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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROME

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Seventy-Fifth Session

Rome, 11 - 22 June 1979

REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE
ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS)

(Rome, 5 - 11 April 1979)

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MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION BY THE COUNCIL

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

- i. The Plan of Action on World Food Security adopted by the Committee, and recommended to the Council for approval (para. 38). The Committee prepared a draft Resolution for consideration by the Council on this subject (para. 39).
- ii. Its request to the Director-General that in accordance with Rule XXXIII.7 of the General Rules of the Organization, its Plan of Action on World Food Security be made available also to the Fifth Session of the World Food Council (paragraph 61)
- iii. Its review of the operation of the Global Information and Early Warning System (paragraphs 50 to 56) and its recommendations concerning further improvements in the System (paragraph 57)

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The Committee on World Food Security held its Fourth Session from 5 to 11 April 1979 at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

2. Mr. B.S. Raghavan (India), the Chairman for the biennium, presided over the Session.

3. In his opening statement, the Director-General of FAO, Mr. Edouard Saouma, stressed that despite some improvement in the world's food situation since 1974, the overall food security position remained virtually as precarious as before the world food crisis. Major elements of the International Undertaking on World Food Security, which had been adopted by 75 governments and the EEC, had still not been implemented. He considered that FAO had a constitutional duty to fill the gap in the world's food security system created by the adjournment on 14 February 1979, without final agreement, of the negotiations on a new international grains arrangement. He accordingly proposed a voluntary Plan of Action focussing on five points where immediate action was needed to strengthen food security: (i) adoption of foodgrain stock policies; (2) criteria for the management and release of national stocks held in pursuance of the Undertaking; (3) special measures to assist low-income food deficit countries to meet current import requirements and emergency needs; (4) special arrangements for increased food security assistance, and (5) collective self-reliance of developing countries. This Plan of Action would be complementary to and not a substitute for an internationally binding grains arrangement. The Director-General expressed confidence that, with the goodwill of all countries, the Committee would rise to the challenge so that real progress would be made towards world food security in 1979. The Director-General's statement is reproduced as Appendix G.

4. The President of the World Food Council, Mr. Arturo Tanco, addressed the Committee and offered his wholehearted support to the Director-General's Plan of Action. He called for a resumption of the grains negotiations by the fall of 1979, so that a new and effective arrangement could enter into force next year, and also stressed the need for coordinated international action on rice, a basic food which plays a critical role in world food security.

5. Mr. G. de Bakker (Netherlands) and Mr. Fouad Reda (Egypt), who had been elected at the Third Session as Vice-Chairmen for the biennium, remained in office. Mr. K.R. Higham (Canada) was elected in place of Mr. F. Shefrin, who had retired, and Mr. H. Cueva (Ecuador) in place of Mr. Paco Moncayo, who was unable to be present.

6. It was noted that 84 countries had become members of the Committee for the biennium 1978-79, of which 69 were represented at the Fourth Session. 11 Member Nations of the Organization attended the Session in an observer capacity. The Executive Secretary of the International Wheat Council also participated. The European Economic Community and 13 international organizations attended in an observer capacity. A list of delegates and observers is contained in Appendix B, a list of the present membership of the Committee on World Food Security in Appendix D and a list of governments subscribing

to the International Undertaking on World Food Security in Appendix E.

7. The Committee was assisted during the Session by a drafting committee comprising Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Colombia, France, Japan, Kenya, the Philippines, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and the United States, under the Chairmanship of Mr. A.K.H. Atkinson (United Kingdom).

8. The Committee adopted its agenda, which is reproduced in Appendix A.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FAO COUNCIL AND THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL

9. The Committee took note of the recommendations of the Seventy-Fourth Session of the FAO Council and the Fourth Session of the World Food Council, which it decided to keep in view while considering related agenda items at this session.

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

10. The Committee examined the world food security situation and the adequacy of world cereal stocks on the basis of Secretariat document CFS 79/7. Several delegates provided up-to-date information on food production and the food supply and stock situation in their countries.

11. The Committee agreed that certain aspects of the world food security situation had improved since the mid-seventies. Partly owing to favourable weather conditions, world production of cereals had exceeded consumption for four years in succession. Since 1977, carryover stocks of grains (excluding China and the U.S.S.R.) had been at or above the level considered by the FAO Secretariat as required for minimum world food security. World production of other major foods had also increased. There had been a significant increase in domestic agricultural investment in a number of developing countries, and a few of them had achieved self-sufficiency in grains.

12. Yet in spite of this progress, there were many reasons for continuing and serious concern. Despite the increase in world food production, food security had not improved in several regions, and in some areas it had deteriorated. Production of cereals in developing countries as a group, had risen little faster than population growth. In Africa, per caput production had actually declined, resulting in a deterioration in food security, particularly in southern Africa. As a result, nutritional levels remained seriously inadequate. The level of self-sufficiency of some developing countries had declined and the food gap of the developing countries as a group had grown rapidly. Despite the rise in import requirements of the low-income food deficit countries, the food aid received by this group of countries had remained below the level of 7.7 million tons prevailing during the late sixties.

13. While developing countries as a group had been able to increase their cereal stocks considerably above the level of 1973-75, total stocks in those countries had actually declined slightly since 1977. Of the 39 developing countries which had set national stock targets, only 11 had been able to achieve these objectives so far. Most developing countries were thus left exposed to acute food shortages in case of crop failure. Several delegates

stressed the need to increase storage facilities in the developing countries to enable them to build up reserves from surplus domestic grain in good production years. The Committee welcomed the initiative of ASEAN countries to set up a regional reserve of initially 50 000 tons of rice. It stressed the need to speed up the studies currently under way on the possibility of setting up regional reserves in the Sahel.

14. The food security situation was not yet satisfactory at the global level. There were no agreed international criteria governing the release of such national stocks and reserves as had been accumulated so far. In addition, transport and handling facilities in several exporting and importing countries were not adequate in time of crisis. In this respect, the delegate of a major exporting country informed the Committee of an important programme under way in his country to improve the national grain transport system. It was also noted that foreign assistance to developing countries was falling short of requirements as well as of internationally agreed aid targets. The target of 500 000 tons of cereals annually for the International Emergency Food Reserve had only partially been met, and the annual volume of food aid had not yet reached the target agreed at the World Food Conference in 1974 of at least 10 million tons from 1975 onward. Official commitments of external assistance to agriculture was still only half of the requirements estimated by the World Food Council Secretariat and the goal for total official development assistance of at least 0.7 percent of the GNP of the developed countries as a group was far from being achieved. The pledges to the WFP for 1979-80 were also still short of the pledging target. The scale of food security assistance was still far below the needs of the developing countries, as recognized by the Committee at its Third Session. This was illustrated by the large number of Food Security Assistance Scheme projects for which finance was being sought.

15. Several delegates noted that some large grain producing and consuming countries such as China and the U.S.S.R. were not members of the Committee, which limited its effectiveness. They expressed the hope that the governments concerned would find it possible in the future to share in the deliberations and efforts of the Committee in the interests of world food security. The Committee requested the Secretariat to explore ways of including more information regarding these countries in its periodic assessments of the world food security situation, in particular in respect of their carryover stocks of cereals.

16. The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare for the next session a full-scale review of the implications for world food security of longer-term trends in world food production, consumption and trade, drawing on the work already undertaken by FAO on commodity projections and Agriculture Towards 2000, taking into account projections made by other organizations. It also requested the Secretariat to expand the coverage of non-cereal basic foods in its analysis of the world food security situation. The Secretariat was further requested to give fuller details about the situation for different groups of developing countries, both as regards cereals and other basic foodstuffs. The need for multi-year aid programmes, whether multi-lateral or bilateral, which would increase the effectiveness of food aid

as well as its timeliness in emergency situations was also stressed.

IV. STEPS TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKING

(a) Proposed Plan of Action on World Food Security

17. The Committee considered the Director-General's Five-Point Plan of Action for World Food Security which was set out in document CFS: 79/8. In describing the general scope and purpose of these proposals, the Assistant Director-General for Economic and Social Policy, Dr. Nurul Islam, recalled that at previous sessions the Committee had recommended a definite timetable for implementing the Undertaking, in the expectation of a positive outcome to the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a new international grains arrangement which would include effective provisions for stockholding, price stabilization, food aid and special assistance to developing countries. In the new situation created by the adjournment of these negotiations, three factors should be borne in mind by the Committee: first, the continuing uncertain state of world food security; second, the responsibility which had been accepted by the entire international community to set up definite arrangements to avoid the recurrence of a world food crisis; and third, the relatively ample grain supplies in exporting countries, which now provided an opportunity to set aside certain quantities as reserves against future crop failures. It could not be assumed that the recent series of favourable crops would continue indefinitely. For all these reasons, action needed to be taken now, without further delay.

18. He noted that the Plan of Action proposed by the Director-General envisaged a return to the concepts and pledges of the International Undertaking on World Food Security. Most of the points suggested action to implement various provisions of the Undertaking, or to set up principles which would make it more action-oriented. Like the Undertaking, the Plan of Action could be considered as a pledge based on mutual trust and faith. It provided a means of implementing the voluntary pledges made by governments in 1974. Acceptance of the Plan would reflect a definite intention on the part of governments to take it into account when considering and formulating policies at the national and international levels.

19. He also informed the Committee of the conclusions of the recent session of the United Nations Committee of the Whole established under General Assembly Resolution 32/174, and stressed the Director-General's hope that acceptance of the Action Plan would ease the way towards an early resumption of negotiations on an international grains arrangement.

20. The Committee agreed that it had a clear mandate, under its terms of reference, to consider the Plan of Action proposed by the Director-General. It also noted that the Committee of the Whole of the United Nations had, at its session in March 1979, welcomed this initiative of the Director-General and had requested the Committee to give it a careful consideration.

21. The Committee considered that the proposed Plan of Action constituted an adequate and opportune basis for discussion, which focussed attention on the action needed to strengthen world food security. While recognizing that a firm foundation for establishing long-term food security lay in increasing

food production in developing countries, the Committee considered that the Plan, which was of a voluntary nature, consisted of a number of essential measures for improving the world food security system. It agreed that the current relatively ample world food supply situation provided an excellent opportunity to build up national stocks along the lines envisaged in the Undertaking so that the world could be adequately protected against supply shortages and price rises.

22. Most delegates fully supported the Plan as a practical and realistic means of strengthening world food security following the adjournment of the negotiations for a new international grains arrangement. The Plan provided an effective programme of action particularly for helping the developing countries most vulnerable to serious food shortages, and generally for implementing pledges made by governments in the Undertaking.

23. Several delegates, while endorsing the basic intent of the Plan, and emphasizing the positive and constructive position of their governments regarding international action on world food security, expressed difficulties in supporting certain aspects of the Plan as presently formulated. In particular, they were of the view that the establishment of national stock policies and quantitative stock targets should be within the ambit of a legally binding international grains arrangement with clearly defined rights and obligations and with an agreed price mechanism for the accumulation and release of stocks. They underlined the need for an early resumption of the negotiations for a new international grains arrangement. Some delegates pointed out that while stocks of cereals were currently at substantial levels in their countries, there was at present no institutional basis for setting national stock targets as envisaged in the Undertaking.

24. Delegates of grain exporting developing countries underlined the special problems of their countries in view of their heavy dependence on grains as a source of foreign exchange earnings. They also stressed that the grain exporting developing countries should be given full opportunity to participate in food aid programmes through, whenever possible, purchases of food from such countries.

25. A few delegates pointed out that account should also be taken of the need of developed importing countries in times of large-scale food shortages.

26. The Executive Secretary of the International Wheat Council gave a detailed account of the course of the discussions and negotiations towards a new international grains arrangement which had taken place over a period of more than four years. He informed the Committee that substantial progress had been achieved during the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a new international grains arrangement to replace the International Wheat Agreement 1971 as extended. He also outlined the main areas of disagreement still remaining, i.e. size of reserves, level of prices, and special measures for developing countries, which had finally led to the adjournment of the Negotiating Conference on 14 February 1979. A process of consultations and contacts was under way, and the progress made would be reported to the International Wheat Council at its next session in June 1979. He considered that the Negotiating Conference would be resumed as soon as there was a clear indication that it would be successful.

27. Several delegates pointed out that the issues which remained unresolved were of crucial importance. The International Wheat Agreement of 1971, which did not have any economic provisions concerning prices and stocks, had been extended up to 30 June 1981, and there were no indications when the negotiations on a new agreement would be resumed. In these circumstances, they considered that the Director-General's Plan of Action should be endorsed in its entirety as a long-term programme and not as a temporary measure. Some delegates also expressed the view that the negotiations for a new international grains arrangement were characterized by a conflict of interests among exporters, producers, importers and consumers.

28. Several delegates emphasized the need for a time-bound programme for the resumption of the negotiations and the conclusion of a new international grains arrangement. Other delegates felt that it would be premature to fix a rigid time-table at present while the process of consultations and contacts was under way.

29. The Committee expressed deep regret that the Negotiating Conference on a new international grains arrangement had had to be adjourned without concluding its work, and urged all governments concerned to search urgently for a basis for resuming and concluding negotiations as quickly as possible. The Committee recognized that the Director-General's Plan of Action included a set of measures which could, on their own merits, reinforce world food security. It was not a substitute for a new international grains arrangement which would contain adequate stock, price and food aid provisions and which was indispensable for a durable and effective world food security system. The Plan was also an interim measure which included certain elements which would be complementary to a new international grains arrangement as envisaged in the Negotiating Conference. The Committee agreed that the Plan of Action would need to be reviewed in the event of a new international grains arrangement being concluded.

30. Recalling the knowledge and experience acquired by FAO in world food security matters, the Committee requested that when negotiations were resumed for a new international grains arrangement the point of view expressed by FAO in that respect should be taken into account.

31. The Committee welcomed the contributions, announced by a number of delegates, to the International Emergency Food Reserve for 1979, and in some cases also for subsequent years.

32. The Committee also welcomed the announcements by delegates of several donor countries that their governments intended to raise their food aid commitments under the Food Aid Convention to the levels indicated during the Negotiating Conference. Many delegates urged that all donor countries should take such action. Delegates of some donor countries felt, however, that an increase in food aid commitments under a new Food Aid Convention was integrally linked with the successful conclusion of a new Wheat Trade Convention with stock and price provisions.

33. The Committee recognized the serious difficulties faced by many developing countries in building up and maintaining food stocks as envisaged in the

Undertaking. Several delegates referred to their current programmes of aid to developing countries. Some delegates proposed the establishment of an international fund, to be allocated by the Committee on World Food Security, to augment the assistance provided to developing countries for food security projects.

34. Two delegates expressed doubts regarding the proposal in the Plan for additional IMF financing, and requested the views of the IMF on this matter. The Committee was informed that the FAO Secretariat had discussed the proposal with the IMF staff, who had stated that, in order to implement it, the staff could apply to the IMF Board to amend the definition of the appropriate Financing Facility.

35. The delegate of Malta referred to the offer of his government to establish a regional food reserve for neighbouring Mediterranean countries, at a strategic location in his country where storage and other facilities could be converted at minimum cost, and where handling, transport and storage rates were competitive. Some other delegates suggested that this offer should receive careful examination by the countries concerned.

36. The delegate for the United States noted that an important distinction must be made between working stocks and reserve stocks and that the Plan of Action as understood by his delegation would most appropriately apply to reserve stocks.

37. Several delegates urged that those countries which had not yet subscribed to the Undertaking, and particularly Brazil, China and the U.S.S.R., should be requested to adopt it so that a truly global food security system could be achieved.

38. The Committee adopted the Plan of Action on World Food Security (Appendix F) as revised in the light of the comments and suggestions made by the delegates, and recommended it to the Council for approval.

39. The Committee accordingly recommended the following draft Resolution for consideration by the Council:

Draft Resolution for Consideration by FAO CouncilPLAN OF ACTION ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

THE COUNCIL,

Reaffirming the common responsibility of the entire international community to assure the availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic foodstuffs in accordance with the objectives of the International Undertaking on World Food Security 1/,

Expressing deep regret that the adjournment of the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a new international grains arrangement will further delay implementation of the policies and guidelines of the Undertaking,

Expressing the hope that the Negotiating Conference will be reconvened as quickly as possible,

Recognizing that, in the absence of a coordinated system of national or regional food stocks, the world is still not adequately protected against acute food shortages in the event of wide-spread crop failures or other disasters and that additional assistance is needed to meet the growing import needs and emergency requirements of developing countries as well as to strengthen their food security programmes,

Noting with satisfaction that the Committee of the Whole of the United Nations established under General Assembly Resolution 32/174 at its session in March 1979, welcomed the initiative of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in proposing a Five-Point Plan of Action and requested the Committee on World Food Security, at its next session, and other appropriate bodies, to give it careful consideration,

Having considered the recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security on the Director-General's Plan of Action for national and international action to strengthen world food security regarding (i) the adoption of foodgrain stock policies, (ii) criteria for the management and release of national stocks held in pursuance of the Undertaking, (iii) special measures to assist low-income food deficit countries to meet current import requirements

1/ Council Resolution 1/64 and Conference Resolution 3/73

and emergency needs, (iv) special arrangements for food security assistance, and (v) collective self-reliance of developing countries,

1. Approves the FAO Plan of Action on World Food Security as attached in the Annex to this Resolution.
2. Recommends that all Member Nations and international organizations concerned take immediate steps to put the Plan of Action into operation as a means of strengthening world food security.
3. Stresses that the Plan of Action is not a substitute for a new international grains arrangement with stock, price and food aid provisions and with special provisions for developing countries, which is indispensable for a durable and effective world food security system, and urges the participating countries in the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a new international grains arrangement to resolve the outstanding questions impeding the resumption of negotiations and to conclude a new international grains arrangement as quickly as possible,
4. Requests the Director-General in consultation with Member Nations and organizations concerned
 - (a) to report to the 20th session of the FAO Conference and future sessions of the Committee on World Food Security and the FAO Council on the progress made toward implementing the Plan of Action; and
 - (b) to submit, in the light of progress achieved in implementing the Plan of Action and other related developments, proposals for any further measures required to achieve the objectives of world food security.

PLAN OF ACTION ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

The following Plan of Action consists of a series of measures which are necessary to implement the International Undertaking on World Food Security. While action is being taken in accordance with this Plan, all governments should search urgently for a basis for resuming and concluding negotiations on a new international grains arrangement with adequate stock, price and food aid provisions, and with special provisions for developing countries, which is essential for an effective world food security system. In the event of a new grains arrangement being concluded, this Plan of Action should be reviewed.

I. Adoption of Foodgrain Stock Policies

- (i) All governments which have subscribed to the International Undertaking on World Food Security should, in conformity with their institutional and constitutional requirements, adopt and implement national cereal stock policies and targets or objectives in accordance with the Undertaking and in particular with paragraph 6 of the Undertaking which recognized that the special difficulties of developing countries in maintaining stocks at desirable levels place an added responsibility for ensuring world food security on the rest of the international community.
- (ii) Governments, particularly of developed countries, should take full advantage of the relatively ample world supply situation for cereals in order to build up stocks in accordance with their national stock objectives by the end of 1979, as recommended by the Committee on World Food Security at its Third Session.
- (iii) Governments should endeavour to arrange their national food stock policies in ways which avoid adverse effects on the structure of production or international trade, paying particular attention to the interests of developing countries heavily dependent on food exports.
- (iv) Measures taken in accordance with the Undertaking should be reviewed by the Conference which may decide on any further action that may be required.

II. Criteria for Management and Release of National Stocks Held in Pursuance of the Undertaking

Governments should apply the following general criteria to guide national decisions on the release of stocks held to safeguard food security:

- (i) National stocks held in pursuance of the Undertaking should be operated in such a way as to contribute to the stability of markets and supplies, taking into account the level of prices. These stocks should be released 1/ in the event of crop failure 2/, natural or man-made disasters or high price situations in order to:
 - (a) maintain a regular flow of food supplies both in domestic and in international markets at prices fair to consumers and remunerative to producers;
 - (b) avoid the emergence of acute food shortages;
 - (c) enable developing countries to satisfy their import requirements on reasonable terms and without adversely affecting their economic development.
- (ii) In exceptional circumstances, the Director-General, drawing on the Global Information and Early Warning System, may alert governments to the need for additional supplies, including possible releases of stocks to meet the urgent consumption requirements of importing countries, particularly developing countries.
- (iii) A special session of the Committee may be convened by the Director-General in accordance with Rule XXXIII (4), to enable governments to consider any special action required to meet an acute and large-scale food shortage.

III. Special Measures to Assist Low-Income Food Deficit Countries to Meet Current Import Requirements and Emergency Needs

- (i) All donor countries should do their utmost to increase their food aid commitments to the levels envisaged in the draft Food Aid Convention now before the UN Conference to negotiate an international

1/ Specific criteria for management and release of stocks may differ from country to country, depending on already established rules or guidelines

2/ An abnormally large decline in the national cereal harvest caused by serious drought, heavy rains, severe floods, pests, plant diseases or other natural hazards, which leads to a large scale disruption of the flow of supplies to markets.

arrangement to replace the International Wheat Agreement 1971, as extended, and should explore ways to bring these levels into effect as of 1 July 1979. New donors should be enabled and encouraged to supplement this effort and contribute additional quantities through the Food Aid Convention.

- (ii) Bearing in mind that only a small share of cereal imports of developing countries are met through food aid, and many of them face a growing food gap and balance of payments difficulties, the annual food aid target of at least 10 million tons of cereals should be re-evaluated by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, taking into account the FAO Secretariat estimate that food aid needs would be in the order of 15-16 million tons by 1985.
- (iii) The IMF should be invited to consider within the context of its Financing Facilities the feasibility of providing additional balance of payments support for meeting the rise in food import bills of low income food deficit countries, particularly in the event of domestic food shortages and rising import prices.
- (iv) All countries in a position to do so should contribute to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) in order to achieve the minimum annual target of 500 000 tons in 1979.
- (v) All food aid donors should establish food aid reserves or take other measures designed to maintain continuity of food aid in times of short supplies and high prices, and to meet international emergency requirements as envisaged in paragraph 6 of the Undertaking.
- (vi) In providing food and other assistance, including financing on highly concessional terms to developing countries, developed countries and international organizations concerned should take due account of the interests of food-exporting developing countries and should ensure that such assistance includes, whenever possible, purchases of food from such countries.

IV. Special Arrangements for Food Security Assistance

- (i) In order to enable developing countries to participate effectively in the Undertaking:

- (a) Governments of developing countries should give high priority within the context of their development policies, to the formulation and implementation of national food security programmes;
 - (b) The concerned international financial and technical organizations, the developed and other potential contributor countries should urgently take the necessary measures to enable the developing countries to obtain the required financial, technical and material assistance to implement their national food security programmes;
 - (c) All governments of developed countries and other countries in a position to do so should commit funds to the Food Security Assistance Scheme for specific projects executed by FAO, and/or for bilateral programmes aimed at the same basic objectives;
 - (d) Governments of developed countries and other potential contributing countries and international organizations, particularly the WFP, should strengthen their food aid programmes in order to help developing countries in implementing their plans and projects to build up national food reserves.
- (ii) The Committee on World Food Security should:
- (a) keep under review the activities of the FAO Food Security Assistance Scheme, which should be used to facilitate coordination of multilateral and bilateral aid to food security;
 - (b) review action taken to meet requests from developing countries for assistance for establishment and maintenance of national food reserves;
 - (c) identify gaps in the assistance required for food security programmes of developing countries, and suggest ways of meeting these needs.
- (iii) In the light of developments, the Committee on World Food Security at its Fifth Session should examine the need to establish a sub-committee on security assistance, with a view to carrying out more effectively the above functions.
- (iv) Full advantage should be taken of the possibilities of convening, if necessary with the assistance of FAO, meetings at the country level

of interested donors with a view to implementing food security projects for which external financing and technical assistance is required by a particular developing country.

V. Collective Self-Reliance of Developing Countries

- (i) The international community should recognize the urgent need for fostering the collective self-reliance of developing countries in the vital sector of food security;
- (ii) To this end, developing countries should intensify their efforts to establish cooperative arrangements, including the setting up of regional reserves, to strengthen their food security and collective capacity to meet emergency food requirements;
- (iii) In particular, the governments concerned should consider joint action on reserve stocks held nationally or regionally; mutual assistance in time of crop shortfalls; special trading arrangements among developing food importing and exporting countries; joint investment ventures in food production, as well as the exchange of technology;
- (iv) Concerned international financial and technical organizations and the developed and other potential contributor countries should extend all necessary support to promote such efforts by developing countries to strengthen their collective self-reliance.

IV. (b) Action taken to adopt national cereal stock policies and targets in accordance with the Undertaking

40. The Committee reviewed the steps taken by governments to adopt cereal stock policies in accordance with the Undertaking, on the basis of document CFS 79/4, which provided information on the national stock policies, stock targets and related recent developments in 114 countries and the EEC. The document also reviewed the progress made in implementing the Committee's recommendation at its Third Session that member countries, and particularly the major grain exporting and importing countries which had not already done so, should by the end of 1978, define and adopt national stock policies and targets or objectives in conformity with the Undertaking and report on the measures taken to the next session of the Committee.

41. The Committee noted that the number of countries with national grain stock policies or practices in accord with the Undertaking had increased to 70, and now included most of the major grain importing countries. As regards the countries which had subscribed to the Undertaking, 45 had adopted explicit grain stock policies or practices with food security objectives, of which 13 were developed and 32 developing countries. Thirty subscribing countries had not yet adopted stock policies or practices.

42. Fifty seven countries, or half the number for which information was available, had now established stock targets: the majority of these targets represented some two to three months' domestic consumption needs.

43. The Committee welcomed the steps taken towards the establishment of regional reserves in the areas vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters. It noted that the ASEAN group of countries ^{1/} meeting in Bangkok in March 1979, had decided on a draft agreement on the ASEAN Emergency Rice Reserve totalling 50 000 tons which had been proposed the previous December. This provided inter alia for the release of rice from the Reserve within three days of notification of need; for subsequent bilateral negotiations regarding prices, terms and conditions; and for the replenishment of the Reserve by the countries releasing the rice. The Committee also welcomed the initiative of the Ministerial Council of the CILSS ^{2/} in considering a regional food reserve for the Sahel. It was informed that a feasibility study of various types of regional reserves, carried out by FAO at the request of CILSS, was now nearing completion and the governments concerned would soon consider the policy options contained in it.

44. A number of delegates provided supplementary information on their national stock and storage policies and programmes. The delegate of a major grain exporting country informed the Committee that his government had achieved its grain reserve stock objective and that no further supplies could enter the farmer-owned reserve. Legislation was being sought to create a special food aid reserve which would ensure that all its food aid

^{1/} Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

^{2/} The Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the members of which are Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta.

commitments under the Food Aid Convention could be met; this reserve was expected to be set up in the course of 1979. Delegates of other exporting countries reiterated that although they did not have specific targets, their stock practices included the maintenance of appropriate levels of stocks for meeting domestic and foreign requirements including those for food aid and other contingencies, and were fully in line with the objectives of the Undertaking.

45. The Committee commended efforts by developing countries to establish and implement stock policies and targets in the face of serious problems due chiefly to inadequate storage facilities, lack of financial resources, and insufficient cereal production, and welcomed the progress achieved towards the objectives of food security in many of these countries. The Committee noted the financial and technical assistance given to these countries in the formulation and implementation of national reserve stock programmes but recognized that the available resources were not sufficient to meet all needs.

46. In view of the fact that the implementation of stock policies was in most cases dependent on progress in the construction of new storage facilities, the Secretariat was requested to obtain data on storage capacities, and to provide information on their development by region, for the next session of the Committee.

47. As regards other aspects of the Undertaking, the Committee noted that contributions to the International Emergency Food Reserves (IEFR) in 1978 had been higher than in previous years, totalling 330 000 tons in wheat equivalent. Contributions for 1979 notified to the WFP totalled only 155 000 tons to date, and the Committee welcomed the additional contributions announced by five delegates during the session, which totalled 90 000 tons of grains and US \$1.68 million in cash. It stressed the need to achieve the full target of 500 000 tons during 1979.

48. The representative of the WFP informed the Committee of the modalities of operation of the IEFR, and gave an account of the emergency operations carried out by the WFP with resources other than those represented by the IEFR. As regards food aid for food security, the WFP provided food aid support for food reserves in a number of countries, while others were helped through food for work projects involving the construction of storage capacity, access roads and similar infrastructures. In the past such projects had not been given the same priority as immediate investment projects, but a change could be anticipated with the current easing in the food supply situation. A higher proportion of the Programme's resources could thus be expected to be directed to food security objectives in the future.

49. The Committee noted the agreed conclusion of the United Nations Committee of the Whole at its Second Session, that "the United Nations/FAO Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes give consideration to the use of food aid by bilateral donors and the World Food Programme in assisting developing countries in establishing national reserve stocks".

V. REVIEW OF OPERATION OF GLOBAL INFORMATION AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

50. The Committee, on the basis of Secretariat document CFS 79/6, reviewed the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture, which had been in operation for about four years. It noted that 92 countries, the European Economic Community and the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration were participating in the System.

51. The Committee recognized the importance of the service rendered by the System. It concluded that within the constraints under which it had to operate, the System had been effective in supplying governments quickly and regularly with an independent assessment of the situation and short-term outlook for the basic foods and fertilizers as well as the state of world food security in general. The various reports issued by the System were found to be of great practical value by governments. Through these reports and alerts, the System had succeeded in giving to governments and relief organizations warnings of crop failures in developing countries, which helped them in drawing up their food aid plans and assessing emergency food assistance needs.

52. The Committee noted that, although the data inflows to the System had improved during the last biennium, a number of important information gaps still remained, particularly in the countries most vulnerable to food shortages. Moreover, lines of communication had not yet fully developed to ensure the speedy flow of information from the field to the governments or from countries to FAO. In this connection, the Committee regretted that some major food producing and importing countries such as China and the U.S.S.R. had not yet joined the System.

53. The Committee stressed the need for further data improvement. It noted that FAO had launched a programme for assisting governments of developing countries in organizing or improving their early warning systems, but that the assistance that FAO could give was limited by financial constraints, and additional assistance was needed for this purpose.

54. In reply to a question concerning the cost of the improvements in the System referred to in the Secretariat document, the Committee was informed that the Director-General had provided for a modest increase of \$150 000 in the resources for this activity in his budget proposals for the 1980-81 biennium.

55. Some delegates requested that the Secretariat should attempt to cover an increasing number of countries vulnerable to food shortages, for which the relevant information was difficult to obtain. The Secretariat informed the Committee it was now using remote sensing techniques for monitoring weather conditions, particularly in those countries for which the information flow from other sources was insufficient. The intensive rainfall monitoring system already successfully applied in the Sahel would be extended to other countries.

56. Several suggestions were made for improving the contents of the reports of the System. The quarterly Food Aid Bulletin, it was suggested, could

include a summary table listing by recipient country, quantities of food aid received from all donors in the form of wheat, rice, coarse grains and dairy products. Some delegates requested that the supply/demand situation of pesticides be covered in the Food Outlook reports. In response, the Secretariat informed the Committee of the difficulties encountered in obtaining reliable and meaningful information required to carry out this task. However, the situation was kept under review and every effort would be made to provide forecasts in case shortages emerged.

57. The Committee made the following recommendations:

- (i) All governments which are not already doing so should take measures to provide the System with the national data it needs to perform its function adequately, to the extent that such are available.
- (ii) The Director-General should again invite the governments of the major food producing and importing countries that had not yet joined the System, including those of China and the U.S.S.R., to participate and to provide relevant information to the Secretariat.
- (iii) To improve the flow of data especially from regions vulnerable to crop failure, the governments of developing countries should set up or strengthen national early warning and crop forecasting systems using whatever information was readily available. At the same time, steps should be initiated to improve the basic statistical systems.
- (iv) Developed countries and all other countries in a position to do so and international organizations, particularly FAO, should take steps to improve the level of all types of assistance to interested developing countries to set up or strengthen national early warning and crop forecasting systems, either through multilateral channels or bilateral programmes.
- (v) The Secretariat should continue its efforts to improve the accuracy of its trade forecasts, and its assessments of the effect of weather on crops, drawing on the experience of governments and international organizations as to methodology. Improved methods of storing and transmitting data should also be sought.
- (vi) Since resources for the System's central unit are bound to remain limited, the Secretariat should constantly reassess programme priorities, in the light of the general food situation; in the immediate future, while giving due emphasis to the global food outlook, greater priority should be placed on monitoring potential food emergency situations.

58. The Committee agreed that it should carry out a periodic review of the working of the System to consider any new developments and the need for reassessing programme priorities.

VI. FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

59. The Committee noted that in the course of the Session, a number of suggestions had been made concerning matters which should be discussed at future sessions. For example, in order to improve the assessment of world food security and the adequacy of stocks, it had been agreed that the long-term trends and prospects regarding the production, consumption and trade in basic foods should be analysed. Particular attention should be given to the underlying causes of the sharp rise in cereal imports of the developing countries. An analysis of population and food production trends and the nutritional status in specific countries and country groupings, would also be desirable, as well as a closer study of the role of non-cereal foods in world food security. In respect of the assessment of the adequacy of stocks, delegates had stressed the need for improving the analysis by including estimates of stock movements in the U.S.S.R. and China. Moreover, the Committee had proposed specific terms of reference for its future work regarding food security assistance in para. IV of the Plan of Action. The Committee might also be asked by the Council to review steps taken by governments and international organizations to implement the Action Plan as a whole.

60. The Committee requested the Secretariat to submit a consolidated draft programme of work to the next session for consideration.

VII. REPORT OF THE SESSION

61. In accordance with Rule XXXIII.7 of the General Rules of the Organization, the Committee requested the Director-General to make available the Plan of Action on World Food Security to the Fifth Session of the World Food Council.

VIII. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION

62. The Committee agreed that its Fifth Session should be held at FAO Headquarters in March/April 1980, the exact date to be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman, taking into account the schedule of other related meetings and developments in the world food situation.

APPENDIX AAGENDA

- I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
- (a) Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable: for decision
 - (b) Membership of the Committee: for information
 - (c) Recommendations of the FAO Council and of the World Food Council of concern to the Committee: for information
- II. ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND ADEQUACY OF STOCKS: for discussion and recommendation
- III. STEPS TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKING: for discussion and recommendation
- (a) Follow-up to the Third Session's recommendations relating to the economic provisions of a new international grains agreement
 - (b) Action taken to adopt national cereal stock policies and targets in accordance with the Undertaking
 - (c) Follow-up to other recommendations of past sessions
- IV. REVIEW OF OPERATION OF GLOBAL INFORMATION AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEM: for discussion and recommendation
- V. FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE: for decision
- VI. OTHER MATTERS
- (a) Arrangements for Fifth Session: for decision
 - (b) Any other business
 - (c) Adoption of Report: for adoption

APPENDIX BLIST OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS
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LISTA DE DELEGADOS Y OBSERVADORES

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IFPRI
 Ms. B. Huddleston
 Research Fellow
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WFTU/FSM
 G. Casadei
 Représentant Permanent auprès
 de la FAO
 Rome



APPENDIX CLIST OF DOCUMENTS

- CFS: 79/1 Provisional Agenda
- CFS: 79/2 Membership of Committee on World Food Security
- CFS: 79/3 Extracts from the Reports of the Seventy-Fourth
Session of the FAO Council and of the Fourth
Session of the World Food Council
- CFS: 79/4 Action taken to adopt national cereal stock
policies and targets in accordance with the
International Undertaking on World Food Security
- CFS: 79/5 Action taken to follow up the recommendations of
past sessions of the Committee
- CFS: 79/6 Review of operation of Global Information and
Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture
- CFS: 79/7 Assessment of the world food security situation
and adequacy of stocks
- CFS: 79/8 Outcome of the Negotiating Conference for a New
International Grains Arrangement: Implications
for world food security and proposals for
implementing the International Undertaking

CONCLUSIONS

- 1. The results of the present investigation are in agreement with those of other workers.
- 2. The rate of reaction is first order with respect to the concentration of the reactants.
- 3. The activation energy of the reaction is 15.5 kJ/mole.
- 4. The reaction is exothermic.
- 5. The reaction is reversible.
- 6. The reaction is catalyzed by the presence of a small amount of water.
- 7. The reaction is inhibited by the presence of a small amount of alcohol.
- 8. The reaction is accelerated by the presence of a small amount of acid.
- 9. The reaction is retarded by the presence of a small amount of base.
- 10. The reaction is unaffected by the presence of a small amount of salt.

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APPENDIX DMEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE
(as of 18 April 1979)

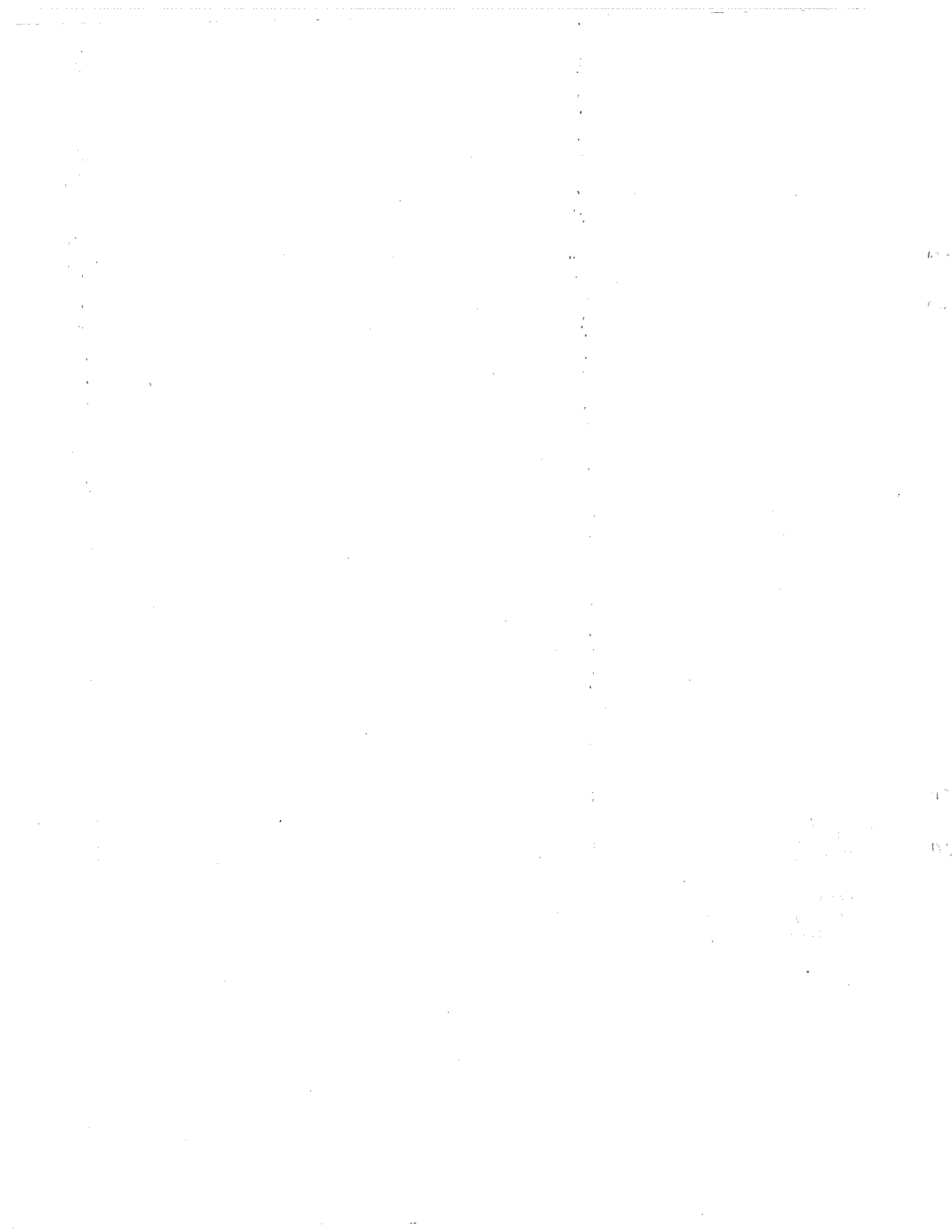
Algeria	Hungary	Peru
Argentina	India	Philippines
Australia	Indonesia	Poland
Austria	Iran	Portugal
Bangladesh	Iraq	Qatar
Belgium	Ireland	Senegal
Benin	Israel	Sierra Leone
Cameroon	Italy	Spain
Canada	Japan	Sri Lanka
Chile	Kenya	Sudan
Colombia	Korea, Republic of	Sweden
Congo	Lao	Switzerland
Costa Rica	Liberia	Syria
Cuba	Madagascar	Tanzania
Cyprus	Mali	Thailand
Denmark	Malta	Tunisia
Ecuador	Mauritius	Turkey
Egypt	Mexico	Uganda
El Salvador	Morocco	United Arab Emirates
Finland	Mozambique	United Kingdom
France	Nepal	United States
Gabon	Netherlands	Upper Volta
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	New Zealand	Uruguay
Ghana	Nicaragua	Venezuela
Greece	Nigeria	Yemen Arab Republic
Guatemala	Norway	Yugoslavia
Guinea	Pakistan	Zaire
Guinea Bissau	Panama	Zambia



APPENDIX ESTATUS OF ADOPTION BY GOVERNMENTS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL UNDERTAKING ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

(as of 18 April 1979)

Afghanistan	Guinea	Philippines
Algeria	Hungary	Poland
Argentina	India	Portugal
Australia	Indonesia	Senegal
Bangladesh	Ireland	Sierra Leone
Belgium	Israel	Somalia
Benin	Italy	Spain
Bolivia	Japan	Sri Lanka
Burma	Kenya	Sudan
Burundi	Korea, Republic of	Sweden
Cameroon	Kuwait	Switzerland
Canada	Liberia	Tanzania
Chad	Luxembourg	Thailand
Chile	Madagascar	Togo
Colombia	Malta	Tunisia
Congo	Mauritania	Turkey
Cyprus	Mexico	Uganda
Denmark	Morocco	United Kingdom
Ecuador	Nepal	United States
Egypt	Netherlands	Upper Volta
Ethiopia	New Zealand	Uruguay
Finland	Nicaragua	Yugoslavia
France	Niger	Zambia
Gambia	Nigeria	EEC
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Norway	
Guatemala	Pakistan	



APPENDIX FPLAN OF ACTION ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

The following Plan of Action consists of a series of measures which are necessary to implement the International Undertaking on World Food Security. While action is being taken in accordance with this Plan, all governments should search urgently for a basis for resuming and concluding negotiations on a new international grains arrangement with adequate stock, price and food aid provisions, and with special provisions for developing countries, which is essential for an effective world food security system. In the event of a new grains arrangement being concluded, this Plan of Action should be reviewed.

I. Adoption of Foodgrain Stock Policies

- (i) All governments which have subscribed to the International Undertaking on World Food Security should, in conformity with their institutional and constitutional requirements, adopt and implement national cereal stock policies and targets or objectives in accordance with the Undertaking and in particular with paragraph 6 of the Undertaking which recognized that the special difficulties of developing countries in maintaining stocks at desirable levels place an added responsibility for ensuring world food security on the rest of the international community.
- (ii) Governments, particularly of developed countries, should take full advantage of the relatively ample world supply situation for cereals in order to build up stocks in accordance with their national stock objectives by the end of 1979, as recommended by the Committee on World Food Security at its Third Session.
- (iii) Governments should endeavour to arrange their national food stock policies in ways which avoid adverse effects on the structure of production or international trade, paying particular attention to the interests of developing countries heavily dependent on food exports.
- (iv) Measures taken in accordance with the Undertaking should be reviewed by the Conference which may decide on any further action that may be required.

II. Criteria for Management and Release of National Stocks Held in Pursuance of the Undertaking

Governments should apply the following general criteria to guide national decisions on the release of stocks held to safeguard food security:

- (i) National stocks held in pursuance of the Undertaking should be operated in such a way as to contribute to the stability of markets and supplies, taking into account the level of prices. These stocks should

be released ^{1/} in the event of crop failure ^{2/}, natural or man-made disasters or high price situations in order to:

- (a) maintain a regular flow of food supplies both in domestic and in international markets at prices fair to consumers and remunerative to producers;
 - (b) avoid the emergence of acute food shortages;
 - (c) enable developing countries to satisfy their import requirements on reasonable terms and without adversely affecting their economic development.
- (ii) In exceptional circumstances, the Director-General, drawing on the Global Information and Early Warning System, may alert governments to the need for additional supplies, including possible releases of stocks to meet the urgent consumption requirements of importing countries, particularly developing countries.
 - (iii) A special session of the Committee may be convened by the Director-General in accordance with Rule XXXIII (4), to enable governments to consider any special action required to meet an acute and large-scale food shortage.

III. Special Measures to Assist Low-Income Food Deficit Countries to Meet Current Import Requirements and Emergency Needs

- (i) All donor countries should do their utmost to increase their food aid commitments to the levels envisaged in the draft Food Aid Convention now before the UN Conference to negotiate an international arrangement to replace the International Wheat Agreement 1971, as extended, and should explore ways to bring these levels into effect as of 1 July 1979. New donors should be enabled and encouraged to supplement this effort and contribute additional quantities through the Food Aid Convention.
- (ii) Bearing in mind that only a small share of cereal imports of developing countries are met through food aid, and many of them face a growing food gap and balance of payments difficulties, the annual food aid target of at least 10 million tons of cereals should be re-evaluated by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, taking into account the FAO Secretariat estimate that food aid needs would be in the order of 15-16 million tons by 1985.
- (iii) The IMF should be invited to consider within the context of its Financing Facilities the feasibility of providing additional balance of payments support for meeting the rise in food import bills of low income food deficit countries, particularly in the event of domestic food shortages and rising import prices.

^{1/} Specific criteria for management and release of stocks may differ from country to country, depending on already established rules or guidelines.

^{2/} An abnormally large decline in the national cereal harvest caused by serious drought, heavy rains, severe floods, pests, plant diseases or other natural hazards, which leads to a large scale disruption of the flow of supplies to markets.

- (iv) All countries in a position to do so should contribute to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) in order to achieve the minimum annual target of 500 000 tons in 1979.
- (v) All food aid donors should establish food aid reserves or take other measures designed to maintain continuity of food aid in times of short supplies and high prices, and to meet international emergency requirements as envisaged in paragraph 6 of the Undertaking.
- (vi) In providing food and other assistance, including financing on highly concessional terms to developing countries, developed countries and international organizations concerned should take due account of the interests of food-exporting developing countries and should ensure that such assistance includes, whenever possible, purchases of food from such countries.

IV. Special Arrangements for Food Security Assistance

- (i) In order to enable developing countries to participate effectively in the Undertaking:
 - (a) Governments of developing countries should give high priority within the context of their development policies, to the formulation and implementation of national food security programmes;
 - (b) The concerned international financial and technical organizations, the developed and other potential contributor countries should urgently take the necessary measures to enable the developing countries to obtain the required financial, technical and material assistance to implement their national food security programmes;
 - (c) All governments of developed countries and other countries in a position to do so should commit funds to the Food Security Assistance Scheme for specific projects executed by FAO, and/or for bilateral programmes aimed at the same basic objectives;
 - (d) Governments of developed countries and other potential contributing countries and international organizations, particularly WFP, should strengthen their food aid programmes in order to help developing countries in implementing their plans and projects to build up national food reserves.
- (ii) The Committee on World Food Security should:
 - (a) keep under review the activities of the FAO Food Security Assistance Scheme, which should be used to facilitate coordination of multilateral and bilateral aid to food security;
 - (b) review action taken to meet requests from developing countries for assistance for establishment and maintenance of national food reserves;
 - (c) identify gaps in the assistance required for food security programmes of developing countries, and suggest ways of meeting these needs.

- (iii) In the light of developments, the Committee on World Food Security at its Fifth Session should examine the need to establish a sub-committee on food security assistance, with a view to carrying out more effectively the above functions.
- (iv) Full advantage should be taken of the possibilities of convening, if necessary with the assistance of FAO, meetings at the country level of interested donors with a view to implementing food security projects for which external financing and technical assistance is required by a particular developing country.

V. Collective Self-Reliance of Developing Countries

- (i) The international community should recognize the urgent need for fostering the collective self-reliance of developing countries in the vital sector of food security;
- (ii) To this end, developing countries should intensify their efforts to establish cooperative arrangements, including the setting up of regional reserves, to strengthen their food security and collective capacity to meet emergency food requirements;
- (iii) In particular, the governments concerned should consider joint action on reserve stocks held nationally or regionally; mutual assistance in time of crop shortfalls; special trading arrangements among developing food importing and exporting countries; joint investment ventures in food production, as well as the exchange of technology;
- (iv) Concerned international financial and technical organizations and the developed and other potential contributor countries should extend all necessary support to promote such efforts by developing countries to strengthen their collective self-reliance.

APPENDIX GSTATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
AT THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Rome, 5 April 1979

Mr. Chairman, delegates and observers,

This session is probably the most important in the Committee's history. It is certainly the most challenging. The Committee on World Food Security was originally set up in 1974, on the recommendation of the World Food Conference. It was seen as a forum where governments could keep the world food security situation under continuous review, and recommend any action necessary to avoid a repetition of the food crisis which shocked the whole world. More specifically, the Committee was given a mandate to monitor the steps taken by governments to implement the International Undertaking on World Food Security, and to report its findings to the Council of FAO.

The Committee has done its best to fulfil these functions. It has followed closely the developments in the world food situation, and has regularly assessed the adequacy of stocks. It has advised on the operation of the Global Information and Early Warning System. It has sought ways of strengthening the Food Security Assistance Scheme. The Committee has also attempted to encourage governments to set up national food reserves in accordance with the Undertaking.

From the outset, however, many exporting and importing countries felt that the coordinated system of national food reserves envisaged in the Undertaking could best be implemented through a new international grains arrangement, on which talks or negotiations have been proceeding for several years. The Committee has therefore had to limit its work on this centerpiece of the Undertaking. It has made policy recommendations on the elements to be included in a new grains arrangement, which were conveyed to the negotiating parties in Geneva. But, to be blunt, the Committee has been waiting for four years on this new grains arrangement as a means of implementing the Undertaking.

Unfortunately, as we all know, the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a new International Grains Arrangement adjourned on 14 February without reaching any agreement.

In these circumstances, I considered that FAO had a duty - and, I think you will agree, that this Committee has the responsibility - to fill the void which this setback had created. I have therefore drawn up a Five-Point Plan of Action, which is now before this Committee for consideration. I communicated this plan to the Rome Representatives of Member Nations at a special meeting on 19 March, in order to give governments sufficient time to consider the new situation and to brief themselves for this session.

At the same time, since the International Wheat Council was meeting in London in March, I informed it of the FAO proposals. These aroused a great deal of interest, I understand, among IWC members. The Council finally decided to extend the 1971 Wheat Agreement in its present form for a period of 2 years, while contacts take place on the problems which impede the conclusion of a new I.G.A. The 1971 Agreement contains no provisions for stock building or price stability.

It was also decided to extend the 1971 Food Aid Convention for 2 years. In this case the London meeting took some positive action. It recommended that ways should be explored to bring into operation in 1979/80 the increased funds of food aid envisaged in the UN negotiating conference. These were, I believe, 7.5 million tons of food aid as against 4.2 million tons in the 1971 Convention.

The FAO plan was also presented by my colleague, Dr. Nurul Islam, to the March session of the Committee of the Whole established by the General Assembly since this high level body was considering food and agricultural policy matters as part of the North/South dialogue. After extensive discussions, the Committee of the Whole welcomed my initiative in proposing the Action Plan and requested the Committee on World Food Security and other appropriate bodies to give it careful consideration. It also reached a number of interesting conclusions on food aid, which this Committee may wish to take into account in its discussion on the Plan.

Since delegates have the full Plan in the document before them, I do not intend to go into details. It consists of the following five basic points:

First, all countries should establish national food reserve policies.

Second, the Committee should adopt criteria to coordinate national decisions on the release of such reserves.

Third, developing countries should be helped to meet their growing import requirements and emergency needs.

Fourth, international assistance should be expanded to enable the developing countries to strengthen their national food security programmes; and

Fifth, the collective self-reliance of developing countries should be fostered in the vital area of food security.

These five points will not be novel to members of this Committee. Essentially, they call for a return to the original concepts and pledges of the International Undertaking which has already been accepted by 75 governments and the EEC. The Plan does not claim to resolve all the world's food security problems. In the long run, food security depends on the farmer, rural development, and an adequate growth in food production, especially in developing countries. Nor is it a substitute for an internationally-binding grains arrangement with stock and price provisions. It provides for voluntary action to fill the gap in the world's food security system created by the breakdown in the grains negotiations. This action would be complementary to any eventual resumption of negotiations on a world agreement.

The Plan is focussed on some of the most immediate food security problems, especially of the low-income, food deficit countries. The FAO Food Security Assistance Scheme has been providing, on a modest scale, practical help to national food security programmes. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the donor countries which are contributing through the Scheme. Total trust fund pledges now exceed 30 million dollars, and several bilateral donors are collaborating in a positive spirit. I have invited all the interested donors to hold an informal meeting next week. But this is not enough. It is essential, in my view, to expand this assistance. It is essential to organize definite arrangements to ensure that the outstanding requests for technical and financial assistance are fully met, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

At the same time, it is also essential to take steps to exploit the potentially important role of food aid. I believe, in particular, that a more significant contribution could be made by the World Food Programme. The promotion of world food security is one of the major objectives under its General Regulations.

I welcome, therefore, the recent proposal of the UN Committee of the Whole that the use of food aid to assist developing countries in establishing national reserve stocks, both through the WFP as well as bilateral donors, should be considered by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes.

But the WFP's ability to promote food security depends, of course, very much on its available resources. It is therefore a matter of very grave concern that the pledges announced for the current biennium (1979-80) had reached only 73 percent of the target of 950 million dollars at the end of 1978. I appeal to both traditional donors and new donors to make up this shortfall. There is a general consensus that an increasing share of food aid should be channelled through WFP. Now is the time to implement this consensus, so that the WFP's resources can be further expanded in line with the rising needs of developing countries.

Nowhere is the need for food aid more urgent than in emergency situations. Last year was an exceptional year for natural disasters. The requests for emergency assistance far exceeded the resources available to WFP. The Programme was engaged in 57 emergency operations - 50 percent

more than in 1977. This exhausted the International Emergency Food Reserve and compelled an increase in the allocation of WFP resources for emergencies. This year the FAO Food Information System is already giving early warning of unfavourable crop conditions in 20 developing countries. This is even more than a year ago. It suggests that the high demand for emergency aid will continue in 1979.

There is, therefore, an urgent need to replenish the International Emergency Food Reserve. This reserve has now been established on a revolving basis, and it is necessary to meet its full target of 500 000 tons per annum. The United States Government led the way in announcing a substantial contribution for 1979, and I urge other countries to make generous pledges without delay. The whole concept of world food security would be a mockery if the international community could not even meet the most urgent emergency needs.

This Committee will wish to examine carefully the present state of the world food security situation. In several respects, it is similar to the position which existed immediately prior to the world food crisis. As in 1974, world cereal stocks are apparently ample. They are expected to exceed 200 million tons at the end of this season, even excluding China and the USSR. But these stocks remain heavily concentrated in one region - North America - as they were five years ago. There is still no agreed understanding as to the conditions under which stocks should be released. Food production in developing countries is still growing too slowly. Their import requirements are still increasing at an alarming rate. In fact, the cereal imports of developing countries have risen since 1974 from 50 million tons to over 70 million tons. If this trend continues, they are projected to exceed 90 million tons by 1985. And even this high projection may be an under-estimate, because it takes no account of the additional needs of the undernourished which has already exceeded 450 million people. And do not forget that there will be 70 million more mouths to feed every year.

Overall, the food security situation remains virtually as precarious as it was before the world food crisis occurred.

This is not to disparage the modest improvements which have occurred in the last four years. There has been a commendable increase in agricultural investment in a number of developing countries. External assistance to agriculture has also risen. Indeed, a few countries have even achieved self-sufficiency in grains, although this does not mean that nutritional standards are satisfactory yet. Several countries have set up national emergency reserves, although relatively few have reached the target size. The Global Information and Early Warning System is in full operation, and this Committee will be carrying out a thorough review of its activities during this session.

Yet, despite this progress, the fact remains that major elements of the International Undertaking have not yet been implemented. Mr. Chairman, I believe that the time for action is now. The world's farmers have already acted: they have produced good crops for four years in succession. This

gives countries a perfect opportunity to implement the pledges made in 1974. It is an opportunity to ensure that the breakdown in the grains negotiations will not jeopardize world food security.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to stress that the implementation of this plan will be impossible without the goodwill of governments. I am seeking especially the readiness of developed countries to accept that the assurance of world food security is a common responsibility of the entire international community. I am confident that the Committee will rise to the challenge which it faces, so that we can make real progress during 1979 towards the objectives of genuine world food security.

