

Eighty-second Session

Rome, 22 November - 3 December 1982

REPORT OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

(31 March - 7 April 1982)

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MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION BY THE COUNCIL

The Committee wishes to draw the attention of the Council particularly to the following matters:

- i. Its review of the implementation of the Plan of Action on World Food Security and its intention to consider at its next session the food security problems faced by low-income food-deficit countries in Africa. (paras. 23 - 37).
- ii. Its review of arrangements for food security assistance and its recommendations on the subject (paras. 43 - 49).
- iii. Its intention to reappraise, at its next session, the concept of world food security and the role of the CFS on the basis of a report to be prepared by the Director-General (para. 56).

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The Committee on World Food Security held its Seventh Session from 31 March to 7 April 1982 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. It was informed that 89 countries had become members of the Committee for the 1982-83 biennium, of which 79 were represented at the Session. Nine Member Nations of the Organization attended the Session in an observer capacity. The Executive Secretary of the International Wheat Council also participated. The following organizations were represented by observers: the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the International Monetary Fund, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Council, the World Bank, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the European Economic Community. A list of delegates and observers is contained in Appendix B and a list of the present membership of the Committee on World Food Security in Appendix D.
2. The Session was opened by Mr. Horatio Mends of Ghana, the outgoing Chairman, who reviewed the Committee's activities during the past biennium and wished it success in its future work. The Committee thanked Mr. Mends for the guidance he had provided in handling difficult food security issues, and expressed its appreciation of his contribution to its work.
3. The Committee elected Mr. E.W. Muir (Australia) as Chairman. Mr. P. Elmanowsky (France), Mr. H. Carrión (Nicaragua), Mr. H. Carandang (The Philippines) and Mr. T.E.C. Palmer (Sierra Leone), were elected Vice-Chairmen.
4. The Director-General of FAO, Mr. Edouard Saouma, gave an opening statement which is reproduced in Appendix E.
5. The Committee was assisted during the Session by a drafting committee which was composed of the representatives of Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Finland, Hungary, India, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay and Yugoslavia under the Chairmanship of Mr. A.G. Ngongi Namanga (Cameroon).
6. The Committee adopted its Agenda which is reproduced in Appendix A.

II. ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND THE ADEQUACY OF STOCKS

7. The Committee assessed the world food security situation and the adequacy of production and stocks on the basis of the Secretariat documents CFS: 82/2, CFS: 82/2 Sup.1 and Sup.2. Several delegates informed the Committee on recent developments in the food production, supply and stock situation and related policies in their countries.
8. The Committee welcomed the improvement in the global food security situation in 1981/82, but expressed concern that the improvements had not been shared by all countries and that the food situation remained precarious in many low-income countries, especially in Africa. It noted that world cereal production had risen by 6 percent in 1981 with record wheat, rice and coarse grain crops in most major producing countries. Cereals out-put in the developing countries rose by 5 percent, well above the average growth during the last decade. However, in the low-income countries as a group, the production increase was only marginally above the rate of growth of population. World imports of cereals in 1981/82 were expected to increase by 2 million tons to a record level of 209 million tons, mainly reflecting a large increase in purchase by the U.S.S.R., where cereal production had been poor for the third year in succession, as well as increased requirements in a number of low-income countries. Some delegates expressed the view that the overall improvement in the supply situation reflected market forces and favourable weather conditions, rather than action by the international community.

9. The Committee expressed satisfaction that world carryover stocks of cereals at the end of the 1981/82 seasons were expected to rise to more adequate levels. At the forecast level of 273 million tons, the carryover stocks would reach 18 percent of world cereal consumption, which is estimated by the FAO Secretariat to be the minimum safe level. Coarse grains were expected to account for the bulk of the increase - 36 million tons out of the total rise of 45 million tons. While wheat and rice stocks were also expected to increase, carryovers of wheat would probably remain below the level reached at the end of 1979/80. Most of the increase in stocks would be in the main exporting countries, especially the United States. Almost 70 percent of the U.S. stocks would be held either in the farmer owned reserve or by the Commodity Credit Corporation, and would be held in the reserve until prices rose above certain levels, at which time they would be made available to all purchasers. The Committee noted with concern that although carryover stocks in the developing countries were expected to rise by the end of 1981/82, they would still remain below the target levels in many of them. It stressed the need for a better geographical distribution of carryover stocks and urged Member Governments to take advantage of the current improved supply situation to build stocks where feasible. It recognized that a lack of financial resources and storage facilities in many developing countries continued to be an important constraint, the removal of which required international assistance. Some delegates suggested that food reserves should be pre-positioned in strategic locations for quick use at times of urgent need.

10. The Committee stressed that the improvement in the global food supply situation should not obscure the continuing and long-term nature of the food problems which remained in the low-income food-deficit countries, particularly in Africa. The Committee expressed deep concern that the food gap had widened in these countries as food production had failed to keep pace with rising consumption needs, and that their 1981/82 cereal imports were likely to increase by 10 percent to 27 million tons. Moreover, although cereal prices in international markets were lower in U.S. dollar terms than the previous year, the relatively strong position of the U.S. dollar had increased the cost of cereal imports in terms of the national currencies of several cereal importing countries. Some delegates while recognizing that there were some developing countries whose overall agricultural and economic situation were deteriorating, pointed out that increases in food imports by some other developing countries with strong economies should not be a cause for concern.

11. The Committee noted that a number of countries, especially in Africa and Asia, were still affected by food shortages in the wake of poor crops, which in some cases had occurred for two successive years. According to the FAO Early Warning System, 20 countries were currently facing abnormal food shortages, of which 17 were in Africa. The Committee suggested that in future assessments of the world food security situation and outlook, more detailed information should be given on the situation in the low-income countries, particularly those which faced persistent food shortages.

12. While the Committee recognized that it was too soon to accurately assess the outcome of the 1982 crops, it noted that the early indicators were favourable. The first FAO forecast indicated that global output of wheat and coarse grains in 1982 would range from 1 205 to 1 320 million tons, depending on the area planted to spring grains and on weather until crops were harvested. This compared with the 1981 production of 1 252 million tons for these grains. As regards rice, the outlook for the early crops, which accounted for about a quarter of total production, pointed to a harvest close to last year's good level. The rest of the crop, however, would not be planted until mid year, and the outcome would depend crucially on the behaviour of the monsoon.

13. Delegates of major grain exporting countries informed the Committee that despite lower world prices, cereal production in 1982 was likely to be maintained or even increased in their countries, depending to a large extent on weather conditions. The Committee was informed that although the voluntary acreage reduction programme for cereals in the United States had been established in response to low prevailing prices, the likely effect on production next season was not expected to jeopardize world food security, since current supplies in the United States including reserve stocks were expected to be more than ample and the growing conditions for the 1982 crops looked good at present. Some delegates urged that, in considering acreage reduction programmes, governments should take full account of the world food security situation.

14. The Committee stressed that adequate growth in food production, particularly in low-income food-deficit countries, was the only permanent solution to the problem of food security. It emphasized that programmes to increase food production should form part of overall rural development strategies that aimed at reducing poverty, which was at the root of hunger and malnutrition.

15. The Committee stressed that remunerative prices had an important role to play in stimulating production, and in encouraging farmers to make the necessary investment so that agricultural production would continue to expand over the long term. It noted, however, that price incentives alone were not sufficient, as returns to producers were influenced also by a number of other factors including the prices of competing crops, yields, prices and supplies of inputs, other operating costs, as well as marketing and distribution facilities etc. It also recognized that for some developing countries, it was difficult to raise producer prices, as this would conflict with the objective of making food available to all at affordable prices, and might necessitate the subsidization of consumer prices in order to protect the interests of vulnerable groups.

16. A number of delegates of developing countries informed the Committee of their policies and programmes to encourage food production, and singled out the lack of financial resources as the most important constraint. They called on the international community and individual donor countries to match the increasing spending priority being devoted to the agricultural sector by some of the least developed countries with the additional development assistance support needed to achieve significant improvements in their national production. The Committee stressed the need to support these efforts by financial and technical assistance from the international community. The need for developing countries to adopt appropriate policies, including incentives to encourage an increase in production, was also emphasized. It was also stressed that cooperation among developing countries could play an important role.

17. Many delegates drew attention to the adverse impact particularly on developing countries, of tariff and non-tariff barriers, and export subsidies on food production incentives. They underlined that progress towards an open international trading system would encourage low cost production and thereby strengthen world food security. Some delegates emphasized that the achievement of world food security also depended on progress towards the establishment of a New International Economic Order. The Committee reiterated the need for governments to resist pressure for increased protection and to promote efforts to liberalize world agricultural trade, especially in order to improve the export earnings of developing countries. One delegation criticized the measures announced at the recent meeting of the OAS regarding the reduction in trade barriers for Central America and the Caribbean.

18. The Committee agreed that until the low-income developing countries achieved a satisfactory and sustained growth in food production, food aid remained essential as an interim measure to ensure world food security. While welcoming the increased food aid commitments by some countries, the Committee expressed concern that total food aid allocations in 1981/82 were at present below the quantities allocated for the previous year at this time. While acknowledging that the 500 000 tons target for the IEFR had been reached in 1981, the Committee expressed its disappointment that the efforts made to reach the 10 million ton minimum target for total food aid in cereals had not been successful. Many delegates felt that this target which was agreed in 1974, was too low. The Committee noted that the food aid requirements and targets would be reviewed by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes at its forthcoming session. A number of delegates stressed that food supplies should not be used for political purposes.

19. Many delegates expressed regret that it had not been possible to negotiate a new Wheat Trade Convention. In their view such an agreement could stabilize prices and thus play an important role in sustaining production incentives. The Executive Secretary of the International Wheat Council (IWC) informed the Committee that the IWC was continuing its search for an agreed basis for a new agreement, keeping in view the paramount objectives of market stability and food security. He added that it was emphasized in the IWC that

discussions on the elements of a new agreement should only take place in that Council and that it would be impractical to move them elsewhere. The Executive Secretary of the IWC also informed the Committee that the IWC had decided, inter alia, to make a comprehensive evaluation of members' grain stockholding policies and practices, and that the IWC attached great importance to cooperation with FAO so as to avoid duplication.

20. Many delegates urged an early resumption of discussions on a new Wheat Trade Convention with provisions for prices, stocks and assistance to developing countries. Some delegates expressed the view that in light of the continuing stalemate in the discussions in the IWC, it was necessary to actively consider alternative solutions for internationally coordinated actions outside the IWC, that at least would guarantee the supply of certain minimum quantities to developing food-deficit countries in periods of acute food shortages.

21. The Committee reviewed the implications for world food security of national policies, plans and programmes to produce fuel alcohol from agricultural commodities on the basis of document CFS 82/2 Sup. 1. Several delegates gave information on developments in energy cropping programmes in their countries. The Committee noted that fuel alcohol was being produced from agricultural commodities in only a limited number of countries, and that given the present state of the conversion technology and the prevailing price relationships between agricultural feedstocks and other energy sources, substantial government subsidies were necessary to make production economically viable. At present, fuel alcohol production programmes from agricultural commodities utilized only a small share of world output. Moreover, the government subsidies in support of these programmes had been reduced or the programmes had been slowed down in countries with relatively large production of fuel alcohol from agricultural commodities.

22. The Committee considered that energy cropping in agriculture needed to be approached with caution so as not to endanger food supplies or lead to an increase in food prices, as this could have a detrimental effect on world food security. In this connection, it stressed that, to the maximum extent possible, energy cropping should aim at utilizing agricultural resources not exploitable for food crops, and/or agricultural waste. In view of the early stage of energy cropping programmes in most countries and the uncertainties which surrounded their future in others, further developments would need to be watched closely in order to assess the impact of energy cropping on food supplies and prices. As suggested by the Twenty-first Session of the FAO Conference, the Committee requested the Secretariat to continue to monitor the progress of national energy cropping programmes with a view to analyzing their impact on world food security.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

(a) Adoption and implementation of national foodgrain stock policies

23. The Committee considered the progress made in the adoption and implementation of foodgrain stock policies in line with points I and II of the Plan of Action on World Food Security, on the basis of document CFS: 82/3. Apart from giving a general progress report, this document provided reviews of the cereal stock policies of a number of selected importing and exporting countries.

24. The Committee noted that a large number of countries had adopted cereal stock policies or were following stockholding practices with objectives which were in line with the Plan of Action and the International Undertaking on World Food Security. Delegates of several exporting countries indicated that their national stock policies and practices aimed, inter alia, at assuring supplies to domestic and commercial export markets, meeting their food aid commitments and providing assistance to developing countries during emergency situations. Although some of these countries had not established specific stock targets, stocking operations in their countries were in line with the International Undertaking and the Plan of Action. Some delegates pointed out that a disproportionately large share of the world's grain reserves was currently being held by a few exporting countries and that a better geographical distribution was necessary to strengthen world food security.

25. The Committee expressed concern that a majority of the low-income food-deficit countries had not yet been able to build reserves or to implement their stock targets, mainly because of the inadequacy of supplies from domestic production or imports, the lack of financial resources and of storage facilities. In view of the high costs involved in the acquisition and the maintenance of stocks, some delegates saw a need for a comparative cost-benefit analysis of stockholding schemes vis-à-vis programmes to encourage food production in low-income food-deficit countries. However, other delegates pointed out that the experience gained by countries which had succeeded in strengthening their national food security and self-reliance showed the need for an integrated approach covering food production, distribution and stockholding.

26. Several delegates stressed that many developing countries would not be able to undertake stock programmes unless they received adequate financial, material and technical assistance to enable them not only to acquire stocks and build up storage facilities but also to cover carrying costs. These carrying costs were substantial particularly with present high interest rates which, in many countries, accounted for over half of total carrying costs.

27. Delegates referred to a number of criteria which might be used to determine the optimum size of a food security reserve. It was suggested that in the case of food-deficit developing countries, stocks should be adequate to meet immediate requirements in case of domestic crop failure until imports could be effected and delivered in the consuming areas. In some countries, the needs of the public distribution system were an important criterion in determining the level of food security stocks. Some delegates stressed that in order to fulfil their purpose, reserve stocks should be insulated from normal trade channels, and only be released in a situation of market stress.

28. The Committee urged governments to provide timely and complete information to the Secretariat on national stock policies and stock levels on an annual basis, in accord with the International Undertaking on World Food Security.

(b) Review of national programmes for increasing food production on low-income food-deficit countries

29. The Committee reviewed food production policies in a number of countries, based on Document CFS: 82/5 and the information provided by delegates. The document summarized the national food production policies and programmes of eight developing food-deficit countries, selected to illustrate the wide variety of measures adopted by governments in coping with different kinds of food security problems.

30. The Committee reiterated that increasing food production in low-income food-deficit countries was a critical element in achieving long-term food security. It expressed deep concern that of the 54 low-income food-deficit countries whose longer-term production trends had been analysed by the Secretariat, 37 or about two thirds had recorded negative growth rates in per caput output of cereals during the seventies. The Committee recognized that many developing countries, particularly low-income food-deficit countries, faced difficult problems in increasing food production. These problems included erratic climatic conditions, rising production costs, lack of infrastructure, the inadequate availability of essential agricultural inputs and the difficulty of implementing appropriate policies. Substantial public investment was required in addition to the necessary incentives to producers. The Committee recognized that the low-income food-deficit countries in particular could not hope to meet these investment needs unaided, and that the national investment efforts should therefore be supplemented by international assistance. Several delegates stressed the special problem posed by the low productivity of small farmers who were unable to apply modern-farming techniques because of inadequate financial resources.

31. The Committee agreed that the food production problem was particularly serious in Africa. Several delegates referred to the Lagos Plan of Action which recognized that Africa had the potential to grow sufficient food to meet its consumption needs as well as its reserve requirements, and might even become a net food exporting region, providing greater financial and other resources were devoted to the production of basic foods which had received less attention than cash crops in some countries.

32. In this connection, some delegates regretted that the agreed replenishment of IFAD had not yet become effective as the instruments of contribution had not yet been deposited up to the required level of at least 50 percent of the target. They stated that the Regional Banks were also short of funds, and there were no indications that official development assistance would increase to the extent required to increase agricultural productivity.

33. While adequate domestic food production and a state of self-reliance were the ultimate goals of national food security policies, a number of delegates emphasized the need of low-income food-deficit countries for continued food aid in the interim period, not only for meeting emergency needs but also in support of ongoing efforts to increase local food production. It was also stressed that the ability of developing countries to become self-reliant depended to a large degree on their capacity to generate sufficient foreign exchange through exports to pay for their imports of food and other essential items.

34. One delegation supported by several other delegations proposed that at its next session the Committee should review the food production and food security problems of low-income food-deficit countries in Africa, and recommend an Action Programme of up to ten years duration which would ensure accelerated and sustained food production in these countries. Such a review would identify the constraints to food production in these countries, as well as measures needed to remove them, including improvements in food policies, incentives to producers and other factors, possible levels of internal financing, financial and technical assistance required and the alternative mechanisms of assuring external resources and of executing the programme. Recognizing that production programmes would require some time before they became fully effective, the proposed review would also consider the immediate food security needs such as food aid, food security reserves and reduction of food losses, the costs involved, and the internal and external financing required.

35. The Committee unanimously supported the objectives of this proposal since it aimed at focusing special attention on the food production and food security problems of low-income food-deficit countries in Africa. It noted that many general and country-specific studies on the food production problems of low-income countries in Africa were already available, e.g. the Lagos Plan of Action, the report of the UN Conference on Least Developed Countries, FSAS country reports, the CILSS grain reserve programme for the Sahelian countries, WFC Food Sector Strategy reports, as well as reports of IFAD, IBRD and other organisations. It also noted that the Director-General would present a report on the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action to the forthcoming Regional Conference for Africa, which would review the goals and priorities for food and agricultural production, identify the constraints and suggest remedial measures. The problem of increasing food production was also considered by other FAO bodies, especially COAG; and it was necessary to take full account of the work of these Committees as well as the functions of the CFS itself.

36. Several delegates stressed the need to focus on specific problems and well-conceived measures for individual countries rather than to carry out a general study and considered it was necessary to examine the reasons why previous plans and projects had not produced the expected results. The hope was expressed that the wide support given to the proposal was indicative of willingness to provide external finance for the measures required, as well as to review the adequacy of existing national production policies. Some delegates considered that it would be preferable for the Committee first to review the nature of the production problems and remedies before preparing an action programme, the elaboration of which might require an expert meeting.

37. The Committee agreed that the food security problems faced by low-income food-deficit countries in Africa, including the constraints on increasing their domestic food production and possible measures to overcome them, deserved special consideration. The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare, for consideration at its next Session, an interim review and analysis based on existing studies which as far as feasible should analyse the work being done in other Organizations, indicate gaps in available information and identify problems and constraints in the way of accelerating food production in these countries. On the basis of this interim analysis, the Committee would consider possible recommendations for appropriate follow-up action by the CFS itself and other FAO Committees if required.

(c) Sub-regional and regional food security schemes aimed at strengthening the collective self-reliance of developing countries

38. Following the request of the Council, the Committee discussed ways of facilitating regional and sub-regional food security schemes aimed at strengthening the collective self-reliance of developing countries, on the basis of document CFS: 82/4. It noted the increasing interest among governments in such schemes, with a variety of proposals presently under consideration in a number of regions and sub-regions including West Africa, Southern Africa, Latin America, the Islamic countries, Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab countries. An expert meeting on the subject within the framework of Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries would be held in August in Manila. The Organization was assisting several regional groups to examine the technical feasibility of regional food security schemes.

39. The Committee reiterated its support for the concept of collective self-reliance as expressed in the Plan of Action on World Food Security and a number of delegates indicated the willingness of their governments to consider participation in regional food security schemes. The Committee was informed that members of the ASEAN Food Security Reserve Agreement, which had been in operation since 1979, were examining ways of further strengthening cooperation. The representative of Malta referred to his Government's offer to provide storage facilities for a regional food reserve for Mediterranean and other countries.

40. The Committee agreed there was considerable scope for regional cooperation in strengthening food security, but emphasized that regional food security schemes should supplement and strengthen rather than replace existing national or global arrangements and should not adversely affect normal trade. Stress was laid on the value of regional cooperation in promoting food production through the sharing of technology and joint agricultural research programmes, the development of complementary infrastructure and early warning systems, and by facilitating trade. It could also promote the reduction of food losses which were a serious problem in many countries. It was desirable for such regional schemes to be flexible and within the financial and administrative capacity of the countries concerned. The need to establish linkages among regional schemes, and between regional and global food security schemes, was also stressed.

41. Some delegates cautioned against excessive expectations concerning the practical implementation of regional food security schemes including reserve schemes. They stated that, since only one regional reserve scheme was currently in effect, it remained to be seen how broadly the concept could be applied. To be workable, regional reserve schemes had to be compatible with national food policies which remained the cornerstone of national food security. For example, the rotation of reserves could have adverse effects on local markets unless national price stabilization measures were taken fully into account, when stocks constitute a large proportion of the marketed surplus. There also had to be a basic complementarity in the food security problems and needs of the countries concerned. Such schemes could entail difficult negotiations if they involved the delegation of national sovereignty to a regional authority or the integration of the agricultural sector. Some delegates stressed that regional food reserves should not be seen as an alternative to an international grain reserve which would be more effective in spreading the risk of large-scale crop failures and in mobilizing external assistance for meeting the heavy costs of storage and food security infrastructure. Without

underestimating the difficulties relating to regional schemes, some other delegates were of the opinion that these difficulties were outweighed by the advantages which could be derived from regional cooperation in food security.

42. The Committee agreed that the conclusions and guiding principles set out in the Secretariat document provided a useful framework within which regional food security schemes could be considered although they should not be regarded as inclusive of all factors to be taken into account. It requested the Secretariat to continue to keep developments towards the establishment of regional food security schemes under review and to report these to future sessions.

IV. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY ASSISTANCE

43. The Committee recalled that under point IV of the Plan of Action, it was charged with reviewing the activities of FSAS, the action taken by governments and international organizations to meet the needs of developing countries, and identifying gaps in aid requirements. The Committee carried out its biennial review of the activities of the Food Security Assistance Scheme (FSAS) on the basis of document CFS 82/7. This document summarized FSAS activities since the Fifth Session, reviewed the progress of nine individual projects, indicated the resource situation, and discussed the future evolution of the Scheme.

44. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the yearly target of resources through the Scheme, as recommended in Conference Resolution 3/79, had been reached in 1981 when 15 food security projects had been funded for a total of U.S. \$ 10 million. The Committee also welcomed announcements made by the delegates of Belgium, Netherlands and Switzerland that their governments would continue to contribute to the Scheme and the announcement of the delegate of Norway that his government would double its contribution in 1982 as compared to previous years. The Committee also welcomed the fact that three new donor countries were now contributing to the Scheme (Australia, Italy and Japan). Some other delegates indicated that their governments supported the purposes of the Scheme and would continue to consider projects identified by FSAS for financing under bilateral programmes.

45. The Committee nevertheless expressed concern that the value of food security projects already identified but still awaiting funding was increasing at a much faster rate than resources were becoming available. It was informed that, if allocations by donors to food security projects submitted to them by FAO during 1982-83 continued at the same level as during the past biennium, the Scheme would, by the end of 1982, be able to fund only one third of the technical assistance and training projects which had already been identified. Several delegates therefore called for increased financial support for food security projects through the Scheme or on a bilateral basis. Recognizing that substantial aid for food security was also given through other multilateral channels and under bilateral programmes, the Committee recommended that donors should consider funding bilaterally the investment needs for large-scale construction projects, in close coordination with FAO.

46. The Committee noted with interest the Secretariat's review of nine FSAS projects. It noted the conclusion that a longer period should be envisaged for the duration of most projects and that it might be advisable to consider the need to increase the budgetary provision for contingencies in order to meet unforeseen increases in project costs. Another important general conclusion concerned the need for more systematic, in-depth and long-term training of national staff in technical and managerial subjects related to national food reserves. More emphasis should also be placed on obtaining commitments from the recipient governments to ensure follow-up action on completion of a project in order to achieve the objectives of national food security.

47. Reiterating that food security in many countries could not be achieved by the creation of emergency reserves alone, the Committee welcomed the decision to include economic and social incentives to production among the elements to be considered by future FSAS missions. The Committee noted with satisfaction that care would be exercised to ensure effective coordination of the Scheme's activities in this area with similar efforts and projects already undertaken by FAO. These included such FAO activities as the follow-up to WCARRD, the Regular Programme assistance on planning and policy matters and the field projects funded by various sources. The Committee considered that this coordination should be reinforced. The Secretariat's intention to prepare a field manual on this subject to guide FSAS missions was also welcomed.

48. Delegates of several developing countries informed the Committee of efforts being made to resolve their food security problems. In view of the limitations of national resources, they called for continued and increased international support in their efforts to help build up reserves and improve food security infrastructure. They stressed the practical usefulness of the Scheme in helping to formulate and implement food security projects in their countries. The Committee moreover felt that it would be desirable to give high priority to the Prevention of Food Losses Programme of the FAO and to integrate its activities further with those of the FSAS. The Committee agreed that FAO should continue to play an active role through the FSAS in the coordination of national efforts in such fields as food information, crop monitoring, market intelligence and the establishment of early warning systems at the regional level.

49. The Committee agreed that FSAS should concentrate on funding the more urgent technical assistance and the smaller-scale investment projects, while large investment projects would be primarily financed and implemented under direct funding arrangements between donors and recipients. FAO would, however, as in the past, assist with project identification and initiating contacts between potential donors and recipients.

50. The Committee noted with satisfaction that an increasing number of FAO's food security projects were linked with assistance from WFP, with which cooperation had been intensified over the past biennium. Some delegates referred to the increased pledges which their governments had made to the WFP, as well as the increase in their bilateral food aid allocations.

51. The Committee appreciated the inventory of food security projects, which had been prepared for the purpose of reviewing assistance given to developing countries for their food security programmes. It requested all governments and international organizations to provide the required information on a regular annual basis, so that the inventory could be kept up to date and be made more comprehensive.

V. PROPOSAL OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO REVIEW THE CONCEPT OF AND APPROACH TO WORLD FOOD SECURITY

52. The Director-General in his opening statement proposed that at its next session the CFS should reappraise, on the basis of a report which he intended to prepare, the concept of world food security and the role of the Committee within the broad framework of the activities of the various international institutions dealing with food issues. In his view, such a review was necessary in order to establish new approaches towards solving world food security problems. His report would be for the consideration of the Committee and it would be up to governments to decide on the appropriate lines of further action.

53. The Committee welcomed the Director-General's proposal and views and considered that his initiative was timely. It met the concern shared by many governments about the persisting world food security problems, even at times of plentiful global supplies, and about the apparent duplication and overlapping among various fora dealing with these issues. The Committee noted that it was the only intergovernmental body in the UN system which was exclusively charged with monitoring, evaluating and consulting on the world food security

situation as elaborated in Rule XXXIII of the General Rules of FAO and World Food Conference Resolution XXII. With its mandate, terms of reference and open membership, the Committee provided the appropriate consultative forum for governments to analyse the world food security problem from all aspects and to make recommendations on world food security taking into account the responsibilities of other bodies. It was stressed by some delegates that use of this forum for negotiations would be inappropriate.

54. Several delegates made a number of suggestions with a view to facilitating the preparation of the review which would provide the basis for constructive consideration by Member Governments. These included, inter alia, examination of the natural and man-made constraints on food production in developing countries, especially in low-income food-deficit countries; the relationship between production, price and stock policies; the relationship between stock policies and storage facilities; regional and international aspects of world food security, including food reserves, food aid, food import financing, food price stabilization and international trade. It was also suggested that such a review should take account of the achievements already made in CFS and elsewhere, ongoing work and responsibilities of other bodies, and gaps that remained to be covered at national, regional and international levels. However, several other delegates, though appreciating these suggestions, expressed the opinion that the Director-General should be given a free-hand in preparing this review.

55. In making these suggestions, the Committee recognized that as stated by the Director-General in his opening remarks, the study would be submitted on his responsibility alone but that it would be for the Committee to consider and reach conclusions upon any recommendations contained therein.

56. The Committee agreed that it would be valuable to review the concept of world food security and the role of the CFS, and looked forward to the Director-General's report.

VI. REPORT OF THE SESSION

57. In accordance with Rule XXXIII.7 of the General Rules of the Organization, and Resolution XXII of the World Food Conference, the Committee requested the Director-General to make available the Report of the Session to the Eighth Session of the World Food Council.

VII. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION

58. The Committee noted that according to its terms of reference it would normally meet twice in a biennium, but could hold additional sessions if warranted by uncertainties in the food security situation. It agreed that its Eighth Session should be held at FAO Headquarters in Rome in April 1983, the exact date to be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman, taking into account the schedule of other related meetings.

AGENDA

- I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
 - (a) Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen
 - (b) Adoption of Agenda and Timetable: for decision
 - (c) Membership of the Committee: for information
- II. ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND THE ADEQUACY OF STOCKS: for discussion
- III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY: for discussion and recommendation
 - (a) Adoption and implementation of national foodgrain stock policies
 - (b) Progress of national programmes for increasing food production in low-income food-deficit countries
 - (c) Sub-regional and regional food security schemes aimed at strengthening the collective self-reliance of developing countries
- IV. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY ASSISTANCE: for discussion and recommendation
 - (a) Special measures to assist low-income food-deficit countries to meet current import requirements and emergency needs
 - (b) Assistance to food security programmes
- V. OTHER MATTERS
 - (a) Arrangements for the Eighth Session: for decision
 - (b) Any other business
 - (c) Report to the FAO Council: for adoption

ANNEX B
ANNEXE B
ANEXO B

LIST OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS
LISTE DES DELEGUES ET OBSERVATEURS
LISTA DE DELEGADOS Y OBSERVADORES

Chairman/Président/Presidente: E.W. Muir (Australia)

Vice-Chairmen/Vice-Présidents/Vicepresidentes: P. Elmanowsky (France)
H. Carrión (Nicaragua)
H. Carandang (Philippines)
T.B.C. Palmer (Sierra Leone)

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
MEMBRES DU COMITE
MIEMBROS DEL COMITE

ALGERIA/ALGERIE/ARGELIA

M.S. Bouleçane
Conseiller technique
Ministère de l'agriculture et de
la révolution agraire
Alger

M. Larbaoui
Ministère de l'agriculture
Alger

R. Chalah
Conseiller technique
Ministère de l'agriculture
Alger

ANGOLA

B.N. Sequeira
Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy of Angola
Rome

ARGENTINA/ARGENTINE

F. Petrella
Minister Plenipotentiary
Embassy of Argentina
Rome

C. Sánchez Avalos
Representante Permanente
Alterno ante la FAO
Roma

R. Sersale di Cerisano
Representante Permanente
Alterno ante la FAO
Roma

AUSTRALIA/AUSTRALIE

E.W. Muir
Assistant Secretary
International Relations Branch
Dept. of Primary Industry
Canberra

J.C. Sainsbury
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Australia
Rome

R.E. Stensholt
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Australia
Rome

AUSTRIA/AUTRICHE

W. Druml
Secretary
Embassy of Austria
Rome

BANGLADESH

Md. Abdul Aziz Pasha
First Secretary
Embassy of Bangladesh
Rome

D. Rettie
Project Manager
Food Security
Dacca

BELGIUM/BELGIQUE/BELGICA

Guy Stuyck
Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent de
la Belgique auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de la Belgique
Rome

J.P. Warnimont
Représentant permanent auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de la Belgique
Rome

M. Vandeputte
Ingénieur principal, Chef de service
Ministère de l'agriculture
Bruxelles

J. Thinsy
Conseiller adjoint
Ministère des affaires étrangères
Bruxelles

E. Martens
Secrétaire d'administration
Direction coopération multilatérale
Administration générale de la
coopération au développement
Bruxelles

BENIN

J. Napporn
Président Commission nationale
céréalière
Cotonou

CAMEROON/CAMEROUN/CAMERUN

A.G. Ngongi Namanga
Counsellor (Agriculture)
Embassy of Cameroon
Rome

CANADA

K.R. Higham
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Canada
Rome

R. Sallery
UN Programmes Division
Canadian International Development Agency
Hull (Quebec)

Ms. M. Glenn
International Trade Policy Division
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa

CAPE VERDE/CAP-VERT/CABO VERDE

A. Pires
Ambassadeur
Représentant permanent auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de la République du Cap-Vert
Rome

A. Rocha
Directeur général de la coopération
Praia

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC/
REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE/
REPUBLICA CENTROAFRICANA

C. Kokpavo
Représentant permanent auprès de la FAO
Rome

CHAD/TCHAD

S. Morbian
Directeur
Lutte contre les calamités naturelles
N'Djamena

CHILE/CHILI

S. Cadenasso
Embajador, Representante Permanente
de Chile ante la FAO
Embajada de Chile
Roma

Sra. M. Balduzzi
Consejero, Representante
Embajada de Chile
Roma

COLOMBIA/COLOMBIE

G. Bula Hoyos
Embajador de Colombia ante la FAO
Embajada de Colombia
Roma

J. Godin
Representante Permanente Alterno ante la FAO
Embajada de Colombia
Roma

CONGO

J. Tchicaya
Représentant permanent du Congo auprès
de la FAO
Ambassade du Congo
Rome

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A. Mouanga
Représentant adjoint permanent du Congo
auprès de la FAO
Ambassade du Congo
Rome

G. Silou
Directeur de la coopération multilatérale
Ministère de la coopération
Brazzaville

CUBA

R.L. Torras
Jefe del Departamento de la Dirección de
Organismos Económicos Internacionales
La Habana

E.J. Tizol
Encargado de Negocios, a.i., Representante
Alternativo de Cuba ante la FAO
Embajada de Cuba
Roma

CYPRUS/CHYPRE/CHIPRE

F. Poulides
Ambassador, Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Cyprus
Rome

DENMARK/DANEMARK/DINAMARCA

J.S. Nielsen
Head of Division
Ministry of Agriculture
Copenhagen

J. Dahl-Hansen
Head of Section
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Copenhagen

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC/REPUBLIQUE DOMINICAINE/
REPUBLICA DOMINICANA

Sra. E. Campagna de Read
Embajadora, Representante Permanente
ante la FAO
Embajada de la República Dominicana
Roma

D.R. Campagna R.
Delegado alterno
Embajada de la República Dominicana
Roma

Sra.D.M. Cedeño P.
Asesor
Embajada de la República Dominicana
Roma

EGYPT/EGYPTE/EGIPTO

M.A.R. Diab
Minister Plenipotentiary
Egyptian Embassy
Rome

O. Tawfik
Second Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Cairo

EL SALVADOR

I.P. Alvarenga
Embajador de El Salvador ante la FAO
Embajada de El Salvador
Roma

Sra.M.E. Jiménez
Consejero y Representante Alternativo ante la FAO
Embajada de El Salvador
Roma

ETHIOPIA/ETHIOPIE/ETIOPIA

B. Tilahun
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Ethiopia
Rome

M. Dagne
Team Leader
Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
Addis Abeba

FINLAND/FINLANDE/FINLANDIA

A. Lutz
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Finland
Rome

S. Koivula
Director, Finnish State Granary
Helsinki

FRANCE/FRANCIA

P. Elmanowsky
Secrétaire général du Comité interministériel
pour l'agriculture et l'alimentation
Paris

Mme M. Musso
Conseiller des affaires étrangères au
Ministère des relations extérieures
Paris

J.N. Menard
Chef du Bureau de la coopération
internationale au Ministère de
l'agriculture
Paris

N. Carrasco-Saulnier
Représentant permanent adjoint auprès
de l'OAA
Rome

Mme M. Godard
Chef du Bureau au service des relations
internationales à l'Office des céréales
Paris

Mme E. Jovenne
Ministère de l'économie
Paris

GAMBIA/GAMBIE

Alieu M.B. Jagne
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture
Bajul

GERMANY, F.R./ALLEMAGNE, REP. FED. D' /
ALEMANIA, R.F.

G. Lieber
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
Rome

W. Lache
Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Forestry
Bonn

J. Kenneweg
Ministry of Economic Cooperation
Food Aid Section
Bonn

L. Koch
Federal Ministry of Finance
Bonn

H. Wetzel
Regierungsdirektor
Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation
Bonn

GHANA

H. Mends
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Ghana
Rome

GREECE/GRECE/GRECIA

A. Exarchos
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Greece to FAO
Embassy of Greece
Rome

N.A. Saltas
Alternate Permanent Representative of
Greece to FAO
Embassy of Greece
Rome

GUINEA BISSAU/GUINEE BISSAU

Mme M. Pereira
Directeur du Bureau de la planification de
la sécurité alimentaire
Bissau

C. Schwarz da Silva
Directeur du département de la recherche
agronomique
Bissau

M. Bocoum
Conseiller technique principal
Food Security
Bissau

HONDURAS

J.A. Lara Bueso
Representante Permanente Alterno ante la FAO
Embajada de Honduras
Roma

Sra. Amelia Marcia Oviedo
Delegada Alterna de Honduras ante la FAO
Embajada de Honduras
Roma

HUNGARY/HONGRIE/HUNGRIA

P. Vador
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Hungary
Rome

INDIA/INDE

B.C. Gangopadhyay
Secretary
Department of Food
Delhi

Ramadhar
Counsellor
Embassy of India
Rome

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INDONESIA/INDONESIE

Alhambra Rachman
Director
Bureau for Foreign Cooperation
Ministry of Agriculture
Jakarta

Amidjono Martosuwiryo
Alternate Permanent Representative of
Indonesia to FAO
Embassy of Indonesia
Rome

Mohamad Syafei
Senior Official
National Logistics Agency
Jakarta

IRELAND/IRLANDE/IRLANDA

Ms. Nuala Rayel
Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Ireland
Rome

ISRAEL/ISRAËL

Y. Pridan
Permanent Representative of Israel to FAO
Embassy of Israel
Rome

ITALY/ITALIE/ITALIA

G. Previti
Direttore di Sezione
Ministero del Tesoro
Roma

Mme M. Grazia Scaglia
Ministero degli Affari Esteri
Roma

IVORY COAST/COTE-D'IVOIRE/COSTA DE MARFIL

N'Guessan Ehouman
Représentant permanent suppléant
Ambassade de la Côte-d'Ivoire
Rome

Souleymane Sako
Ambassadeur auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de la Côte-d'Ivoire
Rome

JAPAN/JAPON

Akira Naga
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Japan
Rome

Takakata Okamoto
Senior Official
International Cooperation Division
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Fisheries
Tokyo

Takashi Satone
Researcher
Specialized Agencies Division
United Nations Bureau
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tokyo

K. Edahiro
Managing Director
Japan FAO Association
Rome

KENYA

R.B. Ryanga
Permanent Representative to FAO
Permanent Representation to FAO
Rome

P.M. Amukoa
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Permanent Representation to FAO
Rome

KOREA/COREE/COREA

Dong-bai Lee
Agricultural Attaché and Alternate
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of the Republic of Korea
Rome

Chung-Ock Seo
Attaché and Alternate Permanent
Representative to FAO
Embassy of the Republic of Korea
Rome

LIBERIA

M.D. Elliott
Ass. Minister of Agriculture for
Technical Services
Monrovia

MADAGASCAR

T.C. Rajaona
Représentant permanent adjoint auprès
de la FAO
Ambassade de Madagascar
Rome

MALI

S. Coulibaly
Premier Conseiller
Ambassade de Mali
Paris

MALTA/MALTE

I. Moskovits
Counsellor of Embassy
Embassy of Malta
Rome

MAURITANIA/MAURITANIE

Ahmed Salem Ould Moloud
Directeur adjoint de l'agriculture
Ministère du développement rural
Nouakchott

Tandia Demba
Directeur, Office mauritanien des céréales
Nouakchott

MEXICO/MEXIQUE

Antonio Juan-Marcos Issa
Embajador ante la FAO
Representación Permanente de México
Roma

Guillermo Kelley Salinas
Representante Alterno ante la FAO
Representación Permanente de México
Roma

Francisco Martinez Gómez
Consejero Agrícola
Representación de México ante la FAO
Roma

Sra. Mercedes Ruiz Zapata
Tercer Secretario
Representación de México ante la FAO
Roma

MOROCCO/MAROC/MARRUECOS

Ms. Farida Jaidi
Représentant permanent adjoint
Ambassade du Royaume du Maroc
Rome

MOZAMBIQUE

C. Carvalho
Directeur de la commercialisation au
Ministère du commerce intérieur
Maputo

D. Hannusch
Planning Economist
Food Security Cabinet
Maputo

NETHERLANDS/PAYS-BAS/PAISES BAJOS

J. Sonneveld
Permanent Representative to FAO
Permanent Representation to FAO
Rome

J.B. Visser
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
The Hague

S. van Voorst tot Voorst
Food Production and Programmes Section
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Hague

J. Heidsma
Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO
Rome

NEW ZEALAND/NOUVELLE-ZELANDE/NUEVA ZELANDIA

W.A. Cochrane
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of New Zealand

G.J. Boxall
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of New Zealand
Rome

NICARAGUA

Humberto Carrión M.
Embajador de Nicaragua ante la FAO
Roma

NIGER

Assoumane Sarki
Directeur adjoint services études et
programmations
Niamey

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NIGERIA

J.O. Alabi
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Nigeria
Rome

Sule Bello
Asst. General Manager
Nigerian Grains Board
Minna

NORWAY/NORVEGE/NORUEGA

Stein V. Hagen
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Norway
Rome

Halvar Garvik
Consultant
Norwegian State Grain Monopoly
Oslo

PAKISTAN

Jiwan Khan
Secretary Food Punjab
Lahore

Tanwir Ahmed
Counsellor (Agriculture)
Embassy of Pakistan
Rome

PANAMA

J. Medrano
Programa Alimentario Nacional
Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario
Panamá

A. Acuña
Representante Permanente alterno
ante la FAO
Roma

PERU/PEROU

J. Gazzo
Embajador ante la FAO
Roma

PHILIPPINES/FILIPINAS

Jesus T. Tanchanco
Minister of Food
National Food Authority
Quezon City

H. Carandang
Agricultural Attaché
Embassy of the Philippines
Rome

Pablito C. Valencia
Assistant Administrator
National Food Authority
Quezon City

Ms. L.M. Veloso
Deputy Executive Director
National Food Authority
Quezon City

Ricardo Mercado
Director
National Food Authority
Quezon City

Ms. P. Mina
Assistant Director
National Food Authority
Quezon City

PORTUGAL

J.M. Bulhão Martins
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Portugal
Rome

ROMANIA/ROUMANIE/RUMANIA

Tudor Mircea
Conseiller
Ambassade de Roumanie
Rome

RWANDA

C. Karekezi
Chef de division de la production vivrière
Kigali

SENEGAL

F.M. Gueye
Conseiller technique au Ministère du
développement rural
Dakar

Sidaty Aidara
Conseiller
Représentant permanent adjoint
Ambassade du Sénégal
Rome

SIERRA LEONE

T.E.C. Palmer
Agricultural Attaché
Embassy of Sierra Leone
Rome

SPAIN/ESPAGNE/ESPAÑA

L. Medina del Cerro
Jefe del Servicio Exterior Agrario
Madrid

J. Briz Escribano
Jefe del Servicio de Cereales y Leguminosas
FORPA
Madrid

F. Simon Vila
Jefe de la Sección de Relaciones del SENPA
Madrid

Sra. Asunción Cavero
Representante adjunto ante la FAO
Embajada de España
Roma

SRI LANKA

D.H.J. Abeyagoonasekera
Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Sri Lanka
Rome

SWEDEN/SUEDE/SUECIA

Stefan de Maré
Secretary-General
Swedish FAO Committee
Ministry of Agriculture
Stockholm

Erland Karlsson
Head of Section
National Agricultural Market Board
Joenköeping

A. Gunnar André
Agricultural Counsellor
Royal Swedish Embassy
Rome

SWITZERLAND/SUISSE/SUIZA

T. Glaser
Conseiller agricole
Ambassade de Suisse
Rome

THAILAND/THAILANDE/TAIANDIA

Vanrob Isarankura
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Thailand
Rome

Sunai Tephaval
Commercial Counsellor
Embassy of Thailand
Rome

Pichai Pongpaet
First Secretary
Royal Thai Embassy
Rome

TUNISIA/TUNISIE/TUNEZ

Lassaad Mouaffak
Directeur général adjoint
Office des céréales
Tunis

Abdelhadi Mohamed
Représentant de la Tunisie auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de Tunisie
Rome

UGANDA/UGANDA

Mansoor Simbwa-Bunnya
Designate Permanent Representative to FAO
Entebbe

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES/EMIRATS ARABES UNIS/
EMIRATOS ARABES UNIDOS

Shahla Ahmed Khalfan
Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Abu Dhabi

UNITED KINGDOM/ROYAUME-UNI/REINO UNIDO

Ms. M.C. Wenner
Principal, Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food
London

P.S. McLean
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of the United Kingdom
Rome

C. Mylchreest
Senior Executive Officer
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
London

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA/
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE/
ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA

W. Scott Steele
Chief, International Affairs and
Commodity Programs
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington

B. Furness
Chief, Food Policy Division
Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs
Department of State
Washington

Avram E. Guroff
Attaché for U.N. Affairs
Embassy of the United States of America
Rome

URUGUAY

Joaquín Piriz Jorge
Representante Permanente Alterno
ante la FAO
Embajada del Uruguay
Roma

Octavio Brugnini
Primer Secretario, Representante Permanente
Alterno ante la FAO
Embajada del Uruguay
Roma

VENEZUELA

H. Claverie
Ministro Consejero y Encargado de Negocio
Representación Permanente de Venezuela
ante la FAO
Roma

Sra M.I. Casellas
Consejero
Representación Permanente de Venezuela
ante la FAO
Roma

A. Brugnoli Cruciani
Segundo Secretario
Representación Permanente de Venezuela
ante la FAO
Roma

YUGOSLAVIA/YOUGOSLAVIE

Milan Zjalić
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Yugoslavia
Rome

Ljubomir Stambuk
Federal Committee for Agriculture
Counsellor for FAO
Belgrade

ZAIRE

N.M. Mapela
Représentant permanent suppléant auprès
de la FAO
Ambassade du Zaïre
Rome

ZAMBIA/ZAMBIE

N.E. Mumba
Director of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture
Lusaka

Maleka Phiri
Senior Economist
Planning Division, MAWD
Lusaka

OBSERVERS FROM MEMBER NATIONS NOT MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE
OBSERVATEURS D'ETATS MEMBRES NE SIEGEANT PAS AU COMITE
OBSERVADORES DE LOS ESTADOS MIEMBROS QUE NO SON MIEMBROS DEL COMITE

BOLIVIA/BOLIVIE

Miguel Torrico Rivero
Representante Permanente Alterno
ante la FAO
Embajada de Bolivia
Roma

BRAZIL/BRESIL/BRASIL

Arrhenius F.M. de Freitas
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Brazil
Rome

Milton de Freitas Almeida Neto
Second Secretary
Embassy of Brazil
Rome

BULGARIA/BULGARIE

L. Djilianov
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Bulgaria
Rome

BURUNDI

F. Nahimana
Conseiller juridique
Ministère de l'agriculture et de l'élevage
Bujumbura

IRAQ

Mustafa Hamdoun
Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Iraq
Rome

Hazim Fadhli Najeb
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Iraq
Rome

LESOTHO

Phoofolo Marabe
Counsellor
Deputy Permanent Representative of
Lesotho to FAO
Embassy of the Kingdom of Lesotho
Rome

MALAYSIA/MALAISIE/MALASIA

Abdul Wahid Jalil
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
Embassy of Malaysia
Rome

SAUDI ARABIA/ARABIE SAOUDITE/ARABIA SAUDITA

Mostafa Mahdi
Permanent Mission to FAO
Embassy of Saudi Arabia
Rome

VIET NAM

Mai-Lúông
Représentant adjoint du Viet Nam
auprès de la FAO
Ambassade du Viet Nam
Rome

HOLY SEE/SAINT-SIEGE/SANTA SEDE

Most Rev. Agostino Ferrari-Toniolo
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to FAO
Vatican City
Rome

L. Bernardi
Member of Delegation of Holy See
Vatican City
Rome

P. Fonseca
Alternate, Delegation of Holy See
Civiltà Cattolica
Rome

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REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
REPRESENTANTS DES NATIONS UNIES ET INSTITUTIONS SPECIALISEES
REPRESENTANTES DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS Y ORGANISMOS ESPECIALIZADOS

UNHCR/HCR/ACNUR

Ms. A. Prandi
Assistant
Rome

WFP/PAM/PMA

J. Moscarella
Special Adviser
Rome

D.J. Shaw
Senior Economist
Policy Unit

IMF/FMI

T. Morrison
Economist
Research Department
Commodities Division
Washington

IFAD/FIDA

T. Van der Pluijm
Senior Economist
Economic and Planning Department
Rome

UNCTAD/CNUCED

L. Ali
Senior Economic Affairs Officer
Commodities Division
Geneva

UNDP/PNUD

C. Widstrand
Resident Representative
Upper Volta

WFC/CMA

Rajinder Kaushik
Senior Economist
Rome

WORLD BANK/BANQUE INTERNATIONALE/BANCO
INTERNACIONAL

Shlomo Reutlinger
Senior Economist
Washington

GATT/AGAC

Ms. Rosine Plank
Economic Affairs Officer
Agriculture Division
Geneva

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY
COMMUNAUTE ECONOMIQUE EUROPEENNE
COMUNIDAD ECONOMICA EUROPEA

G. Bruderer
Administrateur principal à la
Direction générale de l'agriculture
Bruxelles

M. Franco
Administrateur à la Direction générale
du développement
Bruxelles

OBSERVERS FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS INTERGOUVERNEMENTALES
OBSERVADORES DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES INTERGUBERNAMENTALES

IWC/CIB/CIT

J.H. Parotte
Executive Secretary
London

A.R. Woodhams
Economist
London

OECD/OCDE

G. Viatte
Directeur adjoint
Direction de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture
et des pêcheries
Paris

OBSERVERS FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS NON GOUVERNEMENTALES
OBSERVADORES DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES NO GUBERNAMENTALES

IFAP/FIPA

G. Pelà
Liaison Officer
Rome

CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS

Ms. Derna Cerbella
Rome

WFTU/FSM

G. Casadei
Représentant permanent
Rome

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CFS: 82/4	Sub-Regional and Regional Food Security Schemes Aimed at Strengthening the Collective Self- Reliance of Developing Countries	III (c)
CFS: 82/5	Review of National Programmes for Increasing Food Production in Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries	III (b)
CFS: 82/6	Special Measures to Assist Low-Income Food- Deficit Countries to Meet Current Import Requirements and Emergency Needs	IV (a)
CFS: 82/7	Review of Special Arrangements for Food Security Assistance to Developing Countries - Activities of the Food Security Assistance Scheme	IV (b)
CFS: 82/7 Sup.1	Review of Special Arrangements for Food Security Assistance to Developing Countries - Activities of the Food Security Assistance Scheme	IV (b)
CFS: 82/Inf.1	List of Documents	
CFS: 82/Inf.2	Draft Proposed Timetable	
CFS: 82/Inf.3	Extracts from Reports of Various International Fora Relevant to Food Security	
CFS: 82/Inf.4	Inventory of Food Security Projects	
CFS: 82/Inf.5	List of Delegates	
CFS: 82/Inf.6	List of Members of CFS	

APPENDIX D

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

(as at 7 April 1982)

Algeria	Ghana	Panama
Angola	Greece	Peru
Argentina	Guinea-Bissau	Philippines
Australia	Honduras	Portugal
Austria	Hungary	Romania
Bangladesh	India	Rwanda
Belgium	Indonesia	São Tomé and Príncipe
Benin	Ireland	Senegal
Cameroon, United Rep. of	Israel	Sierra Leone
Canada	Italy	Spain
Cape Verde	Ivory Coast	Sri Lanka
Central African Republic	Jamaica	Sudan
Chad	Japan	Sweden
Chile	Kenya	Switzerland
Colombia	Korea, Republic of	Tanzania
Congo	Liberia	Thailand
Costa Rica	Madagascar	Tunisia
Cuba	Mali	Turkey
Cyprus	Malta	Uganda
Denmark	Mauritania	United Arab Emirates
Dominican Republic	Mexico	United Kingdom
Ecuador	Morocco	United States of America
Egypt	Mozambique	Upper Volta
El Salvador	Netherlands	Uruguay
Equatorial Guinea	New Zealand	Venezuela
Ethiopia	Nicaragua	Yemen, People's Dem. Rep. of
Finland	Niger	Yugoslavia
France	Nigeria	Zaire
Gambia	Norway	Zambia
Germany, Federal Republic of	Pakistan	

APPENDIX EDIRECTOR-GENERAL'S STATEMENT

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates and Observers,

This is the Seventh Session of the Committee. It was created in 1975 during the height of the world food crisis, in order to provide a forum for consultations on one of the most important of international economic, political and human problems - food security.

During these 7 years there has been some progress, but also failures and disappointments, in the search for a workable and effective system of world food security. I wish to take this opportunity to look back over this experience and to reflect on certain questions which, in my view, have now to be asked.

Firstly, however, let me review the world food situation.

World Food Situation

We all welcome the improvement in this year's harvests. After two poor seasons, world production of cereals has risen by 95 million tons which should enable a substantial replenishment of global stocks. Agricultural investment has been stepped-up in some regions, new varieties and new technologies have been introduced and the process of modernising farm production has been initiated in a number of countries.

We must give full credit to the hundreds of millions of farmers, both in the developing and the developed world, who have produced this result, but, of course, as always favourable weather conditions have played a large role.

These global figures must not, however, be used to conceal or ignore the growing difficulties of many low-income countries, especially in Africa. It has been claimed in some academic or media circles that the "development community" deliberately exaggerates the figures for ulterior motives. This is of course nonsense, but clearly motivated nonsense.

Slow Growth in Food-Deficit Countries

As all the verifiable data and direct observation show, no less than 37 food-deficit developing countries recorded negative rates of growth in their cereals output on a per caput basis over the past decade; and 19 of these countries experienced an actual decline in total output. Far from moving closer towards self-reliance, they are now facing their widest food gap on record.

Rising Food Imports Gap

The cereal imports of the developing countries as a whole have reached 98 million tons, more than double the level of ten years ago. The cost of the commercial imports of cereals of the low-income food-deficit countries rose to \$7.5 billion last year. This is equivalent to one fifth of their balance of payments deficit on current account. The doubling of ocean freight rates over the last decade has added to their burden.

Cereal Stocks

Furthermore, while world stocks of cereals as a whole are rising, carryover stocks of the major foodgrain in international trade - wheat - will still be smaller this year than in 1977 and the national reserves in many developing countries remain grossly inadequate.

Price Instability

Another major problem affecting producers and consumers alike, is price instability. During recent years the rise in world grain prices created serious financial difficulties for the poor, food-deficit countries. Now, ironically, the decline in prices and inflation in farm costs threatens to weaken incentives to production in the exporting countries.

Acreage Reduction and Decline in Food Aid

Even in the richest agricultural country, the United States, farm income in real terms was already the lowest for two decades in 1981 and it is forecast to fall heavily this year. Acreage reduction programmes for cereals and some other crops may be justified in domestic terms but such measures can hardly strengthen global food security. It is paradoxical that at a time when stocks are being built up and acreage is reduced in developed exporting countries, total food aid allocations of cereals are falling. Also, international assistance to developing countries for building up national food security reserves falters and stagnates.

Protectionist policies and worsening terms of trade continue to damage food-deficit countries which are heavily dependent on commodity export earnings to finance their imports.

Fall in Real Commodity Prices and Balance of Payments

The current FAO Commodity Review reports that tea and jute are now fetching, in real terms, barely one third of their value of twenty years ago. As a result of the rising food imports and depressed export returns, the agricultural trade balance of low-income countries has sharply declined - a matter of deep concern to the recent session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. Faced with the deterioration in their balance of payments, an increasing number of countries took recourse to the IMF compensatory financing facility in 1980/81.

This is hardly a picture of sustained and healthy growth. Nor is it a basis on which confident assertions can be made by theorists or anyone about future trends.

International actions since 1973

There is, in fact, a very wide consensus on the fundamental needs and objectives. This was shown, first of all, by the acceptance of the International Undertaking on World Food Security which was approved in principle by the FAO Conference in 1973. It was subsequently adopted by over 80 countries.

International Undertaking on World Food Security

This Undertaking provided for the holding of stocks according to certain guidelines, for special assistance to developing countries, for a world food information system, and for regular intergovernmental consultations.

The Undertaking was endorsed in 1974 by the World Food Conference, which made a number of recommendations for improving food security, including arrangements for emergency relief and food aid. Some action has been taken to implement these proposals, but it has been slow and limited. Let us look back over the record.

Early Warning System

The responsibility for organizing a Global Information and Early Warning System was assigned by the World Food Conference to FAO. Since then, the Organization has developed an effective system of surveillance on the food situation globally as well as in food-deficit countries. It quickly alerts governments and relief agencies to unfavourable crop conditions and potential food shortages. It surveys and systematically monitors the world food outlook. The system is unparalleled and irreplaceable.

The International Emergency Food Reserve also had its origins in the International Undertaking as a means of providing food assistance on an emergency basis in the event of man-made or natural disasters or crop failures. The minimum annual target of 500 000 tons of cereals was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1975. The target was reached only last year for the first time, and only towards the end of the year.

IEFR

In order to assure the predictability, adequacy, and the continuity of this Reserve, I have proposed a legally binding convention. The Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, however, agreed at its last session on a joint pledging conference for both the WFP's regular resources and the IEFR. At the recent meeting in New York, 164 000 tons were pledged to the IEFR for 1983, and 165 000 tons for 1984. It remains to be seen how effective this device will be. The IEFR is not as yet placed on a fully multilateral basis, freely available at the disposal of WFP. Nor has serious consideration been given to proposals for pre-positioning food reserves in strategic locations for quick use at times of urgent need.

This concept, of course, is different from the proposal now before the World Food Council for a developing country-owned reserve, which seems to be focussed on providing access to food supplies at times of world shortage and high international prices, rather than on meeting domestic production shortfalls and national emergencies. I have not yet seen full details of this proposal but I look forward to the discussion on the subject in the Ministerial meeting of the World Food Council.

But let us return to reviewing past actions. The FAO Food Security Assistance Scheme was set up in 1976. It has already undertaken 52 projects in 18 countries and has mobilized \$45 million through Trust Funds. FAO is now supporting the efforts of the CILSS, the Southern African Development Conference, and the Latin American Economic System, to develop practical food security schemes at the sub-regional level. The annual target of resources for the Scheme set at \$10 million in 1979 by the FAO Conference was met last year, but inflation has eroded its real value. The Committee is also aware that its current shelf of project proposals - valued at some \$200 million - cannot be financed for lack of resources.

Food Aid Convention

A certain degree of stability has been given to cereals food aid by the Food Aid Convention - which is a part of the International Grains Arrangement. Each of the signatories to the Convention commits a minimum amount of food aid to be provided every year. This ensures that even in a year of global shortfall in production, food aid will not be so sharply curtailed as it was during the 1973 world food crisis. The new Convention in 1980 increased the total commitments to 7.6 million tons a year - a substantial improvement over the 4.2 million tons provided in the earlier Convention.

Need to Revise Food Aid Targets

Yet, the harsh fact remains that total food aid has never reached the minimum target of 10 million tons of cereals set by the World Food Conference. At the same time, current estimates indicate the need for an upward revision of the food aid target in view of the rising food import gap of the low-income, food-deficit countries. The CFA has agreed to re-examine the global food aid needs and targets.

Five-Point Plan of Action

Following the breakdown of negotiations of a new International Grains Arrangement, the Five-Point Plan of Action was introduced in 1979. It called for Member Governments to adopt unilaterally national stock policies; it set out criteria for their release; it proposed the strengthening of food security assistance programmes; and it indicated special measures to help low-income countries and for collective self-reliance. After its adoption by the FAO Council in 1979, the Plan of Action received wide support in other fora, including the United Nations General Assembly and the World Food Council.

IMF Facility

In response to the proposal in the Plan of Action and with the support of the World Food Council, action has recently been taken to help offset the mounting costs of commercial cereal imports. The International Monetary Fund modified its compensatory financing facility in May 1981 and has already extended assistance to two developing countries, Malawi and Korea, for this purpose.

This is a positive side of the balance sheet. On the negative side, the efforts of 6 years of negotiation towards a new Wheat Trade Convention, which would have provided a coordinated system of grain reserves and price stabilization, have finally been abandoned: most of the major grain exporting countries have clearly rejected the concept.

The concept of world food security

We now have a breathing space, provided by the more comfortable global supply situation and the impasse in international negotiations. Let us take advantage of it to review the whole concept of "world food security" in general and the role of this Committee in particular.

Food security does not rest solely on reserve stocks; food aid can only provide partial support; higher production, although essential, does not in itself resolve the problem of unequal distribution; and the role played by trade in achieving food security needs to be clarified.

I believe that the time has now come to review and redefine all the various components of food security in order to establish some new approaches towards solving the apparently insoluble problem.

And, along with a reappraisal of the concept of world food security, is it not time to evaluate the whole pattern and effectiveness of the food security institutions set up by the World Food Conference?

The role of CFS

One of the first follow-up activities of the World Food Conference was the creation of the Committee on World Food Security in 1975.

Let us consider the role played by the Committee. This Committee is the only inter-governmental body in the UN system which is specifically charged with monitoring, evaluating and consulting on the world food security situation. Its assigned task is to review the steps being taken to implement the International Undertaking, and the Plan of Action, and to recommend any necessary measures. It is open to all Member Nations of the United Nations. It submits special reports to the World Food Council.

The CFS has kept developments under continuing review at its annual sessions. At the same time, the Secretariat holds quarterly briefings of the Permanent Representatives to FAO on the current food situation. The Committee has provided a sounding board where governments exchanged views on their food security problems. But it must be doubted, frankly, whether the Committee has fulfilled the hopes of its founders.

Past Recommendations of CFS

The Committee's first three sessions up until 1978 were concerned principally with two major issues: one was to set timetables for the adoption of national stock policies in line with the International Undertaking; the second was to make recommendations on relevant food security issues to be taken into account in the negotiations for a new International Grains Arrangement. Unfortunately, the time schedules for national stock policies were not achieved and negotiations on a new International Grains Arrangement ended in a stalemate.

IEFR and CFA

During 1978 the Committee expressed great concern for the shortfalls in the IEFR, but transmitted this problem for discussion and examination to the CFA and WFC. It did appeal, however, for additional emergency assistance for developing countries facing severe food shortages.

As I mentioned earlier, when the negotiations on a new IGA came to a deadlock, I proposed a Five-Point Plan of Action on World Food Security. The Committee, despite the hesitations of some members, did ultimately adopt and recommend it to the FAO Council for approval.

FSAS Sub-Committee

The Committee has a major responsibility for monitoring the flow of resources for food security assistance, which it has recognised as insufficient. But it rejected a concrete proposal to set up a special Sub-Committee to help it carry out more effectively its functions of assessing and promoting the flow of resources for this purpose.

Agenda for Action for Large-Scale Food Shortages

The need to improve the state of preparedness to cope with large-scale and acute food shortages was recognised by the Committee. It adopted in 1981 an Agenda for Consultation and Possible Action to deal with the food crisis situation. Yet it was unable to reach a consensus that these procedures, mechanisms and remedial action should be codified into a Memorandum of Understanding. This was partly because - as at many previous sessions - several governments maintained that such a modest proposal could prejudice the negotiations on a new Wheat Trade Convention which have, of course, since ceased.

The Committee's task has, undoubtedly, been complicated by the multiplicity of fora in which the issues of world food security are discussed. These include the International Wheat Council, the CFA and the World Food Council.

Overlapping of Functions with WFC, IWC and CFA

For example, the discussions in your Committee on the harmonisation of national stock targets and policies are constrained by suggestions that the International Wheat Council is the most appropriate forum for examination of wheat reserve policies. When you seek to assess the role and adequacy of the International Emergency Food Reserve in relation to needs of low-income, food-deficit countries, it cannot but be considered by the CFA. Yet these are all critical components of world food security.

The World Food Council initiates and examines various schemes for stocks and reserves relating to food security. I welcome, of course, the attention given by the WFC to these matters. Food security is such a vital issue that their discussions can only encourage and enrich efforts to find lasting solutions. Yet has not the time come to try to bring more order into all these deliberations so as to avoid overlap, to clarify the lines of communication, and to ensure a comprehensive attack on this critical problem?

In short, this Committee's functions are well-defined but the central question is whether, without some changes in approach, the Committee can successfully serve the purposes for which it was originally established.

I propose that the Committee examine these fundamental questions in depth at its next session. It can do so in the context of a review of the concept of world food security, and on the basis of a report which I intend to prepare. In my view, such an exercise is essential if we are to make concerted progress in tackling the food security problems of the 1980s. This will enable the Committee to reassess the role of the CFS, within a broad framework of the various international institutions dealing with food issues. My report will, of course, be for your consideration and it will be up to governments to decide finally on the appropriate lines of further action.

I look forward to the results of your session and am confident that the Committee will rise to the challenges which it is facing.