

LARC/04/REP

REPORT

Guatemala City
Guatemala
26 to 30 April 2004

Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

FAO Member Nations serviced by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (as of 26 April 2004)

Antigua and Barbuda	Dominican Republic	Paraguay
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Bahamas	El Salvador	Saint Kitts and Nevis
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Colombia	Honduras	Uruguay
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Venezuela
Cuba	Mexico	
Chile	Nicaragua	
Dominica	Panama	

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

First	Quito, Ecuador, 18-25 September 1949
Second	Montevideo, Uruguay, 1-12 December 1950
Third	Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1-10 September 1954
Fourth	Santiago, Chile, 19-30 November 1956
Fifth	San José, Costa Rica, 12-21 November 1958
Sixth	Mexico City, Mexico, 9-20 August 1960
Seventh	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 17-27 November 1962
Eighth	Viña del Mar, Chile, 13-29 March 1965
Ninth	Punta del Este, Uruguay, 5-16 December 1966
Tenth	Kingston, Jamaica, 2-13 December 1968
Eleventh	Caracas, Venezuela, 12-20 October 1970
Twelfth	Cali, Colombia, 21 August - 2 September 1972
Thirteenth	Panama City, Panama, 12-23 August 1974
Fourteenth	Lima, Peru, 21-29 April 1976
Fifteenth	Montevideo, Uruguay, 8-19 August 1978
Sixteenth	Havana, Cuba, 26 August - 6 September 1980
Seventeenth	Managua, Nicaragua, 20 August - 10 September 1982
Eighteenth	Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6-15 August 1984
Nineteenth	Bridgetown, Barbados, 5-13 August 1986
Twentieth	Recife, Brazil, 2-7 October 1988
Twenty-first	Santiago, Chile, 9-13 July 1990
Twenty-second	Montevideo, Uruguay, 28 September - 2 October 1992
Twenty-third	San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 August - 2 September 1994
Twenty-fourth	Asunción, Paraguay, 2-6 July 1996
Twenty-fifth	Nassau, Bahamas, 16-20 June 1998
Twenty-sixth	Merida, Mexico, 10-14 April 2000
Twenty-seventh	Havana, Cuba, 22-26 April 2002
Twenty-eighth	Guatemala City, Guatemala, 26-30 April 2004

**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

(Guatemala City, Guatemala, 26 to 30 April 2004)

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	1 - 46	1
INTRODUCTORY ITEMS		
Organization of the Conference	47	7
Inaugural Ceremony	48 - 53	7
Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and appointment of Rapporteur	54	7
Adoption of agenda and timetable	55	7
Statement by the Director-General	56 - 59	8
SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS		
FAO activities (2002-2003), trends and challenges in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security in the Region and actions taken on the main recommendations of the 27th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean	60 - 74	9
Follow-up to the World Food Summit and the <i>World Food Summit: five years later</i> . Regional dimensions	75 - 83	11
Initiative to review and update national strategies and policies for agriculture, rural development and food security	84 - 89	11
Reports of the Regional Commissions	90 - 94	12
REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE		
Opening of the Technical Committee meeting	95	13
Election of Technical Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and appointment of Rapporteur	96	13
Adoption of Technical Committee agenda and timetable	97	13
Food security as a strategy for rural development	98 - 107	13
Economic and social development as a basis for the implementation of FAO actions in Latin America and the Caribbean	108 - 117	14
International Year of Rice 2004	118 - 120	15
FAO strategic framework for bridging the rural divide	121 - 125	15
Adoption of the Technical Committee report	126	16
Closure of the Technical Committee meeting	127 - 128	16

	Paragraphs	Page
FINAL ITEMS		
Date, place and agenda of the Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean	129	17
Other matters	130 - 131	17
Adoption of the report	132	17
Closure of the Conference	133 - 136	17
 APPENDIXES		
A. Statement by the Director-General		18
B. Agenda of the Technical Committee and of the Plenary Session		23
C. List of participants		25
D. List of documents		37

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General debate on trends and challenges in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security in the Latin America and the Caribbean, and FAO actions in the Region

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

1. Stressed that the international context had a strong bearing on the process of economic and social development of the countries of the Region, and consequently on their food security. An international system based on the principles of justice and equity was needed, as this would facilitate greater, more efficient and more timely bilateral and multilateral cooperation, with renewed opportunity for South-South cooperation. It also called for international undertakings on official development assistance to be honoured and for levels of investment and financial flows to be increased. There was a need to promote access to new technologies and to a fairer trade regime for goods and services, especially agricultural commodities.
2. Reiterated the importance of establishing a more equitable system of international trade and of fulfilling the mandate of the Ministerial Conference in Doha. Trade reform needed to include commitments by developed countries to significantly improve access to agricultural markets, to reduce all forms of export subsidies, with a view to their gradual elimination, and to substantially reduce domestic support which was causing market distortions.
3. Took note of the resumption of multilateral negotiations and urged countries to accelerate implementation of the mandate and spirit of Doha, so that the Multilateral Round could become the "Development Round".

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

4. Endorsed the initiatives that had been taken to follow up the priorities set at the 25th Regional Conference and the implementation of guidelines from the 26th and 27th Regional Conferences; in particular, the development of productive partnerships, the promotion of trust funds, the implementation of regional projects and the development of methodologies for policy and programme evaluation.
5. Stressed that the Region had specific requirements and conditions of poverty and food insecurity that needed to be investigated and analysed on the basis of tailored criteria, and that FAO support and technical cooperation was required to formulate a regional strategic plan. In this regard, the Conference requested the establishment of an institutional mechanism charged with the following functions: a) monitoring the evolution of FAO technical cooperation in the Region; b) making proposals for refining and modernizing FAO technical cooperation mechanisms; and c) dealing with strategies and resources for implementation and evaluation of FAO cooperation programmes in the Region.
6. Recognized the need to assess the negative impact of the geographical condition of landlocked developing countries on their food security, so that projects and programmes could be devised to mitigate their situation.

7. Recommended systematic consideration of emerging issues for FAO technical cooperation in the Region:

- a territorial focus to rural development;
- multidimensional sectoral policies within a holistic approach that addressed the different rural interlinkages, especially the gender issue;
- institutional development and its linkage with the decentralization process;
- methodologies to assess the impact of policies, programmes and projects, not only *ex post*, but also during implementation as a mechanism to rectify, refocus and reinforce actions;
- support to processes of subregional economic and market integration, and backing for technical cooperation actions between countries of the Region;
- processes of urbanization and their impact on hunger in the urban environment;
- agroecology.

8. Recommended that FAO explore ways of increasing technical cooperation in the Region, using participatory mechanisms and drawing upon existing national capacities. There was also a need to strengthen the complementarity of action of international cooperation agencies.

9. Recommended recognition of the need for differential treatment for the least developed countries and the island states, especially those that were net food importers. In this connection, the "Barbados Programme for Island States" constituted a solid platform for the development of their agricultural, forestry and fishery capacities. FAO should play a strong role in its implementation.

10. Recommended that FAO continue to strengthen the international negotiating capacity of the countries of the Region, given the increasing diversity and complexity of issues and ongoing negotiation in a variety of multilateral contexts (WTO, Codex, OIE and ICPM).

11. Recommended that FAO look into the development of an export-oriented processing industry of raw materials in which the Region was competitive, as a way out of poverty for small producers and farmers of the developing countries. In this regard, FAO should assess the impact of tariff escalation and peaks of the developed countries on the development of a higher value-added export industry in the developing countries.

Follow-up to the World Food Summit and the *World Food Summit: five years later*. Regional Dimensions

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

12. Stressed the interdependence that existed between poverty, inequality and the fight against food insecurity. While greater efficiency and competitiveness were needed, there was also a need to temper the current process which was fuelling economic and social inequality in the Region.

13. Recognized that there was strong agricultural diversity in the Region, with the coexistence of a modern competitive sector that was integrated into markets and a very small-scale producer sector that did not have the wherewithal to compete on markets and that required targeted policies reflecting a strategy of gradual development through farm and off-farm activity.

14. Noted that rural development and food security were long-term processes that went beyond one government's term of office and required policies that would be maintained into the long term.

15. Recognized that a successful food security strategy called for concerted action of the State, the private sector, civil society and international cooperation occurring in a coherent, harmonious and highly participatory framework.

16. Endorsed the concerns expressed by COAG regarding the recommendations in the report of the Joint WHO/FAO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases (No. 916) which could have negative repercussions on the Region's agricultural sector.

17. Urged the governments of the Region to provide political support to the process of negotiation of the Set of Voluntary Guidelines to gradually achieve the Right to Adequate Food. The Conference also recognized the crucial role of international cooperation for the realization of this right.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

18. Recommended that FAO support the definition and configuration of new strategic orientations and recognized that current food security trends revealed an inadequacy of previous policies and a need to define new lines of action.

19. Recommended that FAO continue to analyse emerging trends and issues, and called for a greater involvement of countries in preparing related studies.

Initiative to review and update national agricultural, rural development and food security strategies and policies

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

20. Acknowledged that current development policies implied co-responsibility of governments and private players, and that coordination was therefore vital for their implementation.

21. Emphasized the importance of the territorial approach to development when determining rural development and food security strategies. This approach addressed both farm and off-farm activity and considered the individual characteristics of different player groups, highlighting the role of women in the production and better allocation of resources, and the enhancement of living conditions and food security of rural populations.

22. Recognized that rural development and food security policies needed to reflect the requirements of competitiveness and transformation of production but, also, the priorities of combating poverty. These were multisectoral policies that had to involve different ministries, decentralized government bodies and private players in a highly complex framework that required a web of coordination.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

23. Recommended that FAO reinforce and broaden the scope of large-scale training mechanisms for all players in the priorities of rural development and food security, citing the example of the FAO-FODEPAL project, and requested that FAO secure additional funds for this purpose.

24. Recommended that FAO carry out studies on the process of rural outmigration, mainly to developed countries, in order to identify investment programmes based on remittances and develop projects targeting rural households and thus create new sources of employment to reduce this rural exodus.

Food security as rural development strategy

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

25. Recognized that the concept of food security was broad in scope and impact. It covered availability, access, quality, use and contributing factors; it also played an important role in eradicating poverty, in raising productive capacity for development, in promoting social inclusion and equality of opportunity, and in building a fair society.

26. Underlined the need for food security strategies to go beyond the alleviation of hunger or the search for *ad hoc* solutions to instances of malnutrition; the central strategic thrust needed to tackle the conditions that allowed undernourishment to exist. This meant addressing the root causes of social exclusion, marginalization and poverty, adopting a broadly participatory and people-centred approach.

27. Stressed that while economic growth was necessary to reduce poverty and eliminate hunger, it was not sufficient in itself. It underlined the importance of the nature of economic growth, in particular its distributive consequences and its impact on equity. It also pointed to the need for political will and for meaningful involvement of society as a whole, in order to direct development towards equity by means of structural reform for social inclusion.

28. Recognized that the causes of food insecurity had historical roots that reflected hitherto prevailing social conditions; this was compounded by the protectionist trade practices and agricultural subsidies of the developed countries. The Conference called for implementation of the three pillars of the Doha Round. It also stressed the need to strengthen international cooperation for development and to optimize opportunities for subregional integration and South-South cooperation.

29. Identified the need for greater involvement of the poor in order to strengthen their effective capacity to participate in the decision-making processes that affected their development.

30. Recognized that food security was strategically integral to rural development and that rural development was a core strategy for food security. Given this interconnection, it emphasized the need to view rural development as a basic territorial strategy and to reconsider agriculture in a perspective that went beyond primary production to include its vertical configuration in the form of production-processing-marketing-consumption chains.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

31. Recognized that food security analysis required more than diagnosis and that related strategy should include other than medium- and long-term policy orientations. It recommended that FAO carry out immediate and short-term actions, that it seek mechanisms to assess their impact and replicability, and that it develop new actions on a broad front that extended far beyond the promotion of production to include multisectoral approaches, involving government bodies, the private sector and civil society.

32. Recommended that FAO study the potential and means of broadening intraregional trade in smallholder agricultural products as an instrument of economic and social development.

Economic and social development as the basis for FAO actions in Latin America and the Caribbean

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

33. Indicated that any analysis of economic and social development needed to heed the interdependence that existed among the economic, social and cultural aspects of development, where the ultimate objective was to enhance the living conditions of the rural population. Development actions needed to centre not only on economic growth, but also on the distribution of resulting benefits and the easing of social inequalities and poverty.

34. Underscored the importance of monitoring and evaluating rural development programmes and projects in order to shape further cooperation actions. It indicated that monitoring and evaluation should not be limited to the administrative aspects of implementing agreed actions or applying assigned budgets, but should permit meaningful examination of the resulting impact. It recommended that such evaluation be carried out at different stages of project implementation in order to adjust programme delivery in real time or to draw lessons from experiences for the design of subsequent phases or projects.

35. Acknowledged that there was scope for improvement in the rural development technical cooperation programmes of international organizations; but it stressed that international assistance channelled through multilateral cooperation was more transparent and more independent of donor priorities, and could thus better reflect the requirements of beneficiary countries.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

36. Recognized the importance of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), and recommended that FAO, together with the countries of the Region, establish criteria and mechanisms to assess its impact.

37. Acknowledged its concern over the reduction of technical cooperation resources directed towards the countries of the Region, and referred in particular to the growing regional disparity in this regard. It indicated the need to use these resources in the most efficient manner possible and to set up mechanisms to monitor and evaluate FAO cooperation in the Region and thus sharpen its focus.

38. Reiterated the advantages of continuing to recruit national experts, when appropriate, given their thorough understanding of national situations and their lower cost to technical cooperation projects.

39. Recommended that the organization of FAO technical cooperation missions to individual countries be reviewed in order to safeguard against duplication and lack of coordination. It also called for a new look at relations between the different FAO entities (Headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices) in the preparation of technical cooperation projects, taking care that activities dovetailed with national capabilities. In this connection, the FAO Regional Representative briefed the Conference on a mission conducted to evaluate the FAO decentralization process in the Region.

40. Recommended that a standing institutional working group be set up, open to all the countries of the Region. This working group would monitor the evolution of FAO technical cooperation in the Region so that it could refine and modernize FAO technical cooperation mechanisms and devise strategies and means for implementing and evaluating FAO cooperation programmes in the Region. This would unfold in a strategic framework that was coherent with national realities and respected guidelines set periodically by the Regional Conference.

41. Recommended that the conclusions of this working group be presented to subsequent Regional Conferences, which would include a special meeting looking exclusively at technical cooperation.

FAO strategic framework for bridging the rural digital divide

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

42. Recommended supporting FAO's new strategic "Programme for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide to Reduce Food Insecurity and Poverty".

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

43. Recommended that FAO present an assessment of implemented programmes and of ongoing activities to coordinate and unify national institutional efforts to bridge the rural digital divide.

44. Stressed that this new programme should consider the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society and the initiatives of international organizations in the Region, including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

45. Welcomed the idea of developing South-South cooperation modalities for implementation of this new FAO strategic programme.

46. Recommended that the COAIM be maintained and that it prepare a meeting for 2005.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization of the Conference

47. The 28th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Guatemala City, Guatemala, from 26 to 30 April 2004. The Technical Committee met on 26 and 27 April. The Conference was attended by delegations from 24 FAO Member Nations in the Region, together with observers from countries of other regions and representatives of United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations and international and national non-governmental organizations. The list of participants is given in Appendix C.

Inaugural Ceremony

48. The Conference was inaugurated by the President of the Republic of Guatemala. The ceremony was attended by the Director-General of FAO, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, the Minister for Agriculture of Guatemala and the FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean.

49. In his opening remarks, the Director-General of FAO thanked the President of the Republic and, through him, the people of Guatemala for hosting the Regional Conference. He welcomed the delegates of the countries of the Region and expressed his hope that the Conference would add further impetus to the Region's contribution to food security in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the world.

50. He remarked that humanity had achieved feats that, at the beginning of the last century, would have seemed inconceivable, such as the conquest of space, but that the fundamental objective of eradicating hunger, which would have seemed more conceivable given existing capacities, remained elusive. More than 842 million hungry people were still waiting for a result. He therefore again urged countries to make every necessary effort to achieve the objectives that they themselves had set at the World Food Summit.

51. The President of the Republic of Guatemala identified the enhancement of child nutrition as a top priority of his Government and stated that current indicators represented a painful reality that needed to be remedied. He hoped that the Conference would put forward ideas to help design effective actions to this end.

52. He stressed that FAO cooperation was now more relevant than ever, given the high priority that was being given to improving food security in the country and especially to combating child undernutrition. He stressed that actions would concentrate not only on welfare assistance but also on addressing the root causes of food insecurity. Among other elements, attention needed to be paid to increasing agricultural productivity and to developing the competitiveness of the national economic system.

53. He ended by wishing the Conference a successful outcome and declaring it open.

Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and appointment of Rapporteur

54. The Conference unanimously elected the Conference Officers listed in Appendix C.

Adoption of agenda and timetable

55. The Conference adopted the agenda and timetable that are given in Appendix B.

Statement by the Director-General¹

56. The Director-General expressed his concern over the slow, irregular and varied progress that countries had made towards achieving food security. During the first half of the 1990s, the number of undernourished people in the world had fallen by 37 million, but had increased by 18 million during the second half. In 1999-2001 there had been 842 million undernourished people in the world. At that pace, the World Food Summit's target of halving the number of hungry people by 2015 would only be reached in 2150.

57. He stated that Latin America and the Caribbean had achieved relatively more encouraging results. The Region's undernourished population had fallen from 13 percent in 1990-1992 to 10 percent in 1999-2001. If actions against hunger were continued, the proportion could fall to 6 percent in 2015. He pointed out that some countries had flagged hunger as a key national concern, mentioning the "Zero Hunger" programme of the Government of Brazil and the "Campaign against Hunger" recently launched by the Government of Guatemala. However, he also noted that five countries of the Region had suffered food crises in 2002, mainly due to adverse climatic events and to the slump in the coffee market.

58. He stressed that the Region also needed to make significant progress in combating poverty. Some countries had failed to break out of economic stagnation or to reduce the inequality of income distribution. The Region had the highest level of inequality in the world and the situation had worsened.

59. He viewed the Conference as an excellent opportunity to reflect on progress made and on further actions needed to correct negative trends or to accelerate progress against food insecurity in the Region.

¹ The full text of the statement (LARC/04/INF/4) is in Appendix A.

SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS

FAO activities (2002–2003), trends and challenges in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security in the Region and actions taken on the main recommendations of the 27th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

60. The Conference was briefed by the FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean on the actions that had been taken in follow-up to the recommendations of the 27th Regional Conference held in Havana, Cuba. The Conference was also referred to the documents detailing the state of agricultural and rural development in the countries of the Region, and the work of FAO².

61. The Conference endorsed the initiatives that had been taken to follow up the priorities set at the 25th Regional Conference and the implementation of guidelines from the 26th and 27th Regional Conferences; in particular, the development of productive partnerships, the promotion of trust funds, the implementation of regional projects and the development of methodologies for policy and programme evaluation.

62. The Conference stressed that, while the Region was largely made up of middle-ranking countries in terms of *per capita* income, it nevertheless contained alarming pockets of poverty. Due attention therefore needed to be paid to the perverse tendency of macroeconomic indicators to distort reality. It was also important to avoid adopting imported policy evaluation criteria that did not reflect the reality, operating methods or purpose of each country, such as that of good governance.

63. The Conference stressed that hunger was the most serious consequence of a process of unequal development, in which social exclusion led to absolute poverty. Human rights were not fully observed while hunger and its causes existed. Food security was a vital element for the achievement of a society that was fair, nondiscriminatory and non-exclusive.

64. The Conference stressed that the international context had a strong bearing on the process of economic and social development of the countries of the Region, and consequently on their food security. An international system based on the principles of justice and equity was needed, as this would facilitate greater, more efficient and more timely bilateral and multilateral cooperation, with renewed opportunity for South-South cooperation. International undertakings on official development assistance needed to be honoured and investment and financial flows to be increased. There was a need to promote access to new technologies and to a fairer trade regime for goods and services, especially agricultural commodities.

65. The Conference reiterated the importance of establishing a more equitable system of international trade and of fulfilling the mandate of the Ministerial Conference in Doha. Trade reform needed to include specific commitments by the developed countries to significantly improve access to agricultural markets, to reduce all forms of export subsidies, with a view to their gradual elimination, and to substantially reduce domestic support which was causing market distortions.

66. The Conference took note of the resumption of multilateral negotiations and urged countries to accelerate implementation of the mandate and spirit of Doha, so that the Multilateral Round could become the "Development Round".

² "Notes on FAO work in LAC. 1994-2004"(LARC/04/INF/5) and "Trends and challenges in agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the Region".

67. The Conference stressed that the Region had specific requirements and conditions of poverty and food insecurity that needed to be investigated and analysed on the basis of tailored criteria, and that FAO support and technical cooperation was required to formulate a regional strategic plan. In this regard, the Conference requested the establishment of an institutional mechanism charged with the following functions: a) monitoring the evolution of FAO technical cooperation in the Region; b) making proposals for refining and modernizing FAO technical cooperation instruments; and c) dealing with strategies and resources for implementation and evaluation of FAO cooperation programmes in the Region.

68. The Conference recognized the need to assess the negative impact of the geographical condition of landlocked developing countries on their food security, so that projects and programmes could be devised to mitigate their situation.

The Conference recommended:

69. Systematic consideration of emerging issues for FAO technical cooperation in the Region:

- a territorial focus to rural development;
- multidimensional sectoral policies within a holistic approach that addressed the different rural interlinkages, especially the gender issue;
- institutional development and its linkage with the decentralization process;
- methodologies to assess the impact of policies, programmes and projects, not only *ex post*, but also during implementation as a mechanism to rectify, refocus and reinforce actions;
- support to processes of subregional economic and market integration, and backing for technical cooperation actions between countries of the Region;
- processes of urbanization and their impact on hunger in the urban environment;
- agroecology.

70. That FAO pay special attention to the state of fisheries, forest resources and sustainable mountain development. The Conference expressed its support for application of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its recognition of FAO activities in support of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in the Mountain Regions, and requested that funds be directed to these programmes.

71. That FAO explore ways of increasing technical cooperation in the Region, using participatory mechanisms and drawing upon existing national capacities. There was also a need to strengthen the complementarity of action of international cooperation agencies.

72. That there be recognition of the need for differential treatment for the least developed countries and the island states, especially those that were net food importers. In this connection, the "Barbados Programme for Island States" constituted a solid platform for the development of their agricultural, forestry and fishery capacities. FAO should play a strong role in its implementation.

73. That FAO continue to strengthen the international negotiating capacity of the countries of the Region, given the increasing diversity and complexity of issues and ongoing negotiation in a variety of multilateral contexts (WTO, Codex, OIE and ICPM).

74. That FAO look into the development of an export-oriented processing industry of raw materials in which the Region was competitive as a way out of poverty for small producers and farmers of the developing countries. In this regard, FAO should assess the impact of tariff escalation and peaks of the developed countries on the development of a higher value-added export industry in the developing countries.

Follow-up to the World Food Summit and the *World Food Summit: five years later*. Regional dimensions

75. The Conference was briefed by the Assistant Director-General of FAO and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean on the progress made in food security at regional and subregional level. He stressed the interdependence that existed between poverty, inequality and the fight against food insecurity. While greater efficiency and competitiveness were needed, there was also a need to temper the current process which was fuelling economic and social inequality in the Region.

76. The Conference recognized that current food security trends revealed an inadequacy of previous policies and a need to define new lines of action, and recommended that FAO support the definition and configuration of new strategic orientations.

77. The Conference recognized that there was strong agricultural diversity in the Region, with the coexistence of a modern competitive sector that was integrated into markets and a very small-scale producer sector that did not have the wherewithal to compete on markets and that required targeted policies reflecting a strategy of gradual development through farm and off-farm activity.

78. The Conference noted that rural development and food security were long-term processes that went beyond one government's term of office and required policies that would be maintained into the long term.

79. The Conference recognized that a successful food security strategy called for concerted action of the State, the private sector, civil society and international cooperation occurring in a coherent, harmonious and highly participatory framework.

80. The Conference endorsed the concerns expressed by COAG regarding the recommendations in the report of the Joint WHO/FAO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases (No. 916) which could have negative repercussions on the Region's agricultural sector.

81. The Conference urged the governments of the Region to provide political support to the process of negotiation of the Set of Voluntary Guidelines to gradually achieve the Right to Adequate Food. The Conference also recognized the crucial role of international cooperation for the realization of this right.

82. The Conference suggested that FAO review the figures on undernutrition that had been presented³, paying particular attention to the methodology and sources of information used to calculate the indicators included in the related documents.

83. The Conference recommended that FAO continue to analyse emerging trends and issues, and called for a greater involvement of countries in preparing related studies.

Initiative to review and update national strategies and policies for agriculture, rural development and food security

84. The Conference was informed on the updating of rural development and food security policies. In addition to improving the substance, the main thrust of the updating exercise focused on the characteristics and modalities of implementation, given that these were multisectoral policies with a territorial dimension and participatory management.

³ Follow-up to the World Food Summit and *World Food Summit: five years later*. Regional Dimensions (Document LARC/04/4)

85. The Conference acknowledged that current development policies implied co-responsibility of governments and private players, and that coordination was therefore vital for their implementation.

86. The Conference emphasized the importance of the territorial approach to development when determining rural development and food security strategies. This approach addressed both farm and off-farm activity and considered the individual characteristics of different player groups, highlighting the role of women in the production and better allocation of resources, and the enhancement of living conditions and food security of rural populations.

87. The Conference recognized that rural development and food security policies needed to reflect the requirements of competitiveness and transformation of production but, also, the priorities of combating poverty. These were multisectoral policies that had to involve different ministries, decentralized government bodies and private players in a highly complex framework that required a web of coordination.

88. The Conference recommended that FAO reinforce and broaden the scope of large-scale training mechanisms for all players in the priorities of rural development and food security, citing the example of the FAO-FODEPAL project, and requested that FAO secure additional funds for this purpose.

89. The Conference recommended that FAO carry out studies on the process of rural outmigration, mainly to developed countries, in order to identify investment programmes based on remittances and develop projects targeting rural households, and thus create new sources of employment to reduce this rural exodus.

Reports of the Regional Commissions: Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL); Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC); Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC); and Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean (CODEGALAC)

90. The Conference was informed of the results and conclusions of the meetings of the Regional Commissions COPESCAL, WECAFC, LACFC and CODEGALAC. The identified trends in each commission were highlighted and their recommendations explained.

91. The Conference expressed its thanks for the preparation and presentation of the respective reports.

92. The Conference expressed its appreciation of the efforts of FAO to support the activities of CODEGALAC, which had been operating under precarious conditions and with insufficient resources. It also highlighted the importance of this commission in the high priority context of animal health and control of transboundary disease. It recommended that FAO prepare regional technical cooperation projects to support the establishment of a technical secretariat that would oversee the activities of CODEGALAC.

93. The Conference stressed that FAO was the specialized body for determining measures for the management of marine species, which needed to be reflected in the documentation on the relationship of FAO with CITES regarding measures for the conservation and use of commercially important marine species.

94. The Conference recommended that FAO prepare regional technical cooperation projects to support training activities in the sustainable management of forest resources. It also requested that funding be mobilized to help all countries participate in the LACFC meetings.

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Opening of the Technical Committee meeting

95. The Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative of FAO opened the Technical Committee meeting. He welcomed the delegates and observers, and thanked the Government and people of Guatemala for hosting the event.

Election of Technical Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and appointment of Rapporteur

96. The Committee unanimously elected the Technical Committee Officers listed in Appendix C.

Adoption of Technical Committee agenda and timetable

97. The Committee adopted the agenda and timetable set out in documents LARC/04/1-Rev.1 and LARC/04/INF/2-Rev.2 (see Agenda in Appendix B).

Food security as rural development strategy

The Committee recommended:

98. Recognizing that food security was a broad concept that involved the building of a society that was fair, nondiscriminatory and non-exclusive. Food security existed with the realization of balanced and integrated economic and social development.

99. Stressing that the concept of economic and social development needed to be analyzed from an integrated perspective. Specific and sectoral analyses served to clarify constituent factors and their key features, but could distort actual understanding of the development process which, by its very nature, needed to encompass all economic and social factors and actions in a global and balanced manner.

100. Recognizing that the concept of food security was broad in scope and impact. It covered availability, access, quality, use and contributing factors; it also played an important role in eradicating poverty, in raising productive capacity for development, in promoting social inclusion and equality of opportunity and in building a fair society.

101. Underlining the need for food security strategies to go beyond the alleviation of hunger or the search for *ad hoc* solutions to instances of malnutrition; the central strategic thrust needed to tackle the conditions that allowed undernourishment to exist. This meant addressing the root causes of social exclusion, marginalization and poverty, adopting a broadly participatory and people-centred approach.

102. Stressing that while economic growth was necessary to reduce poverty and eliminate hunger, it was not sufficient in itself. The Committee underlined the importance of the nature of economic growth, in particular its distributive consequences and its impact on equity. It also pointed to the need for political will and for meaningful involvement of society as a whole in order to direct development towards equity, by means of structural reform for social inclusion.

103. Recognizing that the causes of food insecurity had historical roots that reflected hitherto prevailing social conditions; this was compounded by the protectionist trade practices and agricultural subsidies of the developed countries. The Committee called for implementation of the three pillars of the Doha Round. It also stressed the need to strengthen international cooperation for development and to optimize opportunities for subregional integration and South-South cooperation.

104. Recognizing that food security analysis required more than diagnosis and that related strategy needed to include other than medium- and long-term policy orientations. It recommended that FAO carry out immediate and short-term actions, that it seek mechanisms to assess their impact and replicability, and that it develop new actions on a broad front that extended far beyond the promotion of production to include multisectoral approaches, involving government bodies, the private sector and civil society.

105. Identifying the need for greater involvement of the poor in order to strengthen their effective capacity to participate in the decision-making processes that affected their development.

106. Recognizing that food security was strategically integral to rural development, and that rural development was a core strategy for food security. Given this interconnection, it emphasized the need to view rural development as a basic territorial strategy and to reconsider agriculture in a perspective that went beyond primary production to include its vertical configuration in the form of production-processing-marketing-consumption chains.

107. That FAO study the potential and means of broadening intraregional trade in smallholder agricultural products as an instrument of economic and social development.

Economic and social development as a basis for the implementation of FAO actions in Latin America and the Caribbean

The Committee recommended:

108. Indicating that any analysis of economic and social development needed to heed the interdependence that existed among the economic, social and cultural aspects of development, where the ultimate objective was to enhance the living conditions of the rural population. Development actions needed to centre not only on economic growth, but also on the distribution of resulting benefits and the easing of social inequalities and poverty.

109. Recognizing that the focus of analysis of economic and social development also needed to be broadened to include urban-rural linkages.

110. Underscoring the importance of monitoring and evaluating rural development programmes and projects in order to shape further cooperation actions. It indicated that monitoring and evaluation should not be limited to the administrative aspects of implementing agreed actions or applying assigned budgets, but should permit meaningful examination of the resulting impact. It recommended that such evaluation be carried out at different stages of project implementation in order to adjust programme delivery in real time or to draw lessons from experiences for the design of subsequent phases or projects.

111. Recognizing the importance of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS). The Committee recommended that FAO, together with the countries of the Region, establish criteria and mechanisms to assess the impact of this programme.

112. Acknowledging that there was scope for improvement in the technical cooperation programmes for rural development of international organizations; but it stressed that international assistance channelled through multilateral cooperation was more transparent and more independent of donor priorities, and could thus better reflect the requirements of beneficiary countries.

113. Acknowledging its concern over the reduction of technical cooperation resources directed towards the countries of the Region, referring in particular to the growing regional disparity in this regard. It indicated the need to use these resources in the most efficient manner possible and to set up mechanisms to monitor and evaluate FAO cooperation in the Region and thus sharpen its focus.

114. Reiterating the advantages of continuing to recruit national experts, when appropriate, given their thorough understanding of national situations and their lower cost to technical cooperation projects.

115. That the organization of FAO technical cooperation missions to individual countries be reviewed in order to safeguard against duplication and lack of coordination. It also called for a new look at relations between the different FAO entities (Headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices) in the preparation of technical cooperation projects, taking care that activities dovetailed with national capabilities. In this connection, the FAO Regional Representative briefed the Committee on the mission conducted to evaluate the FAO decentralization process in the Region.

116. That a standing institutional working group be set up, open to all the countries of the Region. This working group would monitor the evolution of FAO technical cooperation in the Region so that it could refine and modernize FAO technical cooperation mechanisms and devise ways and means of implementing and evaluating FAO cooperation programmes in the Region. This would unfold in a strategic framework that was coherent with national realities and respected guidelines set periodically by the Regional Conference.

117. That the conclusions of this working group be presented to subsequent Regional Conferences, which would include a special meeting looking exclusively at technical cooperation.

International Year of Rice 2004

The Committee recommended:

118. Welcoming the initiative to designate 2004 as the International Year of Rice (IYR), with FAO as lead agency. It noted the timeliness and importance of this initiative and stressed its potential for overcoming productivity restrictions, reducing the efficiency gap, safeguarding and using genetic resources, and developing policies to protect male and female small rice growers.

119. Endorsing the various IYR initiatives. It requested that FAO facilitate and support exchanges between countries, and that it disseminate successful experiences of integrated management of rice production for small and medium farmers, including the availability of economic support to compensate for the impact of adjustment policies, new varieties, management of water resources and control of pests and diseases that existed in some rice-producing countries of the Region. This would help link the IYR initiatives to the regional rice-related outputs of the centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

120. That FAO support the dissemination of information on food safety issues, including genetically modified rice, on the basis of agreed Codex standards, and that this information be made available to consumers, farmers and policy-makers.

FAO strategic framework for bridging the rural digital divide

The Committee recommended:

121. Supporting FAO's new strategic "Programme for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide to Reduce Food Insecurity and Poverty".

122. That FAO present an assessment of implemented programmes and ongoing activities to coordinate and unify national institutional efforts to bridge the rural digital divide.

123. Stressing that this new programme should consider the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society and the initiatives of international organizations in the Region, including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United

Nations Development Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

124. Welcoming the idea of developing South-South cooperation modalities for implementation of this new FAO strategic programme.

125. That the COAIM be maintained and that it prepare a meeting for 2005.

Adoption of the Technical Committee report

126. The Committee generally agreed with the report presented by the Rapporteur and adopted it unanimously after certain amendments and additions had been introduced.

Closure of the Technical Committee meeting

127. The Committee again thanked the Government and people of the Republic of Guatemala for their hospitality.

128. The Chairperson of the Technical Committee thanked the delegates for their participation and brought the Technical Committee meeting to a close.

FINAL ITEMS

Date, place and agenda of the Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

129. The Conference noted with satisfaction the offer of the Delegation of Venezuela to host the 29th FAO Regional Conference to be held in 2006. The offer was unanimously endorsed by the delegations present. The Conference asked that the Director-General take this endorsement into account when deciding the place and date of the next Regional Conference after consultation with the Government of Venezuela.

Other matters

130. The Delegation of Venezuela outlined certain features of its Government's current support programmes for food production and distribution.

131. The Secretary of the Conference explained that the Final Declaration of the Third Regional Consultation of Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations for Latin America and the Caribbean was a direct result of the consultation process that FAO had initiated for civil society to express its views on issues such as food security and its own recommendations and conclusions, acting under the principle of complete autonomy.

Adoption of the report

132. La Conference adopted the report unanimously, including its constituent Technical Committee report.

Closure of the Conference

133. La Conference thanked the Government and people of Guatemala for their warm welcome, for having hosted the event and for having provided all participants with a pleasant stay.

134. The Assistant Director-General of FAO and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean expressed his satisfaction over the relevance of the recommendations to emerge from the Conference, especially policy guidance to take up the fight against hunger in an integrated and participatory manner that pooled the efforts of governments, the private and agrifood sector, civil society and international cooperation, with an emphasis on strategic partnerships, productive chains and regional development. He underscored the establishment of support and evaluation mechanisms for international cooperation programmes, in particular the work of FAO, by the countries of the Region. He concluded by thanking the Government and people of Guatemala for having hosted the Regional Conference.

135. The Acting President of the Republic of Guatemala congratulated the delegations on the outcome of the Conference and expressed his conviction that their efforts represented a significant step forward in the strategy to combat hunger in the Region. He thanked the delegations on behalf of the Government and people of Guatemala.

136. The Chairperson thanked the delegations for their active participation and the high quality of their deliberations and brought the 28th Regional Conference to a close.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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

It is a great pleasure to address the Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean which is being held in this fine city of Guatemala. On behalf of the Organization and all of you, I should like to express my profound gratitude to the Government and people of Guatemala for hosting this Conference and for their warm welcome.

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

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

The prices of many export commodities from developing countries are now lower than ever. Coffee and cotton are the most spectacular examples, but cocoa, sugar and bananas are in the same situation. Moreover, 43 countries earn more than 20 percent of their total export revenue and more than 50 percent of their total agricultural revenue from just one commodity.

After the failure of the Cancun Ministerial Conference, negotiations have resumed following the meeting of the General Council of the World Trade Organization in December 2003. Commitment to achieving the Doha Development Agenda for the agricultural sector was confirmed at the Round Table on this subject held during the Thirty-second Session of the FAO Conference, for a fair trading policy is essential for rural development and food security. In this context, the role of FAO's Committee on Commodity Problems is more important than ever. It is with this in mind that I wish to invite representatives of the Ministries of Trade to the next session of this Committee in February 2005.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources has already been ratified by 48 countries and will come into force on 29 June 2004.

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

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

FAO will therefore be convening a meeting of Fisheries Ministers at its headquarters in 2005 to give renewed impetus to the actions that are needed in this sector.

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

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

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

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

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

In the last twenty years, many Latin American and Caribbean countries have undertaken reforms aimed at improving market access for their products, but some countries have also experienced economic stagnation and inequalities in income distribution among populations have widened. These inequalities are the highest in the world, with the 5 percent richest population receiving 25 percent of income, as compared to 13 percent in the developed countries. In contrast, the 30 percent poorest population of the region receives 7.5 percent of total income, against 14 percent of income in the developed countries.

It is however encouraging to note that the proportion of undernourished people fell from 13 percent in 1990-1992 to 10 percent in 1999-2001. If the countries continue with their efforts to combat food insecurity, this proportion could fall to 6 percent by 2015. The initiatives undertaken by individual countries, notably the "Zero Hunger" programme instituted by the Government of Brazil and the "Campaign Against Hunger" recently launched by the Government of Guatemala are very encouraging developments. However, five countries of the region experienced food crises in 2002, mainly because of climatic events and the slump in the coffee sector.

Agriculture represents 7 percent of Gross Domestic Product which increased by 2.3 percent per year in the 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium. Agriculture accounts for 19 percent of employment but only 3 percent of national budgets. Given its importance, it should be allocated 5 percent of national operating and capital budgets in the next five years.

Agricultural production in the Region increased by 2.3 percent per year between 1990 and 2001, against 1.6 percent for the population. The process of market liberalization initiated by most of the countries has significantly reduced government subsidies, technical assistance and farmer access to credit. The private sector has not been able to completely cover the resulting gap in a context of increasingly tough international competition.

Programmes of agricultural research and training in Latin America and the Caribbean, which are indispensable for encouraging the adoption of new technologies conducive to sustainable development, have also been adversely affected by the withdrawal of state intervention. Private financing has tended to prioritize short-term programmes at the expense of fundamental research.

Only 13 percent of the Region's arable land is irrigated.

The Region uses about 85 kg of fertilizer per hectare of cropland as compared to 144 kg in Asia.

Annual loss of forest cover amounted to 0.41 percent between 1990 and 2000, which is twice the world average.

There are currently 221 million people living in poverty in the Region and the number of rural poor has increased by 21 million since 1990. Poverty affects 44 percent of the Region's inhabitants, rising to 64 percent in the rural areas.

The Region's agricultural imports amounted to US\$22.9 billion in 2002.

Small and medium producers have serious difficulty in accessing credit, especially as they lack the security demanded by the private sector. It is important therefore to set up producer associations and agricultural schemes for the pooling of resources and the coordination of actions.

Finally, the Region is faced with the competition of agricultural products from the OECD countries valued at US\$318 billion in 2002.

The document on *Food Security as a Strategy for Rural Development* which has been submitted to you draws attention to the lessons that have been learned from implementation of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in the Region. The SPFS represents a flexible framework of methodologies aimed at achieving the objectives of the World Food Summit and based on the experiences and concrete situations of beneficiary countries. It emphasizes national ownership and the active participation of rural communities.

The Conference will be examining the institutional and social conditions that are required for rural development projects to be integrated into a national policy capable of ensuring economic and social development.

Substantial sources of information remain inaccessible to the Region even though these play a key role in the market competitiveness of the poorer producers. The information and digital divide that exists between the developed and the developing countries needs to be bridged. Access to information can help create producer networks and foster market activity and, in doing so, raise incomes and reduce food insecurity.

The year 2004 has been declared the International Year of Rice. This crop is strategically important as a source of food for millions of inhabitants of Latin America and the Caribbean and of higher income for the Region's small farmers. The activities organized to celebrate this event will help meet the challenges and identify the opportunities for sustainable rice cultivation, its consumption and its marketing.

The document on *Follow-up to the World Food Summit* reviews the main initiatives that have been undertaken at regional and subregional level to implement the Summit's Plan of Action. In 2006, all countries should be midway towards achieving the objective of halving the number of undernourished people by 2015. This Conference will serve to take stock of progress made and of the actions that are needed to achieve this objective.

There are more than 74 million rural poor in Latin America and the Caribbean. A round table on financing for agriculture has been organized in parallel with this Conference and in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to raise the level of investment in the agricultural sector. This round table will serve to discuss the volume of resources that are allocated to agricultural development projects and the indispensable measures that are required to increase the share of agriculture in national budgets, and in bilateral and multilateral funding. Access by different social groups to financial markets and the terms and conditions of informal loans are other key topics that will be discussed.

I hope that the round table will encourage the countries of the Region, the financial institutions such as the IDB, the World Bank and the regional and subregional organizations to work together in support of the many programmes targeting food security and rural development.

In the current context of globalization, competitiveness is crucial for growth and development. However, productivity should not conceal the inequalities of access to economic factors and the inequalities of income that affect millions of inhabitants of Latin America and the Caribbean, especially those living in the rural sector.

It is essential to strengthen training and to conduct integrated programmes of nutrition, health and education directed especially at women, children and the least privileged population groups, including the indigenous communities. Such initiatives should aim to promote their full-fledged participation in the process of economic and social development.

Investment in infrastructure and in the protection of natural resources needs to be reinforced to contribute towards rural development and, at the same time, towards general economic growth. These interventions need to be integrated into a comprehensive policy framework embracing all human, institutional, structural and territorial aspects.

I am confident that with capable leadership and the necessary political will, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean will be able to rise to the challenges of hunger, malnutrition, inequality and economic stagnation.

FAO will continue to provide its support to the governments and partners of the Region for the implementation of coherent and effective programmes, and for the mobilization of domestic and external financing.

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

AGENDA OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

(26 and 27 April 2004)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening of the Technical Committee Meeting
2. Election of Technical Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Technical Committee Agenda and Timetable

II. TECHNICAL ITEMS

4. Food Security as a Strategy for Rural Development
5. Economic and Social Development as a Basis for the Implementation of FAO Actions in Latin America and the Caribbean
6. International Year of Rice 2004
7. FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide
8. Consultation Meetings and Group Discussions among Delegations
9. Adoption of the Technical Committee Report
10. Closure of the Technical Committee Meeting

AGENDA OF THE PLENARY SESSION

(28 to 30 April 2004)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

II. STATEMENTS

4. Statement by the Director-General
5. FAO Activities (2002-2003), Trends and Challenges in Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Food Security in the Region and Actions Taken on the Main Recommendations of the 27th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
6. Follow-up to the World Food Summit and the *World Food Summit: five years later*. Regional Dimensions
7. Initiative to Review and Update National Strategies and Policies for Agriculture, Rural Development and Food Security
8. Reports of the Regional Commissions: Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC); Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL); Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC); and Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean
9. Round Table on Financing for Agricultural Development

III. FINAL ITEMS

10. Date, Place and Agenda of the 29th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
11. Other Matters
12. Adoption of the Report (including the Report of the Technical Committee)
13. Closure of the Regional Conference

APPENDIX C**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CONFERENCE OFFICERS**

Chairperson	Alvaro AGUILAR	GUATEMALA
Vice-Chairpersons	Joanne Maureen MASSIAH Servulo BAEZA Rodolfo COTO Philippe MATHIEU Satyadeow SAWH Leila RACHID DE COWLES Jarrete NARINE Arnoldo MARQUEZ	ANTIGUA & BARBUDA BELIZE COSTA RICA HAITI GUYANA PARAGUAY TRINIDAD & TOBAGO VENEZUELA
Rapporteur	Ana María BAIARDI	PARAGUAY

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Chairperson	Alvaro AGUILAR	GUATEMALA
Vice-Chairpersons	Jarrete NARINE Philippe MATHIEU	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO HAITI
Rapporteur	Ana María BAIARDI	PARAGUAY

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>
LARC/04/1 Rev 1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
LARC/04/2	Food Security as Rural Development Strategy
LARC/04/3	Economic and Social Development as the Basis for FAO Actions in Latin America and the Caribbean
LARC/04/4	Follow-up to the World Food Summit and the <i>World Food Summit: five years later</i> – Regional Dimensions
LARC/04/INF/1	Information Note
LARC/04/INF/2 Rev 2	Provisional Timetable
LARC/04/INF/3 Rev 3	Provisional List of Documents
LARC/04/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
LARC/04/INF/5	FAO Activities (2002-2003), Trends and Challenges in Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Food Security in the Region and Action Taken on the Main Recommendations of the 27th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
LARC/04/INF/6	The International Year of Rice (2004)
LARC/04/INF/7	FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide
LARC/04/INF/8	Initiative to Review and Update National Agricultural, Rural Development and Food Security Strategies and Policies
LARC/04/INF/9	Report of the XI Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)
LARC/04/INF/10	Report of the Ninth Session of the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL)
LARC/04/INF/11	Report of the Twenty-second Session of the Latin America and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC)
LARC/04/INF/12	Report of the Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean