wrapped around the hips; and finally a group of seven terracotta oil lamps.



Terracotta oil lamps from the Imperial Age, also discovered during the 1938 Ministry of Italian Africa building works.



SARCOPHAGUS

Lid of a figurative sarcophagus in bas-relief, donated by the Italian Government and the City of Rome on 17 October 2011, for the 60th anniversary of the transfer of FAO headquarters to Rome.

THE ATRIUM

The area covered by the Atrium was completely different from what you see today. It was originally a transit area, an open-air courtyard used as parking lot and walking from the offices in building A, you had to cross it to reach the other building facilities. The first change to its aspect was made in 1993, with the construction of the third crossover bridge between buildings A and B. Subsequently, at the World Food Summit in 1996, it became a covered space thanks to the installation of two glass roof domes and glass windows at both ends. This area connecting the buildings became an Atrium, as it is called today. Staff and visitors could now enjoy an indoor courtyard, with light filtering through the domes and at the same time be sheltered from wind and rain. The enclosed Atrium subsequently became the perfect exhibition space. The Atrium is the hub where the World Food Day (WFD) takes place, and each WFD is arranged in a different way. Later, one of the domes was selected to host the Sheikh Zayed Media and Knowledge Centre, which was inaugurated in 2012.

On the right: The Atrium today, after being transformed into an indoor area in 1996. One of its domes is used as exhibition area and hosts the main event organized by FAO, World Food Day (WFD). The dome in the background hosts the Sheikh Zayed Media and Knowledge Centre.
On the opposite page: past photos when the Atrium was still an outdoor courtyard.





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As part of the World Food Summit in 1996 the Atrium became an enclosed space, thanks to the installation of two glass domes.



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LA MORTE E IL PIANTO

“Death and weeping” is a marble sculpture made in 2017 by the Italian artist Luigi Prevedel. The artwork commemorates Alan Kurdi, the Syrian three-year-old child who drowned in 2015, while crossing the Mediterranean Sea. The sculpture was donated by

Pope Francis on World Food Day in 2017, in order to never forget the atrocities connected to migration and underline the fundamental role of agriculture in reducing forced migration. Below: Pope Francis donates the sculpture to FAO on World Food Day in 2017.



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THE SHEIKH ZAYED MEDIA AND KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

On the ground floor between buildings A and B, in the heart of Atrium, is the Sheikh Zayed Media Centre, a state-of-the-art conference centre. The Sheikh Zayed International Media and Knowledge Centre (SZC) was established with a generous donation from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to embody the enlightened vision of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (the Centre is named after him) on the role of agriculture in the service of culture and human progress.

The entrance to the room welcomes visitors with a quote by the Sheikh: “Give me agriculture and I will give you civilization”, repeated in seven languages and in hieroglyphics, illustrating the crucial role that farming has played in human progress and the way that writing has been an integral part of the civilizing process. The entrance door is an artwork called *Passages* (2012) in blown glass and iron sheets. It was made by the Tunisian artist Sadika Keskes, who also designed *Palmeiras* (2012): the stained-glass decorations which adorn the upper glass panels, behind the Atrium. The artwork includes symbolic elements such as palm trees and birds: the palm trees represent the connection between religions – they are considered sacred in the holy texts and also a source of life, as are the birds. The concept of life can also be seen in *Arbre de vie* (2012), the golden trees decorating the platform, another work by the Tunisian artist. The idea is to imagine the tree as a means of interaction between

The entrance of the Sheikh Zayed International Media and Knowledge Centre donated by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Opened in 2012, it is used for meetings, conferences and live television transmissions.

Right from top to bottom: The Atrium seen from the Sheikh Zayed Media Centre. The upper glass panels *Palmeiras* (2012), the palm trees and birds depicted by the Tunisian artist Sadika Keskes. **Centre:** *Passages* (2012), the front door displays Sheikh Zayed's quote, translated into seven languages and in hieroglyphics: "Give me agriculture and I will give you civilization". **Below:** on air during the transmission of the television programme *Scala Mercalli*, broadcasted by RAI in 2015.



land and sky: the roots of the tree penetrate the soil, while the branches spread up towards the sky, a metaphor for the dissemination of communication, information and knowledge, and therefore symbolizing an intersection between cultures. Sadika Keskes worked with the Italian architect Marco Felici on the design of his decorations.

Opened in 2012, the Sheikh Zayed Media Centre (SZC) features a state-of-the-art conference hall for live television transmissions, equipped with post-production and e-learning facilities, seven simultaneous interpreting booths and a control booth. It is therefore testament to the commitment of the UAE to create the conditions for global sharing of knowledge on agriculture and rural development that are critical for future generations.

The SZC has enhanced FAO's ability not only to share its expertise and knowledge on agriculture and rural development issues at a global level, it has also strengthened the Organization's outreach to government institutions, centres of excellence, universities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world.

FAO is now equipped with television transmission capacities, video conferencing, video streaming and digital media distribution services.





The press conference for the launch of *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018*, one of FAO's flagship publications. The event was held on 11 September 2018 and was attended by the Heads of FAO, WFP (World Food Programme), IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), WHO (World Health Organization), and the Director of FAO's Office for Corporate Communication.

Communication lies at the core of FAO's mandate and the addition of the SZC has boosted its capacity to work in a coordinated manner with its extensive network of decentralized offices. Indeed, the Centre enables: remote broadcasters to interview FAO leadership or technical experts on the latest happenings in the field or headquarters (via talk-back or duplex interviews); news conferences or meetings with remote, live participation of journalists or experts; and in closing, special, one-off advocacy events, such as the annual World Food Day.

The SZC is used by FAO to collaborate with broadcast outlets and for joint events and programmes with the Rome-based sister UN agencies: the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

In early 2015, the SZC hosted *Scala Mercalli* (Mercalli Scale) a scientific television programme focusing on environmental issues, broadcasted by RAI, the Italian national broadcaster.

Since its establishment, over 100 high-profile events, meetings and major news conferences have taken place in the SZC, involving Heads of State, ministers, dignitaries and high-profile personalities, such as Nobel laureates and international media representatives. Most of these events were webcast live or via the FAO Intranet to ensure maximum participation of external audiences.

THE FLAG HALL



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Above: the tapestry made by the Senegal artist Saliou Diouf Dëmangui, *Princesse solaire* (Sunshine Princess), donated by the Government of Senegal in 1997. **Below:** the Flag Hall is a relaxing space used by staff. On the main wall there are miniature flags representing the FAO Members.

On the ground floor of building B, the Flag Hall displays Members' flags. Donated by the Government of Kuwait, it is a relaxing space used by staff and for temporary events and exhibitions. The room extends over 100 square meters and was established to host the World Food Summit in 1996.

Inside the room there is an tapestry by the Senegalese artist Saliou Diouf Dëmangui, called *Princesse solaire* (literally Sunshine Princess). The tapestry is characterised by a black background upon which a sun in geometric shape looms. It consists of brightly coloured circles, triangles and rectangles; and it lights up a stylised landscape, depicting a woman's profile. The tapestry was donated by the Government of Senegal in 1997.

Just outside the Flag Room, there is a second century CE floor mosaic, taken from a building discovered in Tignica, 90 km west of Tunis. The colours are still bright and its tiles form floral arrangements in 12 squares in the central space. A geometric picture frame delineates the composition. The mosaic was donated to FAO by the Government of Tunisia in 1965.

Close by there's a huge plaster copy of statue of Minerva – Vittoria Alata, on temporary loan from the Museum of Roman Civilization since 1996. The copy on display is based on a marble replica dating back to 96 CE, recovered in Ostia Antica and now on exhibition at the Ostiense Museum. The statue was intended to be part of the architectural centre piece of Porta Romana, located at the entrance of the current nymphaeum at Piazzale della Vittoria, a place of rest and refreshments where travellers made a stop before heading into Ostia.



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TORSO, OPUS 4. NR. 2.

The marble sculpture was made by the Iraqi artist Athar Jaber. On his travels he reinforced a sense of belonging that went beyond geographical borders. This notion is present in his sculptures. The work of art was donated by the Government of Iraq in 2015.



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Above: the second century CE floor mosaic discovered in Tignica, not far from the city of Tunis.
Left: the plaster copy of Minerva – Vittoria Alata on display, a replica of a statue from 96 CE which was found in Ostia Antica and is now on display in the Ostiense Museum. Another modern copy is on display in the monumental nymphaeum of Piazzale della Vittoria (Ostia Antica).

THE DAVID LUBIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The David Lubin Memorial Library is located on the ground floor of building A, near the Atrium. Established in 1952, it is named after David Lubin, founder of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA).

The Library was redesigned by the Italian architect Piero Sartogo and features the predominant use of glass: glass-floors, floor-to-ceiling glass windows and black glass display columns, as well as black marble walls and supports. Its most striking architectural element consists of a study platform with a dome-like glass roof, a functional and symbolic solution. The glass cupola allows in as much light as possible into a space that due to its position on the ground floor was naturally dark.

The Library began with its predecessor, the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA). As mentioned in the *Story of the David Lubin Memorial Library* book, edited by FAO, the IIA was “the first permanent international organization with expertise in the primary sector [...] tasked with generating technical and economic knowledge”. It was housed in some buildings in the heart of Villa Borghese, and “transformed Rome into a world-renowned centre for the study of agricultural issues and the creation of international cooperation mechanisms”. Over a period of forty years, the IIA Library in Rome undertook the role of conserving and organizing agricultural knowledge, thus becoming an international source of information.





On the opposite page, above: the entrance of the Library and shelves exhibiting publications. Below: display cases housing ancient books. An exhibition was dedicated to them in 2017 for the 65th anniversary of the Library. Left: table-tops for reading.



Above: The Library's glass-floor and the stairway to the reading room covered by a dome. **Below:** The FAO repository in the basement of building A. Nowadays it houses one and half million rare volumes, kept at a controlled temperature of 21°C and 50 percent humidity.

It centralized a wealth of different information from different countries and provided the technical offices of the IIA and, more generally, agricultural experts, with access to information that was essential for developing new ideas and informing debates on the modernization of the primary sector and rural change. Over the years, it was also enriched with donations by various private citizens, in the form of money and books. The IIA continued its work until 1 August 1946, when FAO became the custodian of its work and its library.

The excellent work undertaken by the IIA, as well as its library, led to Rome being chosen in 1948 as the permanent location of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), founded on 16 October 1945 in Quebec City (Canada).

FAO headquarters needed a library, especially as the “collection and dissemination of knowledge is one of the fundamental functions of FAO and the Organization has a responsibility for obtaining all available knowledge on those fields and making it freely and equally available to citizens of all cooperating countries”. Furthermore, Article I of the FAO Constitution states that: “The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret, and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture”. The Conference recommended that the FAO Library be named the David Lubin Memorial Library when moved into the new building, and also





requested “the placing of an appropriate inscription or other permanent designation at the entrance of the Library”. On 10 June 1952, the FAO Library was officially opened and named the David Lubin Memorial Library “in recognition of the foresight, leadership, and outstanding contribution of David Lubin to international co-operation in the field of agriculture”. At the beginning of the new millennium, the Library underwent extensive renovation work, which was completed in 2005.

In addition to inheriting the wealth of resources from the IIA, the FAO Library also inherited the collection of the *Centre International de Sylviculture* (CIS), the first international organization on forestry. The CIS was founded in 1939 in Berlin at the initiative of the IIA, and by the end of the Second World War its collection already contained 150 000 forestry-related books and journals, among which 4 200 old and rare books dating back to 1577 and the middle of the eighteenth century. Browsing the CIS shelves, the spines reveal many famous

authors, such as silviculturist Johann Cotta, zoologist Alfred Brehm, foresters Gorg Hartig and Wilhelm Pfeil, and the explorer and scientist Alexander von Humboldt. The shelves are filled also with atlases, periodicals and yearbooks from forestry institutes, all of which collectively document the beginnings of forest science. A selection of ancient books was displayed during an exhibition in 2017, to celebrate the FAO Library’s sixty-fifth anniversary.

A plaque was placed in the hallway leading to the Library entrance, which bears an inscription in both Italian and English: “Memorial Library dedicated to David Lubin (1849–1919), Founder of the International Institute of Agriculture Pioneer of international collaboration for peace and justice throughout the world”. Another tribute to Lubin was a bronze bust by the Italian artist Mario Rutelli, commissioned for the IIA in 1921 by the King of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele III (together with a commemorative marble tablet that was only acquired by

Left: lithographed title page of Giorgio Bonellis’ first volume of the *Hortus Romanus*, it was one of very few Italian contributions to the botanical works of the eighteenth century, co-authored with Niccolò Martelli. The flowers and vegetables in the plates were painted by Cesare Ubertini and engraved by Maddalena Bouchard. It is an extremely rare edition, as fewer than 300 copies were believed to have been published. Of these, only a limited number were hand-painted in the bold, exuberant style of the eighteenth century. **Right:** display cases exhibiting rare books.



Above: A painting of David Lubin seated with an open book. **Right:** a bronze bust, by Mario Rutelli, and the commemorative marble tablet commissioned in 1921 by the King of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele III. Below these, David Lubin's bureau and armchair.



the Library in 1981). Lubin's bureau and armchair were also kept inside the Library, and a handcrafted wooden cabinet containing all the letters that Lubin wrote to anyone who could help him to accomplish the IIA: from statesmen to journalists, politicians, writers, kings and queens.

The authority of his words matched his appearance, as depicted in the painting portraying him seated with an open book, looking straight into the eye of each and every Library visitor, and keeping a close eye on the thousands of annual visitors who pass through the Library.

The hallway outside the Library is also enriched with works of art: two paintings made by the Mozambican artist Bertina Lopes, *The sun of my country will always warm us*, 1990, and *We from immense Africa in the continuous space*, 1992, both donated by the Government of Mozambique at the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996. There is also a sculpture made by the Sicilian artist Carmelo Sciortino, *L'arbre de Vie* (The tree of Life, 2011): the artwork consists of 15 000 pieces of hand-made, pyramid-shaped clay tiles, individually painted and forming a tree. It was inaugurated during the closing ceremony of the International Year of Forests, 2011.

Entering FAO headquarters, most visitors are unaware that they are literally walking on top of one and a half million publications on agriculture and all its infinite related fields. The basement of building A houses the entire collection of the IIA, CIS and FAO, as well as books and serials that were published by non-FAO publishers on topics relevant to the work of the Organization: from agriculture to food and nutrition, rural development, plant production and protection, animal production and health, forestry, fisheries and many other subjects.



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The wooden cabinet containing Lubin's letters, and the black and white photos with some of the politicians with whom he corresponded.

The maze of shelves houses a repository of the Organization's institutional memory as well as literary and scientific masterpieces, acquired through donations. These are ancient books dating from the sixteenth century and 32 incunabula. The incunabula (from the Latin *cuna*, "cradle"), represent the initial phase of European typographic printing, starting from the Gutenberg's *Bible* in 1455 through to 1500. Among these considerable donations, there is a collection of 185 rare books and 20 incunabula bequeathed by Marquis Raffaele Cappelli, the second President of the IIA from 1910 to 1920. The collection includes various editions by Virgil, Columella and Aristotle – published by the first publisher from the Veneto region, Aldo Manuzio, as well as the exceptional botanical work *Hortus Romanus* published in Rome between 1772 to 1793. In 1925, the Library received over 10 000 volumes and brochures on agricultural chemistry, most published prior to 1905, donated by Italo Giglioli, professor of agricultural chemistry at the University of Pisa and Head of Agriculture at the IIA in Rome. Furthermore, a complete and unique compendium of work on viticulture and viculture was donated in 1941 by Arturo Marescalchi, Undersecretary of State for the Italian Ministry of Agriculture.

Since 2010, the Library has become fully digital, exploring and implementing new technologies and computer services. The document repository provides direct access to all corporate FAO publications.

The David Lubin Memorial Library receives thousands of visitors and requests for information every year, from FAO staff to researchers, from school groups to Heads of State. On 10 June 2017, the FAO Library celebrated its 65th anniversary and its motto is the guiding principle of librarians and libraries around the world: *aliis inserviando consumer* (consumed in the service of others) – meaning the librarian must put himself entirely at the service of others.





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IL SOLE DEL MIO PAESE RISCALDERÀ SEMPRE

"The sun of my country will always warm us" is a painting by the Mozambican artist Bertina Lopes in 1990. The artwork represents the sun and colours of the sky in Mozambique and was displayed on the occasion of the World Food Summit, held at FAO in 1996. The painting was donated to FAO by the Government of Mozambique, as a sign of gratitude for all the Organization had done to help the country.



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NOI DELL'AFRICA IMMENSA NELLO SPAZIO CONTINUO

"We from immense Africa in the continuous space" is another painting made by the Mozambican artist Bertina Lopes. The piece, created in 1992 was donated to FAO in 1996. Through her works, she denounces situations of violence and hardship of the modern world and the condition of the needy.

L'ARBRE DE VIE

"The tree of life" was created in 2010 by the Sicilian artist Carmelo Sciortino: his sculpture is a miniature cypress tree covered by 15 000 pieces of hand-made, individually painted pyramid-shaped clay tiles. It was inaugurated on the occasion of the closing ceremony of the International Year of Forests (IYF) in 2011.



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THE CHINA LOUNGE

Walking down the entrance hallway of building A, the China Lounge is just to your left. The oval antechamber has two different ornate entrances, guarded by two colourful clay lions, as per Chinese tradition. The pair of lions are located on two masonry plinths, guarding the entrance as if protecting the workplace. The lion has a paw lying on a sphere (possibly representing the world) and symbolizes the cosmological and normative domains and is the building's protector. The lioness, depicted with a paw on her cub, is the household, family or staff protector. It symbolizes the domain of life.

The main room is long and narrow, characterised by sinuous curves from the floor that draw the eye towards the back: the ceiling lamp filters light blue and gold light representing the sky. In the background there is a copper map of China engraved with the country's main agricultural products, such as rice and wheat.

Two clay lions guarding the entrance of the China room.
On the opposite page: the interior of the China room after the complete restructuring in 2015.



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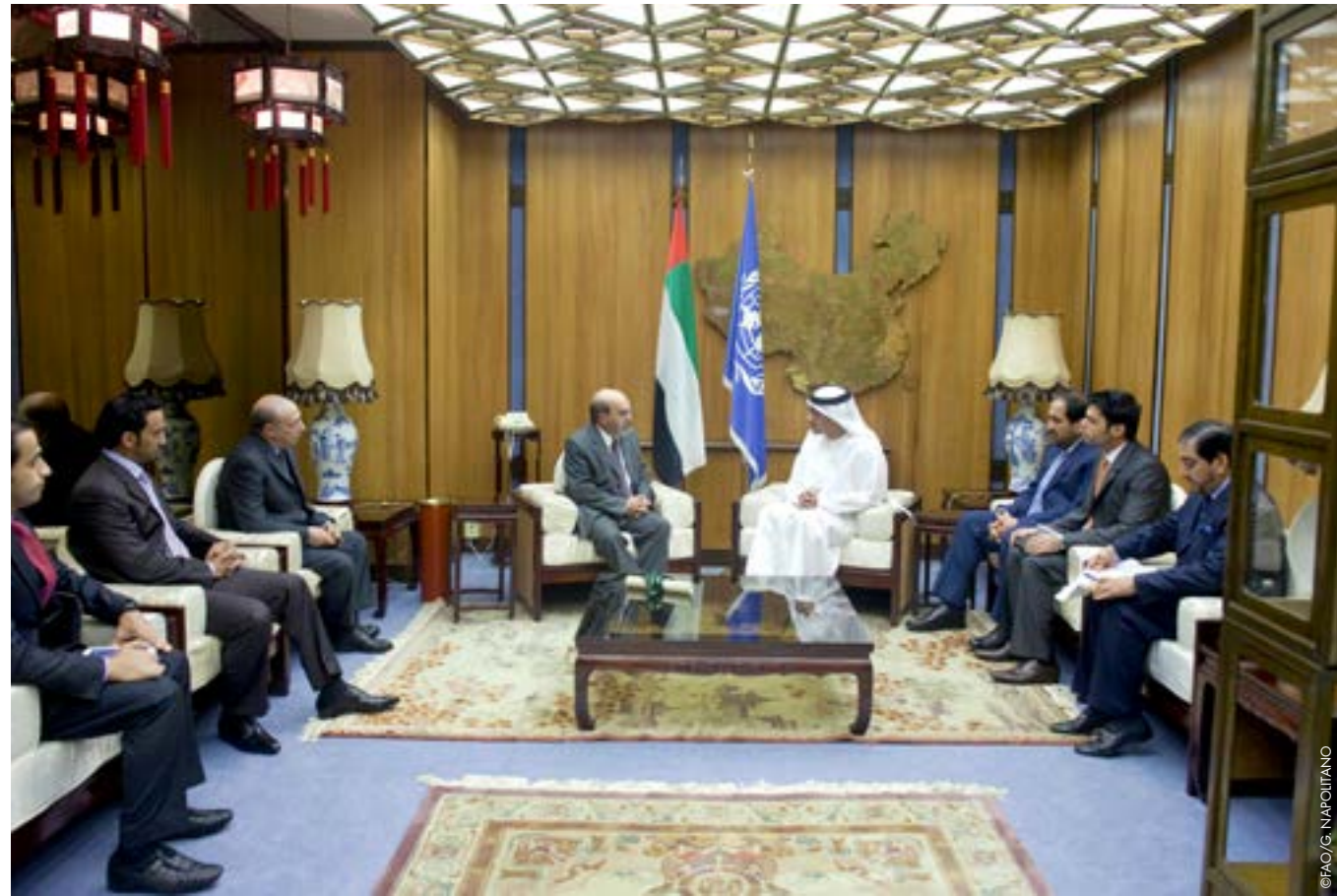
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There is also a secondary breakout room with separate access for more intimate meetings. It is accessible both from the lobby and from inside.

The China Lounge was inaugurated in 1985, and was donated by the Government of China as a gift to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Organization and to express the goodwill between the nation and FAO.

Previous decor conformed to the Member State's cultural contemporary traditions, however 30 years on, after reaffirming the country's relationship with FAO, China funded renovations to the room. The project foresaw the renewal of the room from an architectural, engineering and functional perspective and gave a new and modern look to the room, revisiting the typical elements of traditional Chinese architecture but also keeping and using some details of the original appearance.

The new design was the brain child of FAO's internal architects: armchairs, tables and furnishings were designed specifically for the new layout of the room but some furnishings were recovered and reused for a new purpose. The project incorporated creative ways to recycle the room's materials while completely modernizing the space: Chinese vases were turned into table lamps and the traditional red cylindrical ashtrays decorated in bas-relief were transformed into red hanging lamps.



Above, clockwise; the Director-General of FAO, José Graziano da Silva, with Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the UAE, for the inauguration of the Sheikh Zayed Media Centre (2012). The picture illustrates the original design (1985) of the China Lounge. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Cabo Verde, J. M. Pereira Neves, with the Deputy Director M. H. Semedo (2014); the meeting of J. W. Ashe, President of the UN General Assembly, and the Deputy Director M. H. Semedo (2014); Director-General da Silva presenting Pope Francis with a Special Edition of the *Towards Zero Hunger* book, at the World Food Day Ceremony (2017).



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QINGMING SHANGHE TU

"The Spring Festival along the river" (1996) is a tapestry made with a sophisticated technique of damask silk piling by a group of arts and crafts masters headed by Mr Cui Jie. The artwork depicts rural life in the time of Song dynasty (960–1279). The tapestry was donated by the Government of China in 1996.

Two artworks are hung on the walls, both depicting rural life but presenting the contrast between tradition and modernity. On the one hand we can admire a tapestry, in a mahogany frame, titled *Qingming Shanghe Tu* (*The spring festival along the river*, 1996) made with sophisticated technique of damask silk piling by a group of arts and crafts masters headed by Mr Cui Jie. The artwork was inspired by the masterpiece of realism and folk style by the artist Zhang Zeduan (1085–1145). The painting is made up of three parts: urban area, river and suburban area.

The opposite wall displays a painting by Master Zu Renmin in 2015. Both of them were donated by the Government of China.

This refined Lounge is used by the Director-General of FAO to receive distinguished guests: agreements and understandings are signed on the table of this room which is able to accommodate presidents, ambassadors, representatives of nations, delegations and, if necessary, photographers and journalists.





THE PLENARY HALL

Located on the third floor of building A, the Plenary Hall lies between the Caribbean and Japanese lounges, two spaces for welcoming the representatives. Access to the Hall is also via the Belgian Lounge.

Donated by the Government of Italy, the Plenary Hall is the most important room in the building, especially designed to hold high-level meetings. These include the biennial FAO Conference and its governing body sessions, and other summits and ceremonies. Among the memorable events that have taken place there, was when the United Nations Diplomatic Conference adopted the Statute of the International Criminal Court, on 17 July 1998 and Italy was the first signatory.

Blue is the dominant colour in the hall, a reminder of the blue on the United Nations flag. The main room and the galleries have seating capacity for over a thousand people, over a surface area of 1 076 square meters, which make it the largest FAO conference room.

Speakers can be heard in seven languages through simultaneous interpretation in the six FAO official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) plus one other language when required.

Although the Hall retains some of its original features, in 1951 it was quite different. Over the years, there has been

View of the Plenary Hall during World Food Day, 14 October 2016.



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some modernization: the podium has been moved to the long side of the hall; the decorated balconies have been removed; new seats and new simultaneous interpretation booths have also been added, due to the growing number of Members joining the Organization over the years.

The Plenary Hall ceiling was decorated by the renowned Italian sculptor, painter and engraver Mirko Basaldella (1910–1969). Commissioned by the Government of Italy, the artist designed and completed an extraordinary

example of figurative art, entitled *Universo* (Universe) between 1951 and 1952. The piece includes 18 panels painted in blue, pale yellow, with splashes of grey, green and red around the main theme, which rotates cyclically across an area of 500 square metres.

In order to prepare and assemble the panels of glazed chalk, Basaldella and his colleagues used the area that is now the Library shelving area in the basement of building A.

The original design of the Plenary Hall: the podium is on the side wall, to the right of the main entrance; the seats have a different layout; it was possible to attend the sessions from the upper gallery, in front of the windows.



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UNIVERSO

"The Universe". Created by the Italian artist Mirko Basaldella between 1951 and 1952, the artwork on the ceiling is an allegorical representation of the sky and the ocean floor.



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In this masterpiece, Basaldella offers an allegorical representation of the sky and the ocean floor, demonstrating metamorphosis and intertwining already evident in his previous sculptures and monumental works. Whoever comes into the Plenary Hall will see a safety net along the ceiling, which allows the smooth conduct of the Organization's activities, while being prepared for future restorative works.

The artist also worked on the stained-glass windows in the gallery: indistinct geometrical figures intersect and overlap against an ocean-blue background, perhaps testament to his earlier works between 1946 and 1947 in post-Cubist and neo-metaphysical style.

The frosted surface of the embossed glass, rough and translucent at the same time, as well as the relief on the ceiling's painted panels, not only met the ornamental needs, but also improved the hall's acoustics and concealed the air-conditioning outlets.

The stained-glass windows are another artwork by Mirko Basaldella, created between 1951 and 1952. Geometrical figures intersect against a frosted surface, which also improved the acoustics.



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Above left, clockwise: old photos of the Plenary Hall during some defining moments: Nobel Peace Prize **Norman Borlaug**, father of the Green Revolution (1971); the speech of the **King Bhumibol of Thailand** (1960); **John D. Rockefeller III**, President of the Rockefeller Foundation (1961); the **King of Spain Juan Carlos** addresses delegates during the opening ceremony of the World Fisheries Conference (1984); the former West German Chancellor **Willy Brandt** during the celebration of the first World Food Day (1981).

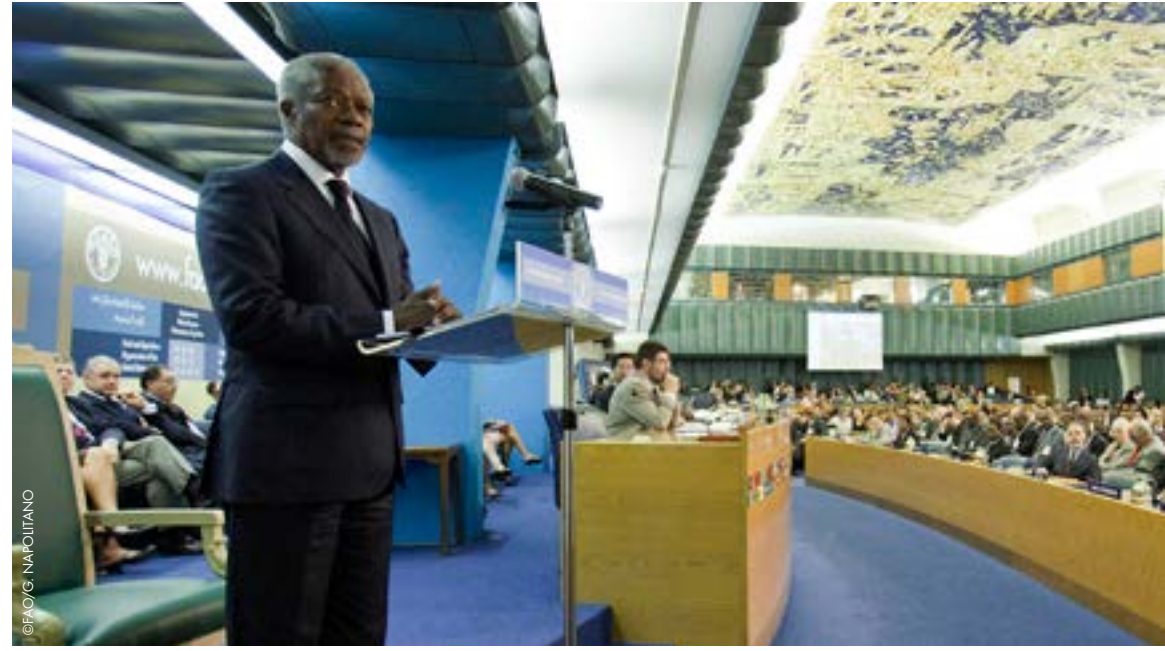


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The Prime Minister of India, **Indira Gandhi**, during the 21st Session of the Conference of FAO (1981); the former UN Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** addresses the 37th FAO Conference (2001); **Queen Letizia of Spain**, FAO Special Goodwill Ambassador, addressing the Nutrition World Food Day Ceremony (2018); **Pope Francis** addressing the World Food Day Ceremony (2017); **Pope John Paul II** addressing the Plenary during the World Food Summit (1996).



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THE BELGIAN LOUNGE

Located on the third floor of building A, the Belgian Lounge is located in front of the entrance to the Plenary Hall. Donated by the Government of Belgium, its walls display portraits of former FAO Directors-General and photos of former Conference Chairpersons. The Lounge was inaugurated in 1953 and renovated at the beginning of the twentieth century (2001); it is reserved for the use of delegates and their guests.

Under the gaze of the former Directors-General, it is worth noticing the furniture of the seating area and admiring the three stained-glass windows, depicting various agricultural scenes: people from all over the world are fishing together, tending their flocks, harvesting fields or hunting in a forest. A special artificial light system illuminates the colours and design. Bands of glass squares in various shades separate these multi-coloured windows on agriculture, each framed by small fragments of coloured glass forming a pattern. The stained-glass windows were designed by the Belgian artist Guido De Graeve (1928–2005) and executed by the Belgian master glass painter Jules François Henry Vosch (1892–1969), who was also responsible for the enamel panel. The artwork was donated by the Government of Belgium, and it was the only partnership between the two artists. On special occasions, a very valuable carpet from Iran is placed in this Lounge to welcome the visitors.

THREE WINDOWS

The stained-glass windows were designed by the Belgian artist Guido De Graeve and executed in 1953 by the Belgian master glass painter Jules François Henry Vosch. They depict various agricultural scenes.



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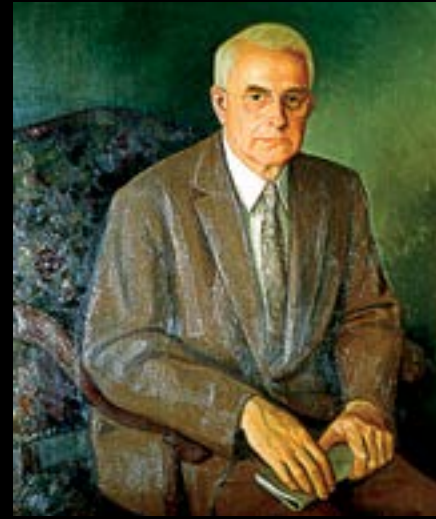
JOHN BOYD ORR
(SCOTLAND, 1880–1971).

In office from 1945 to 1948. His proposals for a World Food Board led to the creation of the FAO Council in 1946. Nobel Peace Laureate in 1949 for his studies in the field of nutrition.



NORRIS E. DODD
(USA, 1879–1968).

In office from 1948 to 1953. Before his appointment he held various roles in agricultural associations and agencies in his country. Under his leadership FAO moved from Washington DC to Rome.



PHILIP V. CARDON
(USA 1889–1965).

In office from 1954 to 1956. He received an MSc in agricultural economics from the University of California. Before joining FAO, he was Director of the US Department of Agriculture.



BINAY RANJAN SEN
(INDIA, 1898–1993).

In office from 1956 to 1967. He was Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ambassador. First Director-General from a developing country, he launched the “Freedom from Hunger Campaign” in 1960.



ADDEKE HENDRIK BOERMA
(NETHERLANDS, 1912–1992).

In office from 1967 to 1975. He was Director-General for Food in his country in 1945. He was the first Executive Director of the World Food Programme in 1962 before taking on the role of FAO Director-General.



EDOUARD SAOUMA
(LEBANON 1926–2012).

In office from 1976 to 1993. He was FAO Director of Land and Water Development until 1975. As Director-General he set up the Technical Cooperation Programme for the provision of urgent assistance.



JACQUES DIOUF
(SENEGAL, 1938).

In office from 1994 to 2011. A Member of Parliament, Secretary General of the Central Bank for West African States, and Senegalese Ambassador to the United Nations. He holds the longest tenure at FAO of any Director-General.



JOSÉ GRAZIANO DA SILVA
(BRAZIL, 1949).

In office from 2012 to 2019. Graduate in Agronomy, University of São Paulo. He led the Zero Hunger programme in Brazil as Extraordinary Minister for Food Security and the Fight against Hunger. In 2015 he was re-elected to office.



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Left: the portraits of the former Directors-General displayed along the wall of the Belgian Lounge.
Above: a view of the Belgian Lounge and the entrance of the Plenary Hall.

THE CARIBBEAN LOUNGE

The Caribbean Lounge is situated in a strategic place on the third floor of building A, to the right of the Plenary Hall. Donated to FAO by the Member States of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), upon entering the entrance you notice the architecture of the room, which was designed to reflect the West Indian (Caribbean) architecture style known as Victorian or Gingerbread. The oblong shape of the room, the great number of openings

(windows and doors) assisted in representing what is perhaps the striking feature in the imagery of Caribbean architecture: the veranda. The furniture, the artworks and the mahogany craft objects which adorn the Lounge are modelled on Caribbean Art Deco style.

The history of this elegant space began with a gift. Originally, FAO headquarters did not have an area dedicated to the Member States of CARICOM, however



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THE CARIBBEAN BIRD

The painting was done in 1993 by the artist Jean Louis Senatus. It was donated to FAO in 1995 by the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The artwork illustrates a flying bird onto which typical scenes of island life and landscape are superimposed. An internationally acclaimed artist, in addition to having participated in many exhibits in the Caribbean countries, Senatus has taken part in exhibitions in Denmark, England, France, Italy, Switzerland and the United States of America.

in 1995 they donated a painting by Jean-Louis Senatus, called the Caribbean Bird, which depicts a large flying bird onto which typical scenes of island life and landscapes are superimposed. This work of art paved the way for the creation of this Lounge: it was precisely during the inauguration that the then Director-General of FAO and a CARICOM representative decided to find an area dedicated to the Caribbean community. The architect Ms. Chantal Laurent designed the Lounge and together with the donors, selected the furniture, objects and other works

of art to be displayed in the Lounge. The artworks reflect modern, traditional Caribbean styles, hence their history: from the early Amerindian Era, through the period of colonisation to modern times.

The Caribbean Lounge was inaugurated in 1995 and later renovated in 1999. It is used as a Lounge for delegates during sessions of the Conference and as access to the Plenary Hall by the Director-General of FAO and Chairpersons of the Conference and Council.



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ZEMISCAPE THEORIES N.5

Karl "Jerry" Craig's painting is an example of his multifaceted style. His works are often focused on the landscapes and symbols of people of the Americas, Caribbean and Africa. The artwork was donated by the Government of Jamaica in 1995.



CARNIVAL CLOWNS

The painting by Rosey Cameron Smith in 1988 aims to capture on canvas the charm and the beauty of West Indian life. The artwork was donated by the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis in 1995.



LEROY IN BOAT

The artist Dorman Stubbs painted this depiction in 1994. His most celebrated works portray the ethnological aspects of Bahamian culture. The painting was donated by the Government of the Bahamas in 1995.

ICARUS GRAVE

The painting is by David Boxer, one of the most sophisticated and influential Jamaican artists. He has steered Jamaican art in new directions. It was painted in 1994 and donated by the Government of Jamaica in 1995.



NAMING - FROM THE IDENTITY SERIES

A silkscreen by Petrona Morrison. The artist is interested in the human condition, in human beings and in ancestral African culture. In her works she transforms non-traditional art materials into sculpture. The artwork was donated by the Government of Jamaica.

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INTERIM: THE EVOLVING PERSONAGE IN BETWEEN DINOSAURS' CONVERSATION

The silkscreen is by Omari Ra, alias Robert Cookhorne, also known as African, a nickname which explains his influences as a radical painter. Omari Ra has been able to translate contemporary problems in the language of painting. The artwork was donated by the Government of Jamaica in 1995.

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PATOO

The patoo, a bird found in Jamaica, by Colin Garland, denotes the artist's surreal and magic realism style. Although his themes are based on landscapes, flora or local customs, his use of surrealism make the art hard to decipher. Garland wanted to evoke exotic fantasy. The painting was donated by the Government of Jamaica in 1995.

SPIRIT OF A WOMAN

The painting is by Joscelyn Gardner who uses art to examine the social and environmental relationships of contemporary Caribbean society in relation to the mythology of the first Caribbean peoples. The artwork was donated by the Government of Barbados in 1995.

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WIND IN THE CANES

A painting from 1994, by the artist Isaiah James Boodoo. The canvas illustrates a Trinidad landscape, his favourite subject. He was particularly fascinated by the sugar cane fields in Caroni, where the sugar industry of Trinidad was based, and where cane fields seemingly stretched forever. The painting was donated by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in 1995.

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MY PAYMENT

This painting, done in 1994, is in the vein of social realism. The artist Earl Etienne depicts a market vendor stretching out her left hand requesting her payment as very often buyers walk away without paying. The subjects of his works are people at work, engaged in some positive aspect of life or, as in this case, in the struggle to survive. Whether portrayals of well-known personalities or common people, his human images are faceless. The artwork was donated by the Government of Dominica in 1995.

RÊVE D'EMMANUELLE

"Emmanuelle's dream" is a painting by the artist Daniel Elie. His technique in painting uses pasty textures of fresh plaster coated onto the canvas, then worked into different thicknesses to create lines or occasionally incorporating other material such as glass, to produce bright colours. The symbolism in his painting is influenced by his Taino and African ancestors (Taino is the name of the ancient indigenous people of the Caribbean). The painting was donated by the Government of Haiti in 1995.



ROOTS IN RELIEF

This is a carved wooden artefact made by the artist Carl Winston. The intricate wood carvings represent scenes of rural life in natural surroundings. The artwork was donated by the Government of Dominica in 1995.





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ABSTRACT FORM

This is a carved wooden sculpture by the artist Stanley Coutain. He uses an assortment of local woods in abstract and representational styles. One of his favourite woods is mahogany, which he carves into unusual animal shapes, occasionally interacting, and in fine detail. The artwork was donated by the Government of Grenada in 1995.



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NATURE

This is carved wooden sculpture by the artist Vincent Joseph Eudovic. He started sculpturing at a very young age and thanks to a UN scholarship, he could study and perfect his skills in Nigeria. In Nigeria, he discovered local sculptural traditions, the art of monumental sculptures and the traditional art of Yoruba (an important ethnic group from South West Nigeria). For his abstract carvings he uses local woods, such as mahogany, teak and cedar. The sculpture was donated by the Government of Saint Lucia in 1995.



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DIOSA MADRE DE LOS TAINOS

The sculpture represents a Taino female deity. The original inhabitants of Caribbean were called Taino, and one of the most important sacred belief of the Taino was Atabeyra. Atabeyra was the goddess of fertility, mother of moving waters, the seas, tides and springs. It is the accepted image of woman in Amerindian mythology. The sculpture was donated by the Government of the Dominican Republic in 1995.

THE THAI LOUNGE

The Thai Lounge is located on the third floor of building A. Donated by the Government of Thailand, it is perpendicular to the Caribbean Lounge and is reserved for meetings of the delegates. Furnished in traditional Thai style, from the floor parquet to the chairs and sofas, every element is made of teak.

Inaugurated in 1955, its current design comes from the renovation work in 1997. Inside the Lounge is a large map of Thailand made of teak, and a big gong held by two ivory tusks (they are from an old elephant who died a natural death and is a symbol to remind humankind to help protect elephants).



Above right: the big gong held by two ivory tusks.
Right: a detail of the teak chairs. On the opposite page: a perspective of the Thai Lounge.



THE JAPAN LOUNGE



Left: a wooden map of Japan displays every single one of its 47 regions, each made from a different kind of wood. **Opposite page:** a perspective of the Japan Lounge.

The Japan Lounge is located on the third floor of building A, to the left of the Plenary hall. Donated by the Government of Japan in 1957, it has served as an important meeting area for Member delegates attending Conference sessions as well as other major events held in the hall.

Inside the Lounge, a wooden map of the country displays every single one of its 47 regions, each of them made from a different kind of wood. The walls display donations from various origins: *Sequa* (1983), by the Peruvian painter and potter Francisco Espinoza; *Vineyard in Samaria* (1949), donated by the Government of Israel; and lastly *Woman washing rice with two buffaloes*, by Marc Leguay (1910–2001), a French painter who lived in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The Japan Lounge also has a separate room for discussions.



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T H E R O O M S

A GLOBAL AND NEUTRAL FORUM

FAO plays a crucial role in disseminating knowledge and information to countries, supporting agriculture, forestry and fisheries, as well as food security and nutrition.

In 2018, the Organization published 829 publications, 1 187 brochures, 6 112 documents and publications online, reaching a total of 85 000 publications held in FAO's document repository. FAO's flagship publications (SOFIA, SOFO, SOFI, SOCO and SOFA) were launched simultaneously in the six UN official languages and in different formats (print, PDF, e-pub, mobi). Over 10 000 titles have been sold as hard copies or downloaded as e-books; 838 have been uploaded on Google Books, exceeding 2 500 000 unique book visits, for a total of 20 000 000 pages viewed.





Every year, FAO hosts many meetings at its headquarters in Rome, making the Organization an important forum for discussion and negotiation, often resulting in pioneering international agreements and conventions.

FAO has also become a centre for prominent conferences. There are a total of 24 meeting rooms at headquarters. The gatherings focus on intergovernmental, technical or economic issues. In 2018 alone, FAO hosted 114 high-level events, held in the Red Room, Green Room, Plenary Hall, Sheikh Zayed Centre and Iraq Room. Figures regarding the Organization's work and turnout may help to give an idea of the scale of the meetings: 477 participants at both Council sessions, 792 at the Committee on Fisheries, over 733 at the Committee on World Food Security, and 712 for the International Symposium on Innovation for family farmers.

As well as conference events, seminars, training courses and workshops are held.

THE GREEN ROOM

The Green Room is located on the first floor of building A. Inaugurated in 1951, its surface area stretches over 500 square metres, so it's one of the major conference rooms at FAO. Donated by the Government of Italy, after the renovation works in 1999, its appearance is now more comprehensive and dynamic. Its specific features are the large podium with the flags of FAO Members behind it; the walls covered with walnut panelling, four pillars in walnut with diamond-shaped points; green carpet and upholstery, and lastly a bronze sculpture hanging on the left wall. The sculpture is by the Italian artist Giò Pomodoro (1930–2002), a renowned sculptor, goldsmith, engraver and scenographer, awarded at both the Paris (1959) and Venice Biennales (1962). Some of his monumental works are found in Italian squares and abroad.

The Green Room is equipped with a technical booth and six simultaneous interpreting booths. After the refurbishment in 1999, there is a now a separate back access to the main podium from the Nordic Lounge. Overall, its design is similar to the adjacent Red Room, which provides complementary functions.

The untitled work of art is made up of four corrugated plates in molten bronze. It was made by Giò Pomodoro in 1966. The well-known Italian sculptor, goldsmith, engraver and scenographer started in the field of goldsmithery, but later explored materials such as stone, marble and bronze, as in this case. To transfer the effect of movement, Pomodoro built a wooden frame covered with fabric. Once he had positioned the fabric, he covered it with molten bronze, which provided the desired shape. The artwork was donated by the Government of Italy in 1967.





Interactive panel discussions on Agroecology and Emerging Opportunities – Innovative Markets, Food Systems and Cities. Second International Symposium on Agroecology (Rome, 3–5 April 2018)



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Above: Fourth Lead Author Meeting for the Elaboration of the 2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Rome 22–26 October 2018.

Right: walnut panels, the four walnut pillars with diamond-shaped points; green carpet and upholstery which lend the Room its name.



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Inaugurated in 1951, the Green Room was initially very different: the seats were perpendicular to the podium, and in front of the simultaneous interpreting booths. Pomodoro's artwork hadn't yet been created; it was first hosted in the Philippines Room and then moved to the Green Room, where it is currently on display.

THE RED ROOM

The Red Room is right next to the Green Room, located on the first floor of building A. Inaugurated in 1951, the Red Room was designed to host the FAO Council meetings, the executive body of the Conference, which normally holds at least five sessions inbetween meetings of the Conference.

Donated by the Government of Italy, it was renovated in 1999 and again in 2006. It was designed to ensure that the 49 Member Nations of the Council – serving three-year rotating terms – and the European Union have seats in front of the podium chaired by the Independent Chairperson of the Council, allowing observers to participate from their seats, listening to the session in any of the six FAO official languages. The Red Room's walls are decorated with portraits of former Chairpersons. The first Chairperson was Andre Mayer from France, in office from 1945 to 1947; the last is Khalid Mehboob from Pakistan, in office since 2017. Since the establishment of FAO, there have been twenty Independent Chairpersons of the Council. By tradition, the Organization commissions a portrait of the outgoing Chairperson, which is duly framed and unveiled in the Council room. Each painting was done by a top-level artist.



©FAO/C. PERLA



The Red Room hosts meetings of the FAO Council, the executive body of the Conference. On the walls are the flags of FAO Members under the simultaneous interpreting booths, and the portraits of the former Chairpersons.



According to tradition, the outgoing Independent Chairperson of the Council has a portrait inside the Red Room, and it is unveiled during the last session of the Council chaired by the outgoing Chairperson. The portraits collection is part of the Red Room's decor. Some curiosities about these oils on canvas: two portraits were made by Arturo Barazzutti. The Italian painted the Georges Haraoui and Cheikh Maurice Gemayel ones. In his paintings, clothes, delicate gestures and faces try to capture the psychological aspects of his subjects in their role. The only one who has realized three portraits for the Red Room is Ann Tudor Walters, the versatile London artist, who painted

the portraits of Bukar Shaib, M. S. Swaminathan and Lassaad Ben Osman. A unique piece in this collection is the self-portrait by the former Independent Chairperson of the Council, José Ramón López Portillo. And lastly, the portrait of the former Independent Chairperson of the Council Aziz Mekour by Paolo Pietrangeli who produced an interesting piece: the backdrop of the painting is in fact a reproduction of an artwork exhibited in the office used by the Chairperson of the Council and by the Chairperson of the Conference. It is a large tapestry, made in 1953, by the French artist André Marchand.





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The portrait of the former Independent Chairperson of the Council, Gonzalo Bula-Hoyos, was done by the well-known Italian artist Aligi Sassu (1912–2000). Influenced by the style of Gaetano Previati, his inspiration was Umberto Boccioni. He was friends with Bruno Munari, and during his artistic education he knew artists such as Tommaso Marinetti, Lucio Fontana, and Pablo Picasso. His artworks have been exhibited in several countries.

During the Council sessions, observers can follow discussions in the six UN official languages. The Red Room has 455 seats.

THE NORDIC LOUNGE

On the first floor of building A, located between the Green Room and the Red Room, is the Nordic Lounge. Donated by the Governments of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the space is reserved for delegates and guests attending conferences in the nearby major rooms. An eye-catching carved wooden map has been there since the inauguration in 1977. A new wooden door with glass panels, installed during the restructuring in 2001, provides an open view of the Lounge and through to the outside. The Lounge also includes photographs of landscapes in the region.

Right: the carved wooden map has been there since the inauguration in 1977.
On the opposite page: the long hallway between the Green Room and the Red Room guides our view outside.





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THE ETHIOPIA ROOM

Located on the second floor of building C, the Room was donated by the Government of Ethiopia. Inaugurated in 1965 and renovated several times over the years (in 1996 and again in 2008), the new architectural design was completed during the 2013 renovations. It reflects the country's culture and customs and pays tribute to the ancient history of the land, and its bright colours are a reference to the country's flag.

In line with the latest technology, the Room includes state-of-the-art audio visual and interpretation equipment while promoting environmental sustainability and energy savings, thanks to the lighting system that guarantees multipurpose lighting options. The new architectural design in an oval shape, and the materials used, ensure maximum visibility for all meeting participants, as well as a feeling of nature, comfort and well-being, guaranteed by ergonomic seats. The oak panelling used in the furnishings and the walls are uniquely fitted and follow the natural curves of the planks thus creating a subtle sense of movement throughout the room. The milling process used to create the wooden panels follows the natural curves of the tree and therefore ensures 20 percent more usable material thus optimizing the number of planks milled from one tree.

IRIS STARGATE

Left: detail of the digital processing of the iris flower, made by the Italian artist Adriano Nardi in 2012. In Ethiopian culture, the iris represents faith, courage, wisdom, protection, hope and good wishes. The background shows the colours of the Ethiopian flag. **On the opposite page:** full view of Adriano Nardi's work-of-art.



The Ethiopian Room is equipped with simultaneous interpreting booths and a video projector system; it is used for meetings and has 86 seats.

Right and below: the original design of the Ethiopian Room, before complete refurbishment in 2013. **On the opposite page:** A Zero Hunger Programme meeting, attended by FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva, FAO's Communications team and FAO Special Goodwill Ambassadors for Zero Hunger.

The work of art on the main wall by the Italian artist Adriano Nardi, was created by digitally processing the image of an iris. In Ethiopian culture the iris represents faith, courage, wisdom, protection, hope and good wishes. On the left of the painting, there is a profile of a woman looking into the distance while a man in traditional Ethiopian dress appears from the right. The composition also features prominent Ethiopian natural elements including coffee beans and baobab flowers. Towards the centre, the DNA double helix symbolizes how we may trace the origins of the human species to the ancient ethnic groups that once resided in Ethiopia.

The original shape of the Room was square and included a honeycomb ceiling, with paintings hanging on the walls. One of them is still shown just outside the Ethiopia Room, it's an artwork by the artist Gebre Kristos Desta (1932–1981), an exponent of modern Ethiopian art. His painting depicts an obelisk located in the centre of a village, surrounded by a hilly landscape.

In addition to the various gatherings, the Ethiopia Room holds important Zero Hunger Programme meetings.





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The painting by Gebre Kristos Desta (1932–1981) depicts an obelisk located in the centre of a village, surrounded by a hilly landscape. Done in 1965, the artwork donated by the Government of Ethiopia was originally located inside the room; today it is displayed just outside.





THE MALAYSIA ROOM

The Malaysia Room is located on the second floor of building B. It is furnished in Malaysian tropical hardwood. The entrance is impressive: a wide, carved wooden doorway, in two different colours, and flanked by two wooden columns. Above them is a lintel with the name Malaysia written on it. Inside the room, seats face each other, on two parallel rows along the 200 square metre length of the room. Along the side walls are eight aedicule containing typical Malaysian objects. The brightness of the meeting room is created by chandeliers in the shape of reversed pyramids and the huge windows.

Every detail of the Room is made from Malaysian materials. Chandeliers in the shape of pyramids and huge windows ensure brightness to the 116 seats, arranged in a two-row layout.

Inaugurated in 1965 and renovated in 1997, the Room donated by the Government of Malaysia is equipped with simultaneous interpreting booths.



Right: the carved wooden doorway of the Malaysia Room. **On the opposite page:** The side walls hold eight aedicule containing typical Malaysian objects.



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THE KING FAISAL ROOM

Located on the second floor of building D, the Room is named after the Saudi Arabian King who reigned from 1964 to 1975.

The King Faisal Room is one of FAO's most prestigious meeting rooms: it is large (about 300 square metres) with a marble floor and walls and can accommodate over a hundred people. The design is inspired by Islamic art: King Faisal's portrait was sculpted in white marble on a wall, set against a marble mosaic of Medina and Mecca. The large central horseshoe table, and the additional seats, host guests in white leather chairs, each with the Saudi Arabian national emblem. The carpet in tone with the wooden table reaches the opposite marble wall, which is carved with verses of the Koran.

The King Faisal Room was inaugurated in 1981, renovated in 1999 and again in 2006. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia offered this room to FAO not only in memory of the Saudi Arabian leader, but also in recognition of the Organization's goals which serve humankind and of its role in fighting poverty and hunger.

Below: King Faisal's portrait sculpted in white marble.

On the opposite page: Director-General José Graziano da Silva meeting some Directors of FAO Regional Offices (2016).



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Above: King Faisal's portrait was sculpted in white marble on a wall, set against a marble mosaic of Medina and Mecca. **Left:** the space can be divided into two separate areas; it is equipped with six simultaneous interpreting booths and video projector. It can seat 116 people.

Right: the Saudi Arabian national emblem is on the doorways and on all the chairs. **Below:** some verses of the Koran sculpted in marble.



The King Faisal Room is an elegant meeting room with a host of high-tech facilities: the space can be divided into two separate areas and is equipped with six simultaneous interpreting booths and one technical booth. This meeting room is used by the Director-General for meetings with UN Regional Groups of Members. During one of these meetings, the sliding wall was activated while Representatives were already in the room, winning FAO praise for its technical means.

A study was done to permit different lighting options for various functions. These options can be easily selected through a user-friendly control panel. For aesthetic and energy-saving purposes, fluorescent lights were selected for the two translucent ceiling lights and spot lights for the decorative marble walls. The architecture of the room is enhanced through this lighting design.





THE NIGERIA ROOM

The Nigeria Room is located on the second floor of building C. Inaugurated in 1973, it was later completely renovated in 2009. Donated by the Government of Nigeria, the Room features a vaulted ceiling with coloured light fittings above the large oval wooden table. The selected materials and themes are inspired by the natural landscapes along the Niger river with its colourful blend of natural and human settlement. The Room's ambience is to promote dialogue and open exchange in a vibrant natural space. The selection of materials and technical aspects minimize overall energy consumption. The Nigeria Room also has a separate breakout area for small group discussions.

The opening ceremony
of the new Nigeria
Room (2010).



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Left and above right: perspectives of the Nigeria Room today. Above: the Nigeria Room before renovation work in 2009.

THE PHILIPPINES ROOM

Located on the second floor of building C, the Room donated by the Government of Philippines accommodates guests with four rows of tables, made of bamboo and laid out in concentric order on the ocean-blue coloured floor. In front of the main wall is the main speaker's table, with a wide illustration as a backdrop: the picture depicts the typical Philippine landscape distinguished by the sea, vegetation and rice terraces. This latter theme is reiterated along the walls. The lights are arranged to represent the archipelago of the Philippines. The intention is to reproduce an atmosphere that pays tribute to the colours and landscape of the Republic of the Philippines. In particular, the inspiration was the country's relationship with the sea, with sailing and its way of life.

When the Room was inaugurated in 1965, it was very different to what you see today: there was wood panelling on the walls, with some works of art such as Giò Pomodoro's bronze sculpture, now on display in the Green Room and a decorative suspended ceiling containing hexagonal honeycombs. The first refurbishment was done in 1996, for the World Food Summit when the Room was equipped with a permanent translation system. Its current design was done in 2013, to create a comfortable setting, that would integrate eco-friendly materials and minimize energy consumption.

The relief work along the walls evoke the image of rice terraces.



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Starting from above you can appreciate the light design representing the archipelago of the Philippines; the backdrop depicts a typical island landscape; the concave bamboo tables; lastly, the rice terraces suggested by the relief work along the walls. The Room can seat 61 people.

THE MEXICO ROOM

The Mexico Room is located on the second floor of building D. Donated by the Government of Mexico, the geometric pattern that decorates the doorway is replicated in the design of the ceiling light. Meetings are held around the large horseshoe table, facilitated by the six simultaneous interpreting booths.

Inaugurated in 1981 and refurbished at the beginning of the new millennium (2001), the highlight of this space is a tapestry called Mexico (750 cm x 190 cm) which hangs on the wall opposite the entrance. Made in 1982, it was designed by the prestigious Mexican architect and designer Pedro Ramírez

Vásquez (1919–2013), a leading figure in Mexican culture of the twentieth century. The very thin texture and the richness of colour, suggested by the architect, gives shape to a field of corn to highlight the intense agricultural activity in the country. The cultivation of maize has its origins, most likely in Central America, and especially Mexico, from where it spread to Canada in the north and to Argentina in the south. The tapestry was made in a carpet factory in Temoaya, a small town not far from Mexico City, renowned for its handicrafts. To appreciate the craftsmanship, one must consider that it takes 45 days of work to make one square metre of carpet.

MEXICO

The tapestry was made in 1982, designed by architect and designer Pedro Ramírez Vásquez (1919–2013). The texture gives shape to a field of corn, one of the main agricultural activities in the country. The work of art was donated by the Government of Mexico and covers most of the wall.



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The geometric patterned light design replicates the design in the doorway. The main wall displays the tapestry *Mexico*, designed by Pedro Ramírez Vázquez. The horseshoe table can accommodate 58 people.



THE IRAQ ROOM

At the main entrance of building A, the name of the Room is written in the following seven languages: Arabic, Aramaic, English, Kurdish, Mandaic, Sumerian cuneiform and Turkmen. The Iraq Room is located on the second floor, in the central bridge between buildings A and B. The agreement for the establishment of a room that was technologically advanced and able to reflect Iraqi art, was signed between the Republic of Iraq and FAO on 23 May 2013. The Room was inaugurated two years later, in June 2015. The main idea of the Room was to provide an elegant, flexible and innovative multipurpose venue for medium to large formal sessions and to enable simultaneous events. The Room can be arranged in different layouts, so that participants can move between simultaneously scheduled events according to need. This is made possible thanks to the ability to divide the space with movable panels, three mobile large flat screens, and the ability to conduct videoconferences. Sessions can be attended by 250 participants, facilitated by simultaneous interpretation in the six UN official languages.



The Iraq Room is an elegant, innovative and multipurpose venue, which can be arranged into different layouts for simultaneous sessions. It seats 250 people.



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The entrance of the Room welcomes visitors with a wall covered in cuneiform script and a replica of the deity Lamassu (or Shēdu).



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Right and below: on the wall, some parts of the Code of Hammurabi on agriculture are reproduced in Sumerian cuneiform. The Code of Hammurabi is a code of law engraved on a pillar found in Susa, in Elam. The collection of laws contains 282 articles about different areas of law.



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Above left: the second replica of Ishtar made by Michele Martinelli. Some 120 lions were created for the processional way towards the northern entrance to Babylon. The blue tiles surrounding the figure were recreated using the original glazing process. Above: A panel representing the images of the stylized palms that once adorned the Ishtar Gate.

Technology and flexibility are the distinctive features of this venue, but its assets don't end here. Among the donations made by the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq, there are three works of art produced by the artist Michele Martinelli. At the entrance of building B and along the hallway to the simultaneous interpreting booths, there are copies of two lions which adorned the processional way to the Ishtar Gate. The lion was the symbol of Babylon, it represented Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, love and war. It was also meant to instil fear in enemies. Some 120 lions were created in polychrome relief tiles for the processional way towards the northern entrance to Babylon, as well as Nebuchadnezzar II's Throne Room

(Nebuchadnezzar II, 604–562 BCE). The majority of these polychrome lions are in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. In the 1930s the German archaeologist Robert Koldewey excavated some tiles that were completely shattered. It required around two years to clean, preserve and reassemble them. The more vivid blue tiles surrounding the figure were recreated using the original glazing process. Thanks to this discovery, the Pergamon Museum could recreate the processional way to Babylon and the Ishtar Gate. The third work of Michele Martinelli is a resin copy of a human-headed winged bull profile, known as *Lamassu* or *Shēdu*. It represents an Assyrian protective deity, often depicted as having the body of an



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Known as Lamassu or Shēdu, the human-headed winged bull is a resin copy made by the Italian artist Michele Martinelli. It represents an Assyrian protective deity, often depicted as having the body of an ox or a lion, and bird's wings. *Lamassu* frequently appears in Mesopotamian art and mythology, although with different names, such as *Lumasi*, *Alad* or *Shēdu*.

ox or a lion, and bird's wings. *Lamassu* frequently appears in Mesopotamian art and mythology, although with different names, such as *Lumasi*, *Alad* or *Shēdu*.

Other representations include those at the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad, the Louvre Museum in Paris, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, just to name a few. Along the wall facing building B is a ten-metre panel representing images of the stylized palms that once adorned the Ishtar Gate. Walking down the Iraq Room you come to the obelisk of King Shalmaneser III, who reigned between 859–824 BCE. It is a replica of the original found in the palace of the King in ancient



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Above: the obelisk of King Shalmaneser III, who reigned between 859–824 BCE. It is a replica of the original found in the King's palace in ancient Calah. Right: the obelisk contains five different rows, each one depicts the tribute of a foreign king including: camels, monkeys, an elephant and a rhinoceros. Assyrian kings often collected exotic animals and plants as an expression of their power.

Calah. The obelisk contains five different rows, each one depicting the tribute of a foreign king including: camels, monkeys, an elephant and a rhinoceros. Assyrian kings often collected exotic animals and plants as an expression of their power.

There is also a remarkable relief replica of the Assyrian God Nisroch, depicted while pollinating the tree of life. The original was found at Nimrud and dates back to the eighth century BCE. Not far from it, is a picture of an aerial view of the city of Erbil, capital of Erbil Governorate in Iraqi Kurdistan, located approximately 350 kilometres north of Baghdad.



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THE GERMAN ROOM

Located on the second floor of building C, the German Room welcomes participants into a harmonious and efficient working environment. Starting from the corridor outside the entrance, there are overlapping lines of script in the six FAO official languages, running the length of the Room. They refer to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food adopted by the FAO Council in 2004: *“Every human being has the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger”*.

Donated by the Government of Germany, the Room extends over 200 square metres, its wooden flooring and panelling is made from sustainably sourced red-hearted beech. A wooden surface starts on the floor and becomes part of the main wall, surrounding the screen, onto which the live sky of Rome is projected via a live camera on the building rooftop. These and other features, such as the increase in the number of interpretation booths, were designed by the architect Heike Schuppelius in 2008.

Starting from the Room’s inauguration year in 1966, the German Room had a modern and functional design, practical for discussion and negotiations. During the various renovation works in 1979 and 2008, the quality standards reached very high levels.

“Every human being has the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger”.

The entrance welcomes participants with an excerpt in the six FAO official languages from the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to food adopted by the FAO Council in 2004.



The screen can project the live sky of Rome; parts of the wooden panelling is from sustainable resources. The Room can seat 90 people and there are six simultaneous interpreting booths.



THE IRAN ROOM



Right: a bas-relief map, made of clay tiles, showing environmentally friendly technologies used in traditional Iranian villages. Below: an illustration of the Iranian tradition.





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FAO Council 156th Session.
Side Event: Sustainable
Food Systems in the New
Urban Agenda (2017)

The Iran Room is located on the first floor of building B. The Government of Iran donated this Room in 1996 to demonstrate its commitment to FAO's mission and ideals. The idea behind the project was to make a visit to the Room a memorable experience, so the space was designed as a multimedia auditorium and permanent exhibition area. Along the stairs leading to the Room, there is a collection of Iranian arts and crafts, illustrating the theme of agriculture and food security. A meaningful artwork is the bas-relief map in clay tiles showing environmentally friendly technologies

used in traditional Iranian villages. The lower section illustrates *ghanat*, the extraction of underground water by gravity; the second section illustrates the windmills in the ancient city of Khaf in northern Iran used to grind wheat. The vertical section on the right illustrates the watermills used in the irrigation of fields while the upper section, on the left, shows pigeon towers used to gather the raw material for fertiliser.

The Iran Room is frequently used for conferences, lectures and debates.

THE LEBANON ROOM

Located on the second floor of building D, the Room donated by the Government of Lebanon welcomes guests around the cherry wood conference table, with two important artworks on the walls. Behind the central seats you can admire a sculpted trifora showing a painting made by the Roman movie set painter Georgio Jefferson: it depicts a cedar tree, the ancient ruins of Baalbeck

and ancient harbour of Saïde. On the opposite wall there are two Beqā Valley sarcophagi from the second century BCE.

The Lebanon Room was inaugurated in 1993, in tribute to the outgoing Director-General Edouard Saouma. The meetings held here are facilitated by the simultaneous interpreting booths.



The Lebanon Room is used for meetings of the Finance Committee. Inaugurated in 1993, it can seat 66 people.

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THE AUSTRIA ROOM

Located on the second floor of building C, the Austria Room is a multimedia auditorium. The red sign outside the Room is designed in twentieth century art-nouveau style; inside, the red leather seats and the light coloured bleached wooden panelling decor reflect the red and white colours of the Austrian flag. The auditorium's minimalist design enhances events taking place in the space. Donated by the Government of Austria, its original design was projected

by the architect Kaminski. Originally intended as a movie theatre, when it was completed in 1965, it was inaugurated by showing a documentary film made available by the Austrian Government. The Room was completely restructured in 2000, when it was equipped with five simultaneous interpretation booths. The auditorium provides a widerange of uses including press briefings and conferences, lectures, presentations and more.



The Austria Room is a multimedia auditorium with a minimalist design. The colours of the seats and the furniture recall the Austrian flag. Inaugurated in 1963, it can seat 108 people.

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THE PAKISTAN ROOM

The Pakistan Room is located on the first floor of building A. Its distinctive feature is a wooden map of Pakistan, displayed on the main wall.

Donated by the Government of Pakistan in 1961, it was originally located on the third floor, where it was renovated in 1996. As of 2002, the Room was located adjacent to the Green and Red Rooms. The new strategic location, combined with the renovation in 2018, make it a useful space for small meetings in conjunction with larger sessions held in the bigger rooms.

The Pakistan Room is adjacent to the Green Room and the Red Room. Inaugurated in 1961, it can seat 24 people.



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THE CUBA ROOM

Located on the second floor of building B, the Cuba Room features a simple and elegant working environment. Donated by the Government of the Republic of Cuba, its walls display two paintings of a symbolic place in Havana: the Catedral de la Virgen María de la Concepción Inmaculada, built in the eighteenth century.

The Cuba Room is an elegant working environment, decorated with two paintings of the Cathedral Square in Havana. Inaugurated in 1972, it can seat 18 people.

The Cuba Room was inaugurated in 1972 and renovated in 1989. Throughout the years it has hosted important meetings with Heads of State and Government, such as the World Food Summit in 1996.



THE QUEEN JULIANA ROOM

The Queen Juliana Room is located on the third floor of building B. Donated by the Government of the Netherlands and dedicated to Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, its original layout was designed by Frits A. Eschauzier, a prominent architect of the Netherlands, and was executed by leading artisans and furniture makers. Inaugurated in 1955, further renovation works in 1981 and in 1996 (to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization), conferred a more modern layout, equipping the Room with simultaneous interpretation facilities. Its walls display a painting with stylized figures of tulips and a bronze sculpture of the head of Queen Juliana. The entrance doors to the Room were constructed in the Netherlands and installed in Rome by Dutch and FAO artisans. In 2012, the Room hosted the 12th Ordinary Meeting of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG), during which the heads of the eight conventions discussed how to enhance coordination and collaboration in supporting the biodiversity and the sustainable development programmes.

The Queen Juliana Room accommodates guests through its characteristic sliding doors. Inaugurated in 1955, it can seat 36 people.



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THE CANADA ROOM

The Canada Room is located on the third floor of building A. The oval oak table draws the eye towards an engraved wooden map of Canada: every region is made in walnut, each in a different shade of colour, which highlights the borders and the mountain reliefs. Overall, the Room draws on the colours of the forest thanks to the green carpet and chairs. The Canada Room was inaugurated in 1953 and

renovated in 1999. Its walls display some illustrations showing the traditions of indigenous life. Many of them were made by the Canadian artist Wayne Yerxa, who by using lithographs on rice paper, recounts the rituals and procedures to harvest wild rice. The lithographs on display have been treated to prevent them from yellowing; the frames are in the same wood as the other wooden items.



The Canada Room features a large wooden map of the country. Its walls display some lithographs showing the indigenous rituals for wild rice harvest. Inaugurated in 1953, it can seat 24 people.

THE INDIA ROOM

Before entering, visitors are impressed by the antique wooden double door, originally from India, and with ornamental motifs engraved on the doors, along the columns and the lintel. The walls are adorned with wooden panels. The space, donated by the Government of India, was inaugurated in 1957 and restructured in 1992 and again in 1999. It is furnished with Indian decorative handcrafts and an illustration of Mahatma Gandhi.

Right: the double wooden door, engraved with ornamental motifs, welcomes visitors into the India Room. **On the opposite page:** Indian handcrafts furnishing the meeting room. Inaugurated in 1957, it can seat 30 people.



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THE AZERBAIJAN ROOM

Located on the second floor of building B, the Azerbaijan Room is strategically situated between the second floor meeting rooms of buildings B and D. Overlooking the historical marble staircase, its cherry wood doors welcome participants into a modern and traditional working environment. Donated by the Government of Azerbaijan, the Room is in the shape of a flame, an ancient identity symbol of the local culture, due to the richness of hydrocarbons in the subsoil. The same shape characterizes the *buta* ornamental pattern, which shapes the ceiling in three-tiered layers; and the cherry-wood floor and marble combination fuses modern and traditional materials.

Inaugurated in 2018, the Room extends over 67 square metres. Two wide windows grant full visibility during meetings around the long oval table, ensuring a double source of natural light; furthermore, the asymmetry of the end walls provides good acoustics. The Room is equipped with state-of-the-art communication technology, set in ogival arches adorned by tapestries and traditional musical instruments, such as the *gamun* and the *qaval*.



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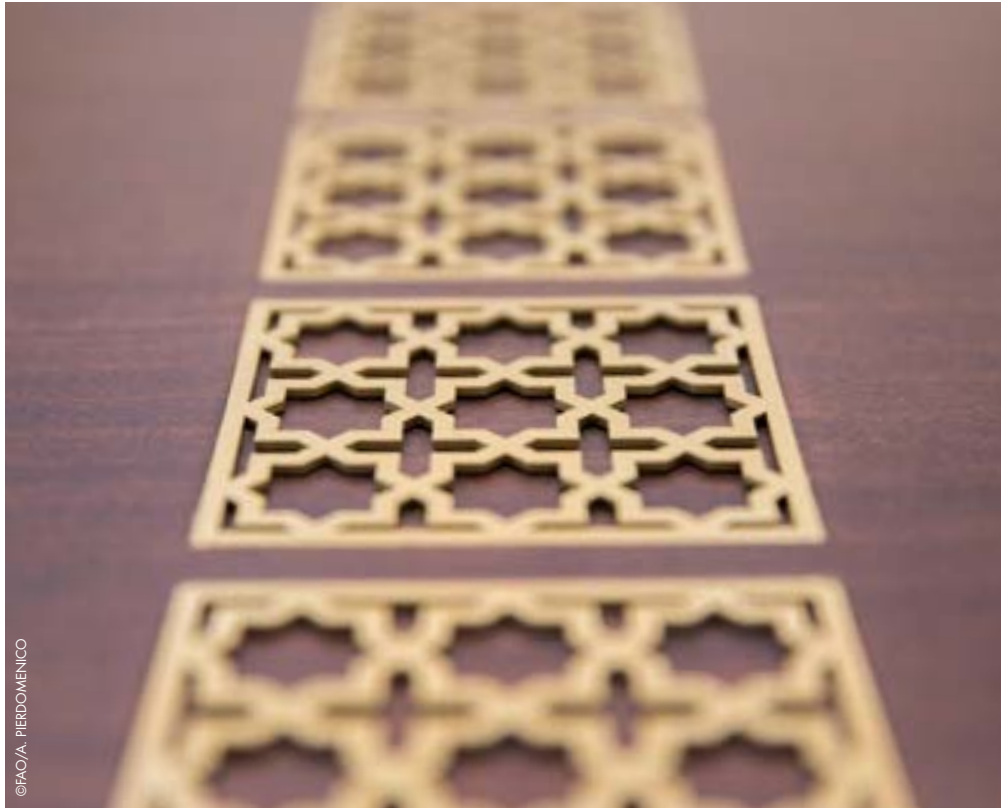
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Above, right: The external wall defines the shape of a flame. Below: detail of meeting table, illuminated by the wide windows. **On the opposite page:** the flame shape is reproduced on the ceiling and on the floor, where the wood and marble combines modern and traditional materials. Inaugurated in 2018, the Room can seat 26 people.



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THE SUDAN ROOM



The Sudan Room is located on the third floor of building A, near the Plenary Hall. Donated by the Government of the Republic of Sudan, the design conveys its visual identity, starting from the entrance: the African mahogany door is adorned with Sudanese patterns, repeated on an inner wall, in front of a small lounge. Inside the room, the wide windows overlooking Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, illuminate the workspace reserved for the Independent Chairperson of the Council, marked by two replica stone columns from the Kush dynasty. Across from it is an oval wooden meeting table, flanked by a replica of a sandstone column discovered in Abu Ertelia in 2015: this archaeological find belonged to King Natakamani and Queen Amanitore, and dates back to the Meroitic Age (from the first century BCE to the first century CE). The sculpture is approximately 140 cm high and was donated to Sudan by the Istituto Studi Medio Orientali (ISMEO).

Above, left: detail of the meeting table. **Below:** a perspective of the room with ornamental plasterwork depicting Sudanese patterns. **On the opposite page:** two replicas of stone columns from the Kush dynasty. On the left is a replica of a sandstone column, dating back to Meroitic Age (from the first century BCE to the first century CE). Inaugurated in 2017, the Room can seat 12 people.

The Sudan Room was inaugurated in 2017. During FAO's Conference Sessions and other major sessions held at FAO headquarters, it hosts the office of the Independent Chairperson of the Council; otherwise it is utilized as a traditional meeting room.



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THE AUSTRALIA ROOM

Located on the fourth floor of building B, it's one of the most representative meeting rooms used by senior FAO officers. The long convex wall curves outwards representing organic life, expanding and directly impacting the world. This is a metaphor for the decisions taken within this Room that will have a physical impact on the world. The minimalist functional design offers an appropriate venue to hold the Organization's most senior-level meetings. The inner wall's rough undulating surface recalls the waves of Australia's oceans; the dark wood table is in the shape of a sailing boat with the curtain panels representing the boat's sails. Reference to the continent's past colonization period is represented by wooden boiserie which alludes to the first dwellings. The Room is also adorned with a painting by the Australian artist Edward Blitner, *Lightning Spirit Man and the Mimis Magic Power Bag of the Dreamin Place*. The work represents mimis, spirit figures represented in many bark paintings and carvings. Their images are also found upon the rock walls of the Kakadu National Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Arnhem Land escarpment, in the Northern Territory. The painting is framed and includes an explanation of the origins of the myth and its relevance for aboriginal communities. Inaugurated in 1955 and renovated in 2011, the Australia Room also has a small studio for videoconferencing, adjacent to the main room.

Right: The long convex wall curves outwards representing organic life, directly impacting the world, as are the decisions taken within this Room. **On the opposite page:** FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva meeting Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank (2018).



LIGHTNING SPIRIT MAN AND THE MIMIS MAGIC POWER BAG OF THE DREAMIN PLACE

A painting by the Australian artist Edward Blitner. It depicts Mimis spirit figures, represented in many bark paintings and carvings.

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M O R E T O S E E

THE INDONESIA ROOM

Located on the eighth floor of building B, the Indonesian Room includes a lounge and a dining room for special receptions, such as banquets reserved for delegates. Inaugurated in 1969 and renovated in 1996 (almost doubling its size), the Room is decorated with representative examples of traditional wood carvings which is very common in many parts of Indonesia. The style is that of temple carvings from the ninth to the thirteenth century. Starting from the silver dinner service, carved-back chairs to the paneling on the columns and walls, every detail is handmade and a work of art in itself. The room was donated by the Government of Indonesia, and both Indonesian and Italian artisans worked together to fit the carved teak paneling. Some of the carved wooden panels include text and symbolic elements about the history of the country, such as the engravings on the back wall and the entrance. They depict scenes from the life of King Rama and his wife Sita, according to Balinese tradition. The story recounts the kidnapping of Queen Sita by the giant Rahwana. Rama's victory over Rahwana represents the victory of virtue over evil, while the queen's return to Rama's kingdom symbolizes the return of wealth and abundance to the people. The Hindu queen is also seen as the incarnation of Dewi Sri, the goddess of rice, one of the most important staple foods in Indonesia. The Room includes other engravings of symbolic value, including a bird of paradise (a symbol of nature), a white heron (a symbol of fertility), a peacock (a symbol of the Indonesian teak forests) and the Gunungan (the tree of life and a symbol of the universe, depicted on a screen).

Right: a detail of wooden carving panels depicting scenes from the life of King Rama and his wife Sita.

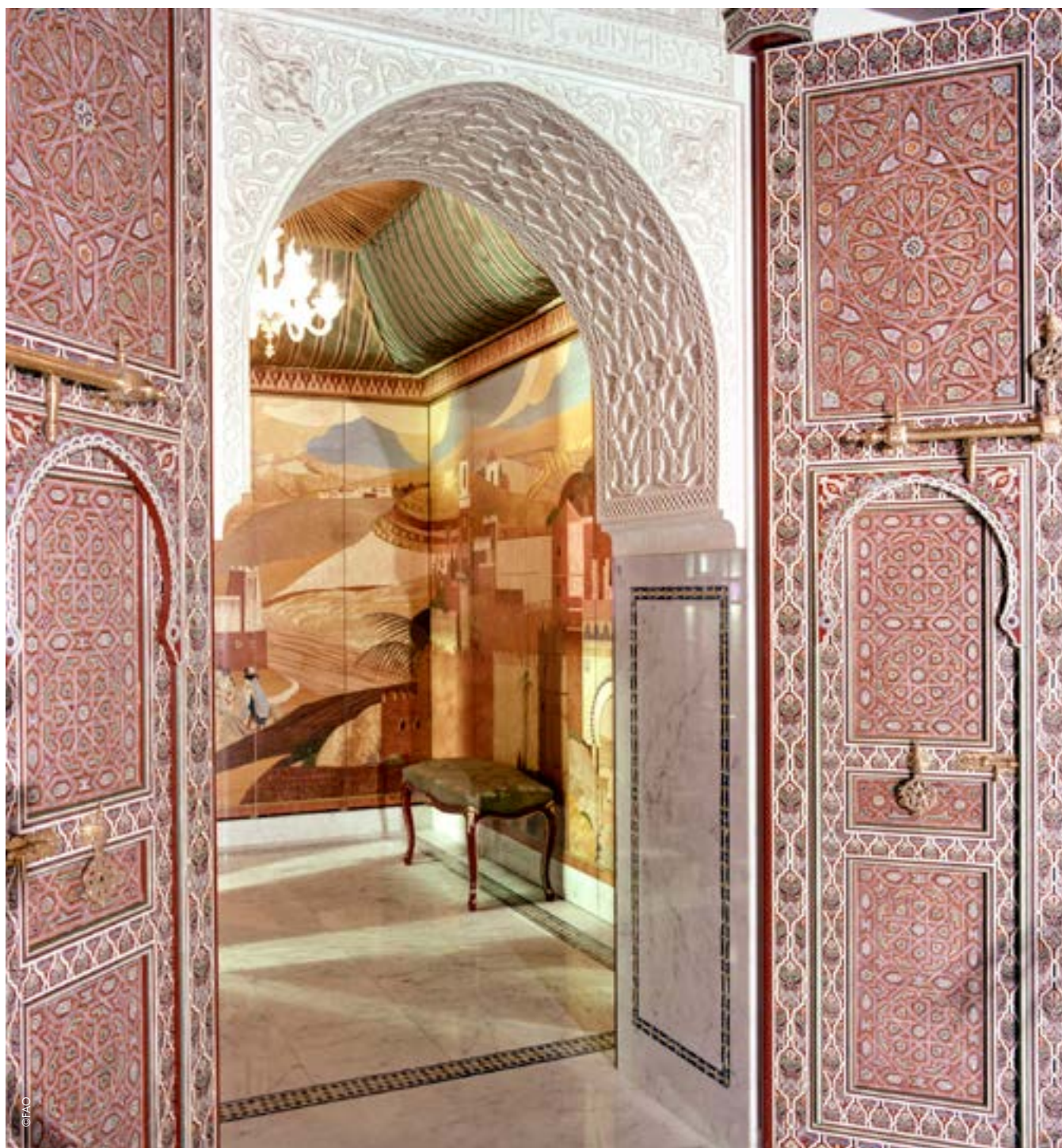




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The Indonesia Room includes a lounge and a dining room for special receptions. The wooden decorated panels were made adopting Indonesian traditional techniques. Inaugurated in 1969, it can seat 74 people.

THE MOROCCO ROOM



Located on the eighth floor of building B, the Morocco Room is also known as King Mohammed V Room. Donated by the Government of Morocco, the Room extends over 150 square metres, hosting a dining room and a wide lounge overlooking the terrace.

The traditional Moroccan space is characterized by the floor and the lower part of the walls made in blue and white hand-painted tiles. The upper walls were carved on site by Moroccan artisans and left white to offset the mosaics. This reception room is sumptuously furnished with rich Moroccan carpets, cushioned leather sofas and a wooden ceiling. The picture windows are adorned with curtains, and the chandeliers hanging from the wooden ceiling provide lighting. Two fountains separate the seating area from the main section of the room: the musical tone of the miniature waterfalls creates a sense of peace and well-being.

Inaugurated in 1965, the Room was restructured in 1967 and in 1987. It is reserved for the Director-General to welcome high-level visitors, such as heads of delegations.

In addition to the main entrance, you can access the Room through an arched secondary entrance, engraved in detail, closed by a finely-decorated door adjoining the Indonesia Room.



The floor and the lower part of the walls are covered with hand-painted tiles. Two fountains separate the lounge from the dining room. Chandeliers hang from the carved wooden ceiling. Inaugurated in 1965, it can seat 64 people. On the opposite page: The Morocco Room and the Indonesia Room are connected by an arched secondary entrance.



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Artisans laying the flooring (1987).



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The decorated white plaster of the upper walls offsets the coloured hand-painted mosaics.

ANGOLA RADIO AND TELEVISION CENTRE

The entrance displays works by Angolan artists.



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located on the third floor of building A, the Angola Radio and Television Centre allows the Organization to make immediate news coverage links worldwide. The highly strategic location offers direct access to the Plenary Hall, facilitating the direct coverage of live events and offering easy access to media and delegates.

Donated by the Government of Angola, the Radio and Television Centre extends over 250 square meters, including a reception area for visitors, and includes artworks by the greatest Angolan artists. The works of art reflect the richness and abundance of Africa: the traditions, aspirations, limitations and daily dramas and lastly the humanity that lies behind all this, giving people hope that there is still a possibility to eliminate world hunger. The oil painting by Álvaro Macieira, *Signs of Angolan identity* (2008) portrays the fertility of the land made of fruit and fish, essential for the survival and progress of humanity. *Angola Family Unity* (2008) is by the same author, and upholds the idea of family unity



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FERTILITY AND ANGOLA ASPECTS

The painting was done in 2008 by the artist Don Sebas Cassule. The artwork represents the Earth's fertility, production, the well-balanced food distribution at a global level and promotes the International Year of Natural Fibres of FAO. It was donated by the Government of Angola.



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SIGNS OF ANGOLAN IDENTITY

This painting was done by Álvaro Macieira in 2008. It depicts the fertility of the land, made from fruit and fish, essential for the survival and progress of humanity. The artwork was donated by the Government of Angola.



Left: the studio for live broadcasting. On the opposite page: the radio and television centre.

against hunger and poverty, and celebrates peace as the biggest conquest of the Angolans and of humanity.

The other two works of art are by Don Sebas Cassule: *Fertility and Angola aspects* (2008) deals with the Earth's fertility, production, the well-balanced food distribution at the global level and promotes the International Year of Natural Fibres. The painting *Creating ideas for new facts* (2008), reflects on communication and land fertility as factors for the advance of Angolan society and societies in general. The artwork uses a symbolic language:

there is a man hidden behind a mask represented by a drum and a candle. A woman comes out from the sound wave in a zigzag pattern that represents daily commotion. The sun symbolizes the passage of time (the same symbol carved in the rocks of southern Angola) and finally the bird, represented as a homing pigeon, symbolizes journey and communication.

The Angola Radio and Television Centre is a technological space with a distinctive cultural identity.



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KOREAN CONFERENCE SERVICE CENTRE

The Korean Conference Service Centre is located on the first floor of building A. Donated by the Government of the Republic of Korea in 2001, it is a multifunctional space equipped with computers. The space serves as an information and document distribution area for the Green Room and the Red Room.

The Centre is adorned with some paintings entitled *Feelings from Korea*, by the Korean architect and artist, Tai Nam Jung. A wall displays some folk instruments called *Samul Nori* (signifying playing four instruments), typical of traditional music. There are also examples of ancient Korean farmers folk poems, written in Korean calligraphy. The many pictures display Korean architecture and landscapes.



The multifunctional Korean Lounge serves as a foyer area for activities taking place in the Green Room and the Red Room. The area is decorated with traditional Korean paintings and objects. It was inaugurated in 2001.

UEMOA ROOM

Located on the ground floor of building A, the UEMOA press room (Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa) is a workplace equipped for use by journalists.

Inaugurated in 1999 and refurbished in 2003, the Room is decorated in wood and leather with typical artworks and craft items provided by the UEMOA Member States. The Room has a lounge and a small studio for interviews.

Donated by the UEMOA Member States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo), it is a press room for use by journalists. Inaugurated in 1999, it can seat 14 people.



ESPACE GABON

The meeting room is equipped with video facility to screen FAO's ongoing projects and activities. Inaugurated in 1999, it can seat 20 people.

The Espace Gabon is located on the ground floor of building A, and is a venue to inform visitors and guests about FAO's ongoing projects and activities. Donated by the Government of Gabon, the space is usually used for meetings with the decentralized offices, as well as high-level meetings. The meeting room was inaugurated in 1999 and refurbished in 2003.



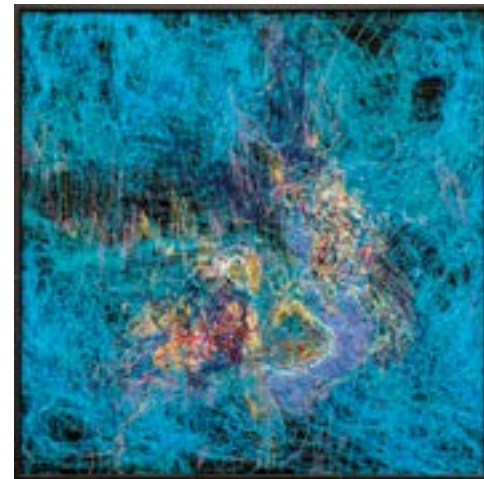
TURKISH REGISTRATION CENTRE



The Iznik ceramic tiles, depicting the traditional sailing ship, represent the richness of the seas. The Centre was inaugurated in 2001 and can seat 10 people.

Located at the entrance of building A, the Turkish Registration Centre is a large airy space, designed to receive delegations and carry out registration procedures. Workstations line the walls; the area is decorated with Turkish ceramic tile copies based on the originals from the fifteenth and sixteenth century; among the carpets on the walls, one is made of silk. The Iznik ceramic tiles, depict the traditional sailing ship and represent the richness of the seas. Donated by the Government of Turkey, the Turkish Registration Centre was designed to help FAO fulfil its growing role as an important United Nations conference centre.

SLOVAK DELEGATES' LOUNGE



PREBUDENIE

The artwork is a textile composition made in 2001 by the Slovak artist Lucia Korenova.

Located on the ground floor of building B, the Slovak Delegates' Lounge is a multifunctional workspace equipped with the latest state-of-the-art technology. Donated by the Government of Slovakia in 2001, it is possible to separate the multimedia working area with sliding wooden doors. This working environment consists of an internet area, a lounge and a small meeting room. It is reserved to welcome delegates from Members.

Some artworks are kept there, mostly provided on permanent loan by the Slovak Agriculture Museum in Nitra. Among them, a textile composition named Prebudenie (2001) stands out, made by Lucia Korenova, an expert in textile art.

OTHER ARTWORKS

Even though many works of art are stored in the main meeting rooms, there are a great number of masterpieces throughout the FAO headquarters complex. Here are some works of art which you can see when walking down the hallways.



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ANGOLA FAMILY UNITY

This painting was done in 2008, by the Angolan artist Alvaro Macieira. It upholds the idea of family unity against hunger and poverty and celebrates peace as the biggest conquest of Angolans and of humanity. The painting was donated by the Government of Angola and is on display on the third floor of building A, in the Angola Radio and Television Centre.

AUTUMN

In this classic example of Swiss colourism, the Swiss artist Giovanni Giacometti (1868–1933) brilliantly mediates between French and Italian artistic traditions. The colour of the human forms echo the hues of the distant landscape, establishing a deep connection between nature and human experience. The artwork was completed in 1920 and donated in 1953 by the Government of Switzerland. It is on display along the hallway on the first floor of building A.



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ABBONDANZA (ABUNDANCE)

Made in 1996 by the renowned Italian artist Ferdinando Codognotto, the sculpture in stone pine wood, the artist's preferred material, is a tribute to FAO and to the World Food Summit held in 1996. The name of FAO is engraved on the stand, which holds planet Earth surmounted by a giant ear of wheat. The artwork is on display along the hallway on the third floor of building B.



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This sculpture was made in 1967 by Carla Accardi (1924–2014). The artwork consists of various abstract shapes, made of shiny aluminium, placed onto two brushed aluminium supports. The Italian artist was one of the leading exponents of Italian abstractionism; she took part in various international exhibitions, such as the Venice Biennale. The artwork was donated by the Government of Italy and is on display on the eighth floor of building B, in the Celio Room.



SEED OF WILD RICE

This is a cast stainless steel sculpture made by the Japanese artist Mitsuaki Tanabe (1939–2015), shown sitting next to his sculpture. The subject of the work is a seed of wild rice, the ancestor of today's cultivated rice. Made in 2008, the artwork was donated by the Government of France to commemorate the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. The sculpture is 9 metres long and is located on the second floor of building D, overlooking the marble staircase.





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THE WORLD OF CHILDREN

This bronze sculpture was made in 1994 by the Italian artist and FAO Goodwill Ambassador Gina Lollobrigida. Three children stand on the Earth, surrounded by doves, representing a world of purity, love and generosity. The artwork was donated to commemorate World Food Day in 2006. The sculpture is over 3 metres tall and is located on the ground floor of building B, at the foot of the marble stairs.



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THE GREAT FLOOD

This is a watercolour made in 1951 on linen paper by the Chinese artist, Jiang Zhaohe (1904–1986). The artwork is characterized by dark colours, except a dash of red on the younger woman's scarf. Donated to FAO in 1955, the watercolour is on display at the entrance of building D.



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THE CREATION

The painting made by the Cuban artist Pedro Pablo Oliva explores the birth of humanity and love, as elements that provide form and meaning to creation. The mural represents what the Cuban artist calls "Tree of Life". Two archetypes of love can be found in the mural: on the right a tender couple in love; on the left, an expectant mother. At the centre, the new human being, sleeping in a womb and awaiting constant emotional and physical attention. Oliva made this painting while holding a workshop with Roman art students at FAO headquarters. Subsequently he donated the mural to FAO to celebrate the Telefood Concert, simultaneously held in Rome and Havana on 26 October 1997. The work is on display on the second floor of building B.



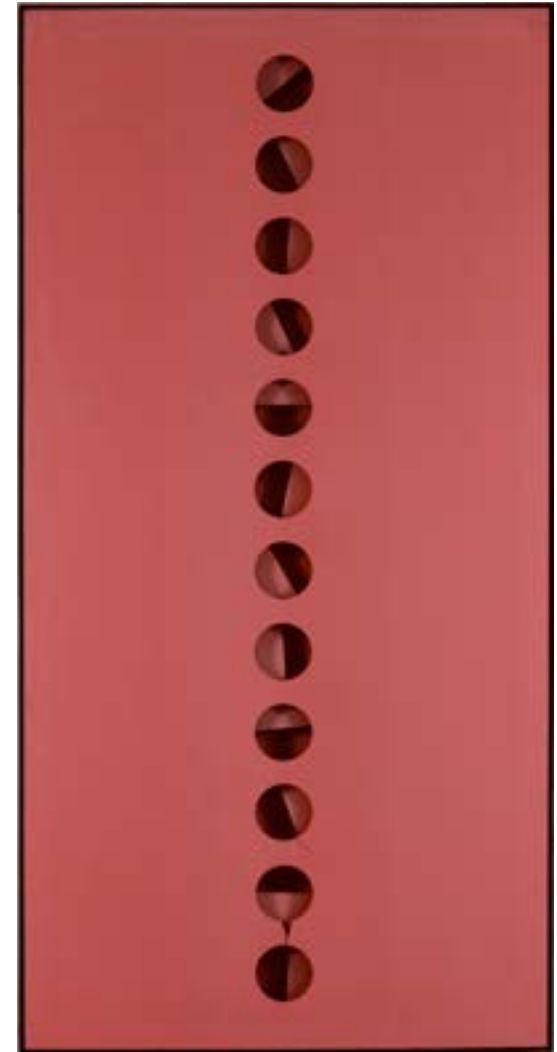
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FAMILY

This sculpture was made by the Polish artist Stanislaw Kulon in 1967. The artwork consists of two groups: a mother and child and a couple and child. Donated by the Government of Poland, the sculptures were positioned in the Polish bar when a team of Polish architects and artisans arrived to furnish the Polish Lounge, inaugurated in 1967. Today the Lounge no longer exists but the bar is still there, on the ground floor of building A.

STRUTTURE MODULARI

Two artworks made by the Italian artist Paolo Scheggi (1940–1971). **Right:** *Struttura modulare* (Modular structure), 1967, PVC pink sheets, superimposed and die cut, around 180 x 90 x 5 cm. **Below:** *Struttura modulare*, 1967, PVC light yellow sheets, superimposed and die cut, around 90 x 272 x 5 cm. These two *Strutture modulari* are Paolo Scheggi's research on plastic integration in architecture, designed and made specifically for FAO. The artworks were donated by the Government of Italy in 1967; they are on display on the eight floor of building C.



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IL CICLO DELLA NATURA / CIÒ CHE NON È STATO

"The cycle of nature / that which has not been" is a painting from 1994 by the Italian painter Vasco Bendini (1912–2015). It features a predominant use of gold, black, yellow and brown colours. The Italian artist took part to the great exhibition "Novecento, arte e storia in Italia", held in 2000 at the "Scuderie Papali al Quirinale" and "Mercati di Traiano" of Rome. He devoted his career to conceptual art and arte povera. The artwork was donated by the Italian Government in 1994 and is on display on the fourth floor of building B.



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IL SEME CHE GERMOGLIA

“Seed that sprouts” is a sculpture by the Italian artist Roberto Joppolo in 1999. It represents the stage of sprouting and associates FAO with a fairer world, united in the fight against malnutrition and undernutrition. The seed that sprouts is FAO itself. The artist’s style blends with FAO’s buildings, creating an artwork over 3 metres high. The sculpture was executed in cast bronze and wax, shined and coated internally. It was donated by the Government of Italy in 1999, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of FAO headquarters establishment in Rome. The work is located on the south side, outside building A.



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SOLIDARIETÀ

“Solidarity” is a sculpture made in 1999 by the artist ANTOS (under the supervision of Antonio Grieco), it consists of 80 clay tiles in relief, that added together reach over 3 metres in height. The artwork represents the difficulties of life that we all have to deal with, so this is the wall of life up which we all must climb. The first man has reached the top and helps the next man. This first tile gives the name to the whole work.

Solidarity is a collective need, everyone needs each other and this is often forgotten in modern society. The masterpiece was donated by the Associazione Laziale Motulesi – Onlus, to celebrate the International Day of Disabled Persons, 2000. The sculpture is located on the south side, outside building B.



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UOMO E MACCHINA VANNO

“Man and machine go” is a stone sculpture on a fused steel support made by the Italian artist Lorenzo Guerrini (1914–2002). It was donated by the Government of Italy in 1967.

Lorenzo Guerrini was one of the leaders in the revival of Italian art in the second half of the twentieth century. His work is located outside building D, on the north-west side.



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COLONNA TRASPARENTE

"Transparent column" is a stainless steel sculpture by the Italian artist Teodosio Magnoni in 1994. It stands 6 metres high. The external surfaces are glazed uniformly, without welding marks; the inside is painted black to enhance the difference between void and fullness. The sculpture can be seen beyond the wall from Viale Aventino, it is located outside building D, north-west side.

THE TERRACE

FAO's magnificent panoramic terrace is located on the eighth floor of building B. Extending over 1 400 square metres, the 360-degree open space offers breathtaking views over some of Rome's most famous archaeological sites, reference points for those visiting the city, including the Colosseum and Saint Peter's Basilica. The terrace's travertine paving is also a tribute to these two magnificent landmarks of the capital city and in keeping with the finest traditions of ancient Rome.

From up here the hustle and bustle of the city seems distant and traffic noise is muted; you can take advantage of the restaurant and two coffee bars to take a moment and ponder the ancient glories of Rome.

RUDERE ROMANO I – OMAGGIO A CARACALLA

"Roman ruin I – Tribute to Caracalla" is a contemporary art sculpture representing a Roman ruin. It was made in 1958 by the Italian artist Roberto Rota (1912–1994).

It is a stone artwork, just under 1 metre high, placed on a chiselled pedestal. Donated in 1994, it is located on the FAO rooftop terrace, on the eighth floor of building B, facing the Baths of Caracalla.





UCCELLO

“Bird” is a contemporary art sculpture representing a bird. It was made in 1960 by the Italian artist Roberto Rota (1912–1994). Donated in 1994, it is located on the FAO rooftop terrace, on the eighth floor of building B, facing the Circus Maximus.

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**SAINT PETER'S
BASILICA**

**THE VATICAN
MUSEUMS**

**THE CHURCH OF
SANT'ANDREA DELLA VALLE**

**THE CHURCH OF
SANT'AGNESE IN AGONE
(PIAZZA NAVONA)**

PALACE OF JUSTICE

THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS

THE VITTORIANO

CAPITOLINE HILL

FAO's terrace stands on the north side of the architectural complex, providing a majestic view from the Gazometro in the Ostiense neighbourhood, to the Baths of Caracalla. In the panoramic photo, you can appreciate the landmarks of Rome's artistic, cultural and archaeological heritage.



THE PALATINE HILL

THE PALACE OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS

THE PALACE OF DOMITIAN

THE COLOSSEUM

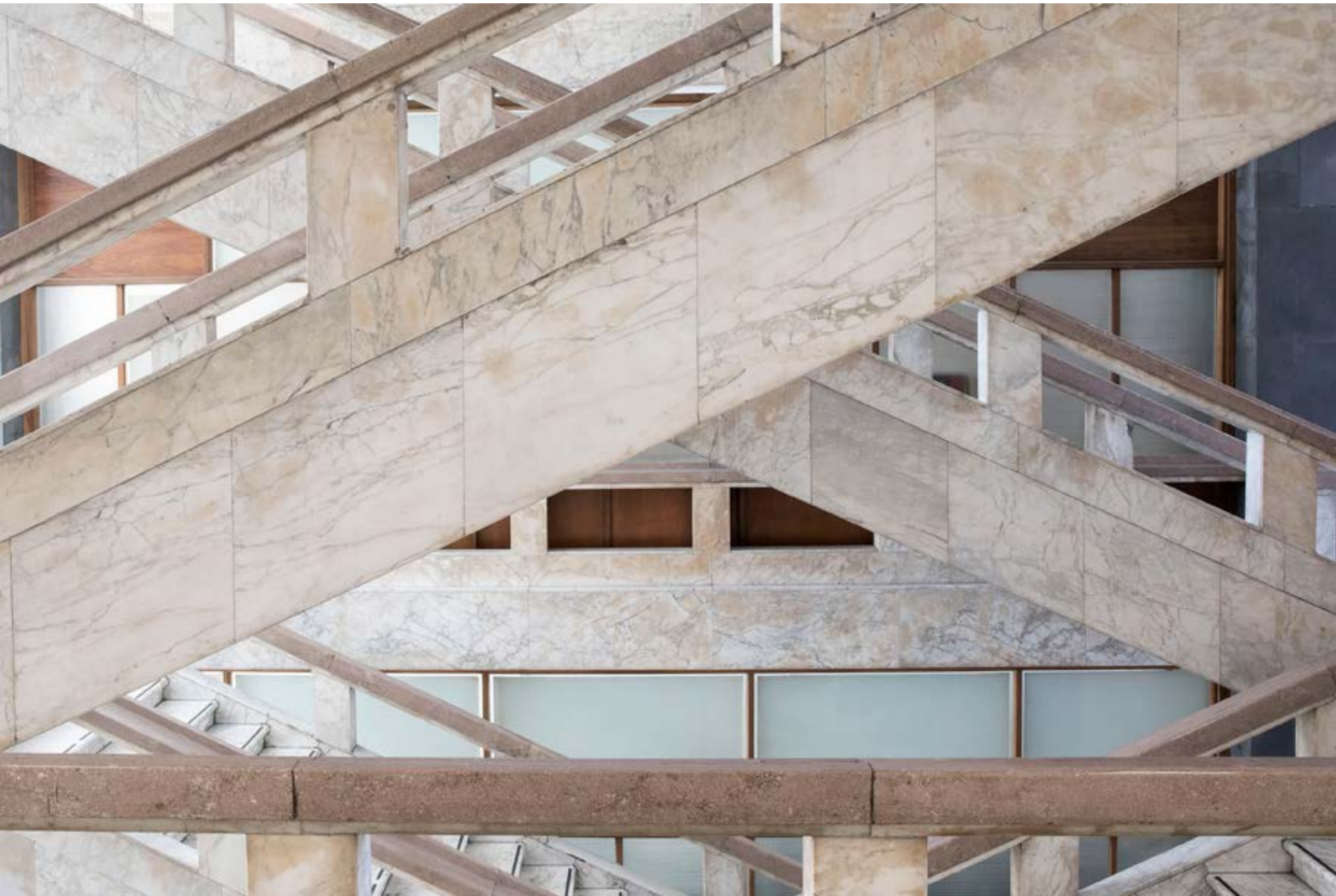
THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE

THE PAPAL BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE





















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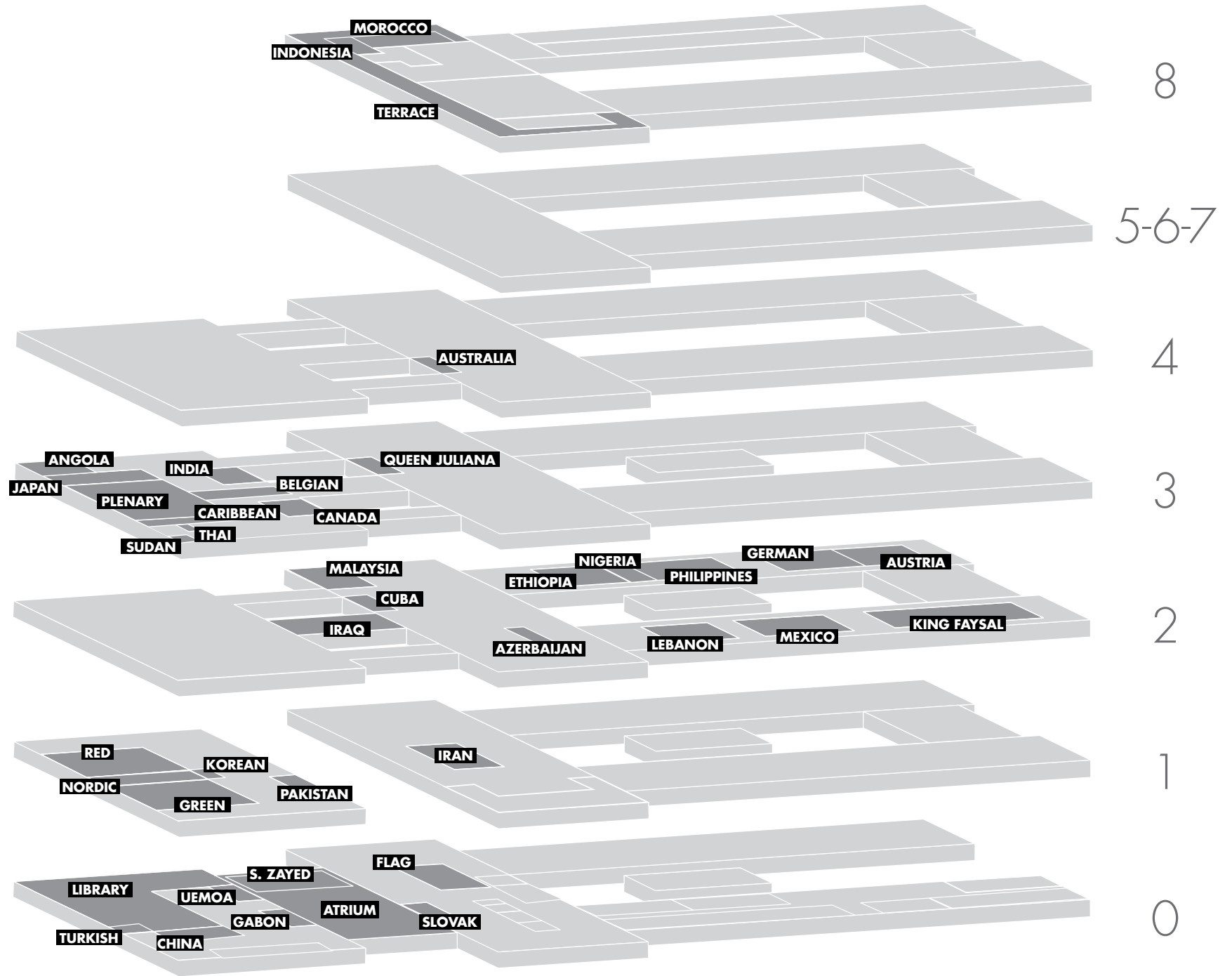
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PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTFOLIO (pp. 174–183)

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M A P



INSIDE FAO

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A T R U L Y
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ISBN 978-92-5-131470-8



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