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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

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**Fortieth Session
Quarantième session
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**Rome, 3-8 June 2017
Rome, 3-8 juin 2017
Roma, 3-8 de junio de 2017**

**FOURTH MEETING OF COMMISSION II
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II
CUARTA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II**

7 July 2017

The Fourth Meeting was opened at 9.44 hours
Mr Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La quatrième séance est ouverte à 9 h 44
sous la présidence de M. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la cuarta reunión a las 9.44
bajo la presidencia de la Sr. Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen,
Presidente de la Comisión II

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**Adoption of Report / Adoption du Rapport / Aprobación del Informe
(C 2017/II/REP)****CHAIRPERSON**

I should like to invite the Chairperson of Commission II, Mr Johannes Hoogeveen of the Netherlands to take the Chair of this meeting as Commission II.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to report on the work that has been done by Commission II. We started Monday afternoon in the Red Room and we completed our work on Wednesday by lunch, really way ahead of our schedule. And a record achievement could only be done, was only possible thanks to the very constructive atmosphere and expert cooperation of all the Members of Commission II and also the willingness to find compromises. Yes, we did find good compromises.

I think it was because of the excellent preparatory work done by the Independent Chairperson of the Council, His Excellency Mr Ngirwa, our colleagues in the Council, and I think also the excellent support and preparation of the Members by the Secretariat.

Allow me also to congratulate Mr El Taweel, the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, and the colleagues in the Drafting Committee for a very smooth running of the Drafting Commission.

The text was adopted in one session. I think that was the atmosphere not only in Commission II but also in the Drafting Committee. Well done.

In deliberations of Commission II, we confirmed the recommendation of the 156th Session of the Council for approval by the Conference of the budget level for 2018-19 of USD 10056.6 million, agree that the Conference authorizes the Director-General to carry over unspent funds from the current biennium to support programs in 2018 and 2019, including the Special Funds for developing finance activities in agreement with the Programme and Finance Committee at their sessions later this year.

The Commission also provided a strategic direction for FAO's work in the realm of Mid Term work to be done as well as indicators and other important planning and monitoring issues, including evaluation matters.

And last but not least, supported the outcomes of the Independent Assessment of Technical Capacity of the Organization and provided clear guidance for future assessments, both quantitative as well as qualitative.

And now I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Commission II so that he can provide the necessary information for the adoption of the report.

Mr Khaled EL TAWHEEL (Chairperson Drafting Committee Commission II)

Let me start by expressing my appreciation for giving me the opportunity to report on the work carried out by the Drafting Committee of Commission II. It was an honour and pleasure for me to Chair the Drafting Committee on Commission II of the 40th Session of the FAO Conference and to work in the Committee with Distinguished Delegates of Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America.

The Committee concluded its work in one meeting on Wednesday afternoon and reviewed five Agenda Items which are Programme Implementation Report 2014-2015, Programme Evaluation Report 2017, the Revised Strategic Framework, and the Medium Term Plan 2018-2021, Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019, as well as the Independent Assessment of the Technical Capacity of the Organization.

The atmosphere in the meeting was very constructive, engaging, with good spirit on the parts of all Members. I would like to stress that the job of the Drafting Committee was made easier by the leadership of the Chairperson of Commission II who spared no effort in finding consensus.

The extensive deliberation, the spirit of consensus, and the clear summing up of the discussion really facilitated the job of the Drafting Committee.

I would like to state that personally, I am proud to be part of the process that led to the adoption of the budget for the FAO 2018-2019 which was previously approved by the FAO Council for the second time in the history of FAO.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank all Members of the Committee for the cooperative spirit and the very good comments provided to improve the text of our report.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat for providing clarification on any query raised and also the interpreters for their dedication. All of this contributed to smoothly reaching agreement on all Agenda Items of the document before you, C 2017/2/Draft Report which I am honoured to present to you today and which I propose to the Chairperson to suggest to adopt en bloc.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you very much, Mr El Taweel, not only for your report but also for the excellent chairing of the Drafting Committee.

I think we should sit more often in this room because for the first time in the sessions of Commission II, we did not have difficulty with a quorum. But again I would like to thank you for the positive spirit in the way Commission II has done its work.

I think it could be an example for the work forward, how we have to work within FAO to achieve what we have to achieve, Zero Hunger - leaving nobody behind. And with that, I would like to invite Commission II to adopt its report en bloc.

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

There is a concern being raised by Trinidad and Tobago. I would like to refer back to the Chairman of Commission II.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

May I recall, Chair, to the Report on Commission II, Item 23.a), Page 3 that first paragraph reads the Conference *noted declared description of the main challenges expected to be faced by countries in food and agriculture in the coming years.*

Totally agreed with but I would respectfully suggest that we add a few words at the end of that sentence. I have a proposal to the Chair and for the consideration of Members gathered here this morning. The words are, and the demands for increasing country level technical support from FAO especially by SIDS.

In my view, the observation on the challenges are insufficient unless demands are in respect of what we are to do about it. I respectfully suggest that particularly for the SIDS Community this addition be added.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Could you please read out again your concrete text suggestions so that everybody can note it?

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

At the end of item 23.a) add and the demands for increasing country level technical support from FAO especially by SIDS.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you very much for your proposal. Of course it was not part of the Drafting Committee Session so I think we can only include it if there are no objections from the floor. I give the floor to the Seychelles.

Mr Antoine-Marie MOUSTACHE (Seychelles)

I would want to strongly support this proposal, Chair. We had a chance to meet together at the SIDS side event and we appreciated very much the peculiarities of SIDS in the context of food and nutrition security. Somewhere in this document we need to reflect SIDS on the peculiarities of SIDS and make special reference to SIDS.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Are there any objections against this proposal? If not, can we then adopt it?

Mr Hinrich THOLKEN (Germany)

We very much welcome the idea that is suggested with the language that is proposed by the colleague from Trinidad and Tobago but as it was mentioned, this was not subject of the discussion to my knowledge at Commission II. We were just wondering whether it should be taken up in the Report reflecting a meeting if this has not been discussed in this very meeting.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Of course we can reflect it in the Report of the Commission II because then it is clearly noted, not only the remarks but also I think the reflection and with reference to the side event.

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

I just wanted to intervene to indicate that I was a Member of Commission II and I recall intervening in the discussions in Commission II in which I made reference perhaps not in the same words but in the spirit in which these words are presented.

Mr Khaled HNAIFAT (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to welcome the proposal made by Trinidad and Tobago. However, in this text I believe that it is not fair to talk about the SIDS only.

If you want to give specifications of one group of country then let us have specifications about other countries and other groups of countries as well so what about the Near East? What about other parts of the world? So if we start specifying regions and groups of countries across the world then it would only be fair to add several other groups as well.

I would suggest therefore to leave the text general as it is and have no specifications.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you very much, Jordan, trying to find a compromise and it was the spirit which we have and hopefully still have in Commission II.

With that I would like to give the floor to Mauritius.

Mr Nilkanthsing JAGARNATH (Mauritius)

Mauritius would like to support Seychelles and Trinidad and Tobago. I think the case of the SIDS is well-known worldwide and especially at the level of FAO. The special vulnerabilities of SIDS are stated in all conferences. We would support that suggestion of Trinidad and Tobago and Seychelles very strongly. I do not think that will do any harm in adopting the proposal of Trinidad and Tobago in this regard.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Estonia on behalf of the European Union.

Mr Ruve SCHANK (Estonia)

I am not sure I can speak on behalf of all the Member States because we did not have proper time to discuss it and we did not have proper time either to read the Reports which were told to us would be available only in the afternoon.

Regarding this item of the discussion, we very much support the idea that the SIDS should be supported by technical assistance. I think it is reflected in various parts of many other documents that FAO does and the European Union Member States also do it.

As Trinidad and Tobago is also a Member of the Committee too. There was an opportunity to add this text there as well. But in a matter of compromise, we might accept this proposal.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you very much and also again showing that you are willing to find a solution.

Mr Thomas M. DUFFY (USA)

We support the concerns and the substance of the issue under discussion but again it is a procedural point. There were points that this could have been precisely and adequately addressed and those points were not raised so we have both a procedural concern in agreement with our Jordanian colleague. We would note that there are other areas of the world that deserve special attention too, so we would therefore support our Jordanian colleague's proposal to keep the language as is, which in our view would both redress the procedural question but also not get into the point of singling out specific territories.

Mr Spyridon ELLINAS (Cyprus)

As a compromise instead of using the word especially, we could use the word including maybe, so including SIDS.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Are there any other Members who wish to take the floor?

If not, I think Commission II is still in session so until the end of Commission II and from a legal point of view we can look for options to add text.

At the moment it would be before it is adopted although I think we have to be very careful also from the procedural point of view. We are not going to reopen the text which was carefully drafted both in the Commission II as well as in the Drafting Committee as this issue was not raised in neither of the two.

It is of course addressed in the text but before going forward with the proposal Bangladesh is at the last moment asking for the floor.

Mr Kaikobad HOSSAINI (Bangladesh)

I would like to also support the statement made by United States and Germany. The question is the procedure. We know the importance of the technical assistance for the SIDS countries.

We definitely can agree but our position is that as it was thoroughly discussed in the Commission II probably our colleague from the Trinidad and Tobago in Commission II, I do not know whether I was fully present in that time when it was discussed. So therefore the question is procedural. If it was discussed over there, our colleague could clearly bring it into the Report of the Commission.

And also when summary made by the Chair of the Commission II I do not know whether it was raised in that point or not. But in terms of compromise we can go along with the proposal made by Cyprus for the compromise so it could be including so we can support the proposal made by Cyprus.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Of course after this discussion is clear that we have to be very careful not to unravel the compromise and agreement we had in Commission II as well as in the Drafting Committee.

So my first question and I think everybody in this room knows how important the small island development states are and the challenges they are facing. I think it was clearly addressed in the discussions we have had but we also have to find a way forward. Given this discussion now, it is clear that it will be reflected in the verbatim of Commission II. The attention asked by some of the SIDS and of course supported by others.

So my question would be whether or not that would be the right way forward also because of some of the procedural issues which were raised. But before giving the floor to Trinidad and Tobago I see that now also Italy and Jordan have asked for the floor and then I would like to close discussion because what I understand is that the Chair of the Conference is willing to give a free Saturday so I think that is very good incentive but then of course we have to finalize our work on Commission II as soon as possible.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy aligns itself with the statement made by Estonia on behalf of the European Union. We think the compromise proposal made by Cyprus and Bangladesh is a good one, a very good way forward.

Mr Khaled HNAIFAT (Jordan) (Original Language Arabic)

As a compromise, we think that we should not change the text because the text needs to be general, needs to remain general so we should not mention any particular region. We are not against mention of some regions in some places but here this was a general principle that was discussed in the plenary and here we think we should not specify any country or region specifically. This is following on from the discussions which took place in the different Commissions of this Conference.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Now I look to Trinidad and Tobago whether or not given this discussion and knowing that it will be taken up in verbatim of Commission II and a special request ask for special attention to the small island development states, would that be enough for you so that we can agree with the text as it is?

Mr Winston RUDDER (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad and Tobago in the spirit of compromise the way the Conference has gone thus is satisfied and that the issue having been raised as generated a concern that it wished to have generated.

I would have preferred if it had remained in the text, to be quite honest, but in the circumstances it would be reflected as so in the documents of the Conference. We would be satisfied.

Mr Johannes HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Commission II)

Thank you, Trinidad and Tobago, for your flexibility but also for raising the issue and special attention on SIDS and also saying to Jordan it is not only related to SIDS but to more specific regions.

Can we then again adopt the Report as it is? We know that the issue raised is in verbatim records, so can we again adopt the Report?

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplausos

Thank you so much for again this excellent spirit of compromise, I am looking ahead for the important work we have to do. With that I would like to turn the floor back to the Chairperson of the Conference.

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 10.09 hours

La séance est levée à 10 h 09

Se levanta la sesión a las 10.09