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**Report of the Seventh Informal Regional Conference for North America
(United States of America, 12-14 April 2022)**

Informal North America Regional Conference (INARC)
of the FAO

2022

Tuesday, April 12 – Thursday, April 14

Virtual Meeting

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**Report of the Seventh Informal North America Regional Conference of the FAO
Virtual Meeting, 12-14 April, 2022
Virtual Pre-Briefings, 6-11 April, 2022**

Summary

Deeply concerned by global trends in food security, the North American Region recommends the FAO use its unique position as a lead UN food security agency to enhance system-wide coordination and action, notably by way of its policy advice and recommendations, its scientific standard setting function, and technical cooperation role. The North American Region also recommends the FAO to utilize its leadership to address the escalating food crisis and far-reaching effects on global hunger of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war in Ukraine.

The North American Region reaffirms its commitment to strong collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and its members, appreciating the frank and open exchange of the bi-annual Informal North America Regional Conference (INARC).

The North American Region calls on the FAO to continue to aspire for best in class management including to foster effective governance, transparency, and internal management practices, focus on implementation of ambitious climate change and science & innovation strategies, and extend its attention on pandemic recovery and building food systems resilience, prioritizing sustainable productivity growth, free and fair trade, gender-responsive approaches and co-development initiatives with indigenous peoples and vulnerable communities. The North American Region emphasizes the FAO's enduring added value supporting normative work and standard-setting bodies, underpinned by science.

Preface

1. The North American Region is deeply troubled by the challenges facing the FAO and its work to support global food security, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially ending hunger (SDG 2), and to ensure productive and sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sectors. Negative trends in these areas are exacerbated by the increasing impacts of climate change; COVID-19's effect on production and food prices; declining global productivity growth; conflict; and, most recently, Russia's unjustified and illegal invasion of Ukraine. Russian attacks have targeted critical agricultural infrastructure in Ukraine, and Russia has blockaded Ukrainian ports halting vital shipments of Ukrainian grains and other food exports.
2. At this time of increasing crisis, the North American Region believes the world needs a FAO that is a courageous advocate for evidence-based efforts to increase sustainable productivity growth, to increase social inclusion, to improve sustainability, and to enable all actors in food

systems – countries, producers, civil society, the private sector, and consumers – to collaborate together to find solutions to our common problems.

3. All INARC speakers addressed the critical role North America played in the FAO's creation and policy direction. Principals from Canada and the United States celebrated past success, implementation of North American recommendations since the last INARC, and laid out perspectives on the imminent challenges ahead for global food security within the FAO's mandate, including climate change and variability, protracted conflicts, effective humanitarian responses, and creating more resilient, inclusive agri-food systems. All underscored the need for agricultural innovation and technologies to increase sustainable productivity, while also addressing the large environmental footprint of global agriculture. Speakers clearly and unequivocally denounced the Russia's ongoing war on Ukraine and its devastating global food supply chain and food security effects. The North American Region called on FAO to demonstrate leadership within the UN system on the short-, medium-, and long-term response in Ukraine and beyond, prioritizing efforts to relieve the effects on the worst-affected member states.

North American Priorities for the FAO

4. The North American Region identified concrete priorities for the FAO's work in the 2022-2023 biennium. They are presented in the five key strategic recommendations shown below:

1. Ukraine and impact on global food security

Given the profound impacts that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine will have on global food security, the FAO should provide sufficient resources, data analysis, gender- and climate-responsive policy recommendations, and attention to the crisis and work to keep food and fertilizer markets open and transparent and assist countries worst affected with overcoming food security challenges. FAO's work should reflect the decisions adopted by FAO Council and contained in CL 169/REP, including regular reporting to members on implementation as appropriate.

2. Governance

FAO should be a model of an effective, efficient, relevant, transparent, accountable and gender-responsive UN organization that supports a rules-based international system. It can indicate its commitment to being a model specialized UN agency by fostering member consensus on a robust code of conduct for elections and promptly welcoming a JIU Management and Administrative Review at the earliest possible date.

3. Climate Change and Resilience

Given the urgent need to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from food systems, while increasing their resilience to the impacts of climate change, the FAO should increase its support to Members for sustainable productivity growth, reducing emissions, enhancing carbon sequestration in agriculture, and adaptation, through an ambitious, cross-cutting approach inclusive of innovations and building on relevant international initiatives. Its updated strategy should reflect FAO's dual role in helping farmers and food systems become more resilient to climate shocks, while also promoting agriculture as part of the solution to climate change.

4. Science, and Innovation

The FAO should deliver world-class tools, advice and public goods to address current and emerging threats. The FAO should be unwavering in its promotion of science and innovation as critical to building more sustainable, equitable, productive, and resilient food systems. Its new strategy should outline FAO's role in promoting science and innovation in food systems, emphasizing the Science and Innovation Strategy's interconnectedness and complementarity with other FAO strategies and policies, namely on climate change and private sector engagement.

5. Agricultural Trade

The FAO should deepen and proactively communicate the basis of evidence demonstrating the importance of trade for resilience and sustainability. The FAO should continue to provide technical assistance to allow countries to realize the benefits of trade and enhance global food security.

Organization of the 2022 INARC Conference

5. The 7th INARC was held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The North America Region held a series of virtual pre-briefings and discussions with the FAO on April 6-8, 2022, followed by the INARC plenary on April 12-14, 2022. A complete list of Regional Conference participants is provided in *Appendix B*. Representatives from Canada and the United States, which make up the FAO's North American Region, participated in the Regional Conference and pre-briefs alongside officials from the FAO headquarters in Rome and the FAO North American Liaison Office in Washington (FAOLOW).

Adoption of the agenda

6. The Regional Conference adopted agendas for the pre-briefings and for the plenary meeting. Both are provided in *Appendix A*.

Proceedings of the INARC Plenary Discussions

Welcome and Opening Remarks

7. There was a consensus from North American Region speakers that Russia's unprovoked war on Ukraine has exacerbated the already dire global food security situation. The Region agreed that the FAO has a central leadership role to play in the UN system response in providing timely and accurate information, while encouraging countries to keep agricultural markets and trade open, predictable, and transparent by avoiding trade restrictive measures including export prohibitions and restrictions. The North American Region called on FAO to implement fully the decisions adopted by the 169th session of the Council (CL 169/REP).

8. The North American Region began the INARC by expressing gratitude to the FAO for its efforts organizing the pre-INARC meetings and convening virtually for a second INARC during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Region agreed that INARC, among other regional conferences, is an important opportunity to consider high-level priorities in a flexible and candid way. Opening session speakers from Canada and the United States highlighted the urgent need for expanding climate resilience and adaptation work in the FAO's program of work, specifically the need for climate-smart agriculture for reducing agriculture's methane, carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gas emissions. The North American Region made clear the importance of supporting collective action in the food production sectors to become more resilient and sustainable. Also highlighted were the FAO's invaluable contributions to food security and safety through its support of standard setting and normative work as well as technical expertise. Recalling the critical importance of the FAO mandate and therefore the need for an effective, efficient, and transparent Organization, speakers further underscored that within its mandate, the FAO is the best forum to discuss the science and innovations needed to overcome challenges and provide resilient agri-food systems that feed the world. (Note: speaker summaries are presented in Appendix 4).

Opening Remarks from Deputy Director-General (DDG) Beth Bechdol

9. Deputy Director-General of the FAO, Beth Bechdol expressed appreciation for the informal nature of INARC and noted the FAO's concurrent engagement in other regional conferences. She suggested the current challenges of the global community are reminiscent of the near aftermath of WWII, from which the FAO was conceived as a specialized agency of the then newly created United Nations. Bechdol signaled the FAO's intent for a "renewed and reinvigorated" engagement with the North America Region, noting her recent trip to Washington, DC, and planned trip to Ottawa soon. The DDG was clear the monitoring and reporting on the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine was of utmost

importance for the FAO's work, while giving other hunger hotspots like Afghanistan, the Dry Corridor, Yemen, and the Horn of Africa, the attention they deserve. She highlighted the need to devote more resources to address the root causes of food insecurity, and that humanitarian responses must position agriculture, agricultural livelihoods, and resilience building initiatives front and center. Bechdol highlighted the FAO's normative work through support to standard setting, technical expertise, partnerships, critical investments, and dedication to science and innovation cross-cutting all strategic priorities. She concluded by underscoring ongoing UN agency collaboration and a commitment to concrete actions.

Plenary Discussions

Review of FAO's Uptake of the 6th INARC Recommendations

10. DDG Bechdol highlighted the FAO's actions since the last INARC including how the Organization implemented North American recommendations (C 2021/LIM/1). FAO established a Chief Scientist, established an Office of Innovation, completed the Private Sector Strategy and began implementation, developed the draft Science and Innovation Strategy, developed a revised draft Strategy on Climate Change, and hosted the newly established Food Systems Summit Coordination Hub. Bechdol commented the Russian invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the need for strengthening of market information systems including the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) and Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS). Bechdol referenced the FAO's increased financial support for the international standards setting bodies.

North American Deliberations

11. The North American Region broadly complimented the FAO's work over the past biennium commenting in particular on mainstreaming gender analysis, reinforcing the value of the normative work, securing the adoption by members and implementation of a private sector engagement strategy emphasizing creative and collaborative partnerships, and promoting innovation and science, including the role of Chief Scientist and the Office of Innovation. Multiple speakers expressed appreciation for the FAO leadership's thoughtful and strategic engagement with members as well as Bechdol's efforts to renew relations with both Canada and the United States. The Region praised the FAO for its accomplishments since the last INARC but also emphasized that more could be done to support countries using innovative technologies such as biotechnology. More details of conversation are presented in Appendix 4.

FAO presentation on Ukraine and the Global Outlook for Food Security

12. Regarding the current war in Ukraine, the FAO delegation highlighted the key role that Ukraine plays globally in terms of production and export of key agricultural commodities, and also the importance of agriculture inside Ukraine for employment and inclusive economic growth. Presenters stressed that important implications including knock-on effects needed to be considered with policy interventions, including through the lens of gender roles in the context of agriculture. The FAO delegation stressed while more funding is required to address humanitarian needs in Ukraine, it must strive to achieve balance with the other global food security crises, which before the war in Ukraine, were already at levels not seen since WWII. The FAO highlighted the Horn of Africa's unprecedented fourth consecutive failed rainy season and drought as one such example.

13. FAO Chief Economist Maximo Torero's presented FAO's initial analysis and discussed with delegations a range of questions centered around a few notable themes. With regard to the current record high food prices, participants asked about designing policies to counter market incentives to reduce supply and maintain high prices of food and fertilizer commodities. Torero was unequivocal that free trade restrictions and efforts to restrict exports would exacerbate food prices and worsen global food security. To combat and prevent reactionary and unhelpful policy decisions, he underscored the importance of the FAO's role in bringing transparency and information to markets through strengthening the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS). In regard to agricultural financing, Torero highlighted the FAO's plans to design and deploy targeted small enterprise and smallholder financing in ways that lower risk to commercial banks. Finally, Torero highlighted the FAO's ongoing work to map areas for optimal nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (NPK) fertilizer blends. Informing farmers, Torero argued, would increase crop yields and efficiency, reduce costs, and create positive social changes. Torero added that building blending facilities was relatively low-cost and generally worthwhile even over the short-term.

FAO's Science and Innovation Strategy

14. FAO Chief Scientist Ismahane Elouafi presented on the FAO's draft Science and Innovation Strategy. Elouafi emphasized that science and innovation is needed for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and would be linked to the Programme Priority Areas in the Strategic Framework. Elouafi noted that the purpose of the Strategy was not to create new priorities, but to help realize existing ones. She discussed the Strategy's vision, goals, outcomes and strategic pillars and noted the multiple productive consultations conducted with Member States.

15. Elouafi fielded multiple questions from the United States and Canada. On obstacles to the Strategy's adoption at the FAO Council, Elouafi noted technology transfer, ethics, and science

communication remained ongoing issues for member discussion, facilitated by the FAO Secretariat. Responding to questions, Elouafi acknowledged the FAO lacks internal capacity and resources to fully implement the Strategy, but noted plans to develop an Action Plan and Resource Mobilization Plan to build the necessary capacity for implementation once the Strategy is endorsed.

16. The North American Region signaled its strong support for the development of an ambitious Strategy that supports progressive innovations in technology matched to local contexts and capacities, features the FAO's subject matter expertise and ability to gather and disseminate information, and creates food systems that are more resilient to shocks and disruptions.

North American Deliberations

17. The North America Region emphasized:

- a) Its support for the vision and goal of the Science and Innovation Strategy (SIS) noting the importance of science and innovation to creating resilient sustainable food systems that are able to produce more with less and to achieving sustainable productivity growth;
- b) That successful implementation of the SIS would assist policymakers and farmers access all the available tools to build more sustainable food systems, including biotechnologies;
- c) That the SIS should use where possible internationally negotiated and agreed language and concepts; and
- d) That the FAO should outline more clearly the resourcing it needs for robust implementation of the SIS.

18. The North American Region encouraged the FAO to:

- a) Include in its SIS an increased focus on the communication of the contributions of innovative technologies towards achieving sustainable food systems and ensuring the elaboration of a thorough accountability framework.
- b) Effectively communicate the benefits in the Strategy of risk-proportionate, and science-based regulatory systems for the products of biotechnology, and foster collaboration to help ensure a global regulatory environment that promotes innovation; and
- c) Consider the natural inter-connectedness and complementarity of the SIS with other FAO policies and strategies, namely the draft updated Strategy on Climate Change and Private Sector Engagement Strategy (2020) in applying science, innovation, technology, and partnerships to solving global challenges in food and agriculture.

FAO's Strategy on Climate Change

19. Deputy Director Zitouni Ould-Dada of the Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment presented the latest version of the FAO Strategy for Climate Change, underscoring the interconnections between human society and ecosystems as detailed in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Report titled *Impact, Adaptation and Vulnerability* and the resulting need for climate resilient development. He gave background information on the evaluation of the FAO's contributions to SDG 13 (climate action), which recommended the development of a new strategy to scale actions, align them with the Strategic Framework (2022-2031) and better address the climate risks in all areas of work. His remarks noted the importance of avoiding working in silos by linking this document with others, including the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement and the Science and Innovation Strategy. Ould-Dada explained the timeline of having the Strategy considered for approval by the 133rd Session of the Programme Committee in May 2022 and the 169th Session of the Council in June 2022, after which the Action Plan will be developed accordingly.

20. Ould-Dad fielded multiple questions from the United States and Canada. On the importance of leveraging innovations to achieve the goals of the Strategy, he underlined the need for technologies to be adapted to context-specific requirements. FAO Chief Scientist Elouafi responded by highlighting the issues of scalability, affordability, accessibility. He discussed examples of innovations essential to the mitigation of the consequences of climate change, including genomic breeding, drip irrigation, and methodologies for accounting the carbon sequestration in agriculture. Ould-Dad recognized the Strategy did not currently take in considerations the impacts related to migration and agreed on the importance of including them. He acknowledged biotechnologies' potential for accelerating the achievement of sustainability, noting the example of recovery of value in waste to increase circularity of food systems.

North American Deliberations

21. The United States and Canada welcomed the draft FAO Strategy on Climate Change (SCC) and supported the FAO in strengthening its contribution to the global climate agenda, supporting countries in transforming their agri-food systems to contribute to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Region underlined the FAO's critically important role in addressing the climate crisis and said this strategy would guide the FAO during this decisive decade for climate action.

22. FAO's previous SCC (2017-2021) placed emphasis on adaptation. The North American Region emphasized while food and agriculture systems were crucial to resilient development, agricultural lands also played a key role in the global climate system as potential carbon sources

and sinks, and emitters of other potent greenhouse gasses. Looking forward, Canada and the United States said mitigation should be equally important and captured as a standalone goal of the Strategy, not only as a co-benefit of adaptation.

23. The North American Region expressed concern the current draft Strategy contained references to climate change concepts and related elements negotiated in other forums and cautioned against citing prior agreements or portions of other texts without full context. The SCC should focus on technical knowledge and science, avoiding references to agreements outside the FAO mandate or re-negotiating other agreements in a FAO context. References to other multilateral agreements should be functional, identifying how the FAO can support members in achieving their national determined contributions, commitments, and adaptation plans in the context of agri-food systems.

24. The SCC, the North American Region emphasized, should focus on FAO's dual role in:

- a) Treating agriculture and food systems as part of the solution to climate change, namely by emphasizing adaptation, mitigation, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; and
- b) Helping farmers and countries make agriculture and food systems more resilient to climate shocks and extreme weather conditions.

25. The North American Region suggested more precise phrasing surrounding greenhouse gas emissions and asked the FAO to recognize in its subsequent draft the unique impacts agri-food systems have on methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions, which are both potent greenhouse gasses. Reducing emissions of methane and nitrous oxide in agricultural land and food production presents a major opportunity to slow global warming in the near-term. Reducing them should be included in the FAO's support to countries on mitigation measures.

26. As highlighted in the FAO's draft Strategy, the North American Region agreed the SCC's Action Plan will be crucial in the operationalization of the Strategy by working at country level and providing implementation support;

27. The FAO North American Region was supportive of the following elements of the SCC:

- a) The emphasis on the gender equality agenda and engagement of Indigenous Peoples (the Region noted this was a critical part of this Strategy that should be thoroughly and appropriately integrated);
- b) The FAO contributing to private sector climate action, sustainable consumer behaviors and preferences, and food loss and waste; and
- c) The FAO's collaboration with other organizations and alignment with other relevant agreements and organizations to avoid duplication.

28. The North American Region encouraged the FAO to include in its SCC:
- a) A more robust discussion on how the FAO plans to integrate the SCC with its emergency work;
 - b) The need for conflict as key driver of food insecurity and poverty to be addressed together with climate crisis, as relevant;
 - c) The role of remote sensing and geospatial platforms, plant breeding, and other relevant technologies, that the FAO could engage, in partnership with countries, as part of the strategy; and
 - d) Greater acknowledgement of the role played by local actors beyond production.

Lessons Learned from Covid-19, One Health, and Creating Resilient Food Systems

29. Director of the FAO's Food and Nutrition Division Lynnette Neufeld presented data showing the negative impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on nutrition outcomes. The FAO anticipated, via its food price index, the situation was likely to worsen in 2022, leading to an additional one billion people being unable to afford a healthy diet. Neufeld called attention to the FAO's forthcoming 2022 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report, which will focus on repurposing fiscal investments to groups that are most in need.

30. Director of the FAO's Office of Emergencies and Resilience Rein Paulsen presented on the global humanitarian situation, with emphasis on FAO's immediate response work in Ukraine on cash assistance to vulnerable households, livestock protection, and seed support to safeguard upcoming planting and harvesting seasons to the extent possible amid violence and military activities. He stated the upcoming State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report would show significant increases in global food insecurity over the past year. In 2022, the FAO was targeting 50 million people for assistance, up from 30 million in the previous year. Paulsen praised Canada and the United States for their strong historical support of FAO's role in emergencies. He promoted the expansion of social protections, underlining more resilient outcomes were achieved when social protection was integrated as part of humanitarian responses.

31. Director of the FAO's Partnerships Division Marcela Villarreal discussed collaboration among the Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs). Villarreal emphasized the importance of RBA collaboration as it allows the FAO, WFP, and IFAD to leverage their strengths, speak in one voice, and implement joint programs for greater collaboration. Villarreal noted significant RBA collaboration occurring at the country level. In response to questions, Villarreal suggested that

donors could help avoid competition among the RBAs through proactively designing their support to encourage collaboration.

32. Director of the FAO's Markets and Trade Division Boubaker Ben-Belhassen presented on the FAO's trade work. He noted the myriad of challenges facing trade including Covid-19, rising transport and input prices, climate variability, and the war in Ukraine. The FAO's work included strengthening market intelligence and early warning systems including on Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), increasing capacity so that countries could realize the benefits of trade, promoting greater market integration, supporting regulatory cooperation on trade facilitation measures, and promoting the adoption of digital solutions. Ben-Belhassen also referenced the FAO's work supporting regional integration.

North American Deliberations

33. The North American Region emphasized the importance of the FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Program in fostering resilient food systems, noting Canada's financial contribution of \$22.4 million CAD, and U.S. contribution of \$10 million USD. Both countries were pleased to see FAO efforts included analyzing and addressing gendered impacts of COVID-19 in numerous countries and regions.

34. The Region encouraged the FAO to deepen understanding and communication of the differentiated impacts of Covid-19 and conflict on women and Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable groups.

35. The North American Region welcomed ongoing efforts by the RBAs to strengthen collaboration at the global, regional, and country levels and commented that as the FAO continues to expand its work in emergency contexts, significant effort needed to be directed to the issue of coordination with WFP, to clearly define the comparative advantages of each organization, the limitations of their respective mandates, and the division of labor in recovery and resilience-building activities - as well as in certain emergency contexts.

36. The Region encouraged enhanced leadership from the FAO in informing Members through evidence-based policy guidance on the impacts of trade measures and suggested the FAO should continue to reinforce the lessons learned from the previous and ongoing food price crises.

North American Regional Bilateral Breakout Session

Summaries and Recommendations

Related global initiatives: 2021 UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) Coalitions and COP 27

37. The North American Region supported the important contributions of the UN Food System Summit (UN FSS) to the global dialogue on food and agriculture. Canada and the United States called on the FAO to build bridges and leverage synergies among and between different coalitions and existing initiatives and organizations to reduce duplication across global agriculture and food architecture. Moreover, the Region recognized the need to maintain a focus on sustainability and resiliency, even in the face of high food prices and rising demand.

38. The North American Region called on the FAO to manage the newly established UNFSS Coordination Hub in a transparent manner and in consultation with Members. Work by the Coordination Hub to connect National Pathway Convenors with Coalitions should be unbiased. Noting that sustainable productivity growth was one of five major action themes identified in the National Pathways, the Region said the FAO should elevate sustainable productivity growth in its current workstreams and program of work and encourage the Coordination Hub to highlight the Sustainable Productivity Growth Coalition, and other Coalitions linked to main themes, to Pathway Convenors. Also, recognizing the number and wide variety of Coalitions, the Region asked FAO to encourage the Coordination Hub to keep the Coalitions website updated to facilitate collaboration among the Coalitions and with other global initiatives on food and agriculture.

39. Delegates noted the value of the FAO's active engagement and support of the Zero Hunger Coalition and the Sustainable Productivity Growth Coalition. North America identified both coalitions as central to the FAO's role and noted significant support by many Member States' National Pathways. Delegates call on the FAO to prioritize its support to these coalitions, as well as the Food is Never Waste Coalition and the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) initiative. The North American Region expressed appreciation for the FAO's role as co-lead for one of the working groups on National Gender Responsive Food Systems Policies, along with the International Food Policy Research Institute in context of a Gender Coalition.

40. With regard to the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, North America welcomed the FAO's efforts to support country parties in the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, as well as efforts to mobilize climate finance. Delegates further called on the FAO to support greater integration of agriculture and food systems issues across COP 27 events, potentially including a "food day," or

through side events, such as events with UN FSS Coalitions on Sustainable Productivity Growth and/or Zero Hunger.

New/Innovative Protein Developments and Sustainability Benefits to Food Systems

41. The North American Region was mindful of the persistent problem of protein deficiency, which due to insufficient consumption of quality protein remains a driver of malnutrition in the most affected regions, disproportionately affects children and women through its impacts on health and livelihoods.

42. The Region considered resilient food systems and proactive anticipatory actions played a crucial role in meeting the need for protein and that there were no one-size-fits-all solutions to achieve the Agenda 2030 and develop sustainable food systems.

43. In this context, the Region requested the FAO to leverage the Committee of Agriculture (COAG) including the new sub-committee on Livestock and other relevant FAO bodies to support Members in meeting the need for sufficient quality protein consumption recognizing the role of sustainable productivity growth. Canada and the United States said this support should be delivered through context-specific data, guidance and analysis which recognize the links between all sources of protein and their essential contributions towards achieving more sustainable food systems and adequate protein consumptions especially by women, children and those in vulnerable situations. This guidance should include relevant information on quality, access, affordability, and availability in order to make progress in reducing protein deficiency.

Gender Equality and Indigenous Peoples

44. The North American Region appreciated the FAO's Policy on Gender Equality (2020-2030), its mainstreaming of gender-sensitive language in its policies and strategies, and its highlighting of dimensions for promoting gender equality and greater inclusion in agriculture. The Region encouraged continued work toward using more inclusive terms that acknowledge the full diversity of individuals and communities. It acknowledged the FAO's contribution in generating evidence of gender equality gaps in agriculture and food security and encouraged the Organization to continue collecting and disaggregating data to demonstrate how the FAO could support the empowerment of women in all their diversity, Indigenous Peoples, youth, persons of color, and persons with disabilities, including through the examination of barriers to equality in programming at country level. Of note, the FAO could provide more guidance on how to measure women's unpaid care work outside their involvement in agricultural professional activities. The Region welcomed further reporting on implementation of the FAO Gender Equality Action Plan, in relation to the Program Priority Areas, targets, and indicators of the

Strategic Framework (2022-2031), including greater alignment of the FAO's Policy on Gender Equality with the Strategic Framework.

45. The Region encouraged increased attention by the FAO for the meaningful inclusion of women, Indigenous Peoples, and individuals and communities in vulnerable situations in addressing climate change and disaster risk response programs, noting the disproportionate effects of climate change on these groups and appreciating the threats to livelihoods, ways of life, and cultural connections to the environment often experienced first by these groups, who often have significant experience in successful environmental stewardship.

46. With regard to science and innovation, North America urged the FAO to prioritize dissemination of science, innovation, and technology to women, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalized groups while integrating indigenous knowledge, particularly in addressing environmental degradation, land and water use issues, crop production, livestock management, and disease prevention. Participants suggested the FAO consider how the One Health Approach could be tied to discussions of antimicrobial resistance, biodiversity loss, and zoonotic disease prevention since interconnected human and animal health threats can have a profound impact on income, livelihoods, and well-being, especially for women and Indigenous Peoples.

47. The North American Region suggested the FAO explicitly consider means for more meaningful inclusion of women's, Indigenous Peoples, and individuals and communities in vulnerable situations and society organizations, including women's rights organizations in co-development of strategies, proposals, policies, and programs and their involvement in decision-making.

COFI and Fisheries Issues

48. The North American Region noted fisheries management and governance were predicated broadly based on predefined and static stock boundaries. Climate-related changes to marine and aquatic systems such as ocean warming, pollution, and acidification were driving changes in stock location and migration, productivity, and resilience. The Region stated status-quo approaches to fishery management needed to be adaptive to the increasing global challenges of promoting social and ecological resilience, providing food and nutrition security, supporting decent work, and reducing the environmental footprint of agri-food systems.

49. The Region suggested the FAO should act as convenor for the climate-fisheries nexus particularly around programmatic work related to adaptation and mitigation but also on the technical side. Given its breadth and depth of global expertise, Canada and the United States identified greater FAO leadership as expected and needed in this area.

50. The North American Region commented recent research highlighted opportunities for fisheries and aquaculture, also termed blue/aquatic foods, to address key food and nutrition deficiencies, especially for reducing child wasting and cognitive impairment in developing countries. Recognizing the contribution of aquatic foods to global nutrition, food security, and climate change mitigation/adaptation efforts, the Region called on FAO to be a more prominent advocate for the role fisheries and aquaculture can play in global food security and nutrition, while providing technical support to promote sustainable and resilient aquatic food production.

51. The United States and Canada noted recent changes to FAO governance, including the loss of an Assistant Director General position, signaled the FAO may be de-prioritizing its role in the fisheries/aquaculture sector. Recognizing the importance of fisheries and aquaculture to global food security, nutrition, and climate change mitigation/adaptation efforts, the Region said FAO needed to deploy its leadership more effectively to ensure that topics related to oceans, fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic foods are properly considered in all relevant international fora, including through improving communication around the progress of work streams to Members. Canada and the United States urged the FAO to ensure its staffing levels were adequate to effectively implement the decisions and initiatives coming out of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and its sub-committees.

52. Finally, the North American Region welcomed greater global technical attention on fisheries and aquaculture, but cautioned the FAO against incorporating non-negotiated statements or outcomes, through reference, into UN system work, preferring instead that FAO introduce concepts to Members through deliberations within the FAO's technical bodies.

COFO and Forestry Issues

53. The North American Region recognized the global goal of net-zero GHG emissions by mid-century, as well as the success of many of the SDGs, depended in part on having healthier, more productive forests. At the same time, the Region noted the challenge of feeding a growing global population.

54. Given that agriculture is the biggest driver of deforestation globally, Canada and the United States requested the FAO continue and increase work on cross-sectoral and FAO technical committee collaboration. Enhanced cross-sectoral integration of forests with food security are crucial to increase the perceived value of forests, halt deforestation and reach net-zero GHG emissions.

55. The North American Region further emphasized a common interest and concern regarding the following issues and requested to see them addressed at the upcoming 26th session of the FAO Committee on Forestry:

- a) wildland fire
- b) forest data and reporting (including improved forest employment data)
- c) urban forests
- d) climate change and biodiversity conservation
- e) gender and diversity
- f) sustainable use of forest products
- g) forest restoration/afforestation

56. The Region took note of a rising interest in deforestation-free agricultural commodity supply chains internationally and feel this is an area in which the FAO is uniquely placed to foster cross sectoral dialogue and to help identify pragmatic solutions without duplicating efforts and in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

Food Systems for Healthy Diets

57. The North American Region highlighted food systems were not delivering on nutrition and said more must be done to address the barriers to accessing safe, affordable, and nutritionally adequate diets, particularly for women and children. Canada and the United States identified gender-based inequalities as both a cause and an outcome of unsustainable food systems, malnutrition, and inequitable food access, consumption, and production. The Region emphasized more food systems investments were needed to support women's empowerment as "agripreneurs" and strengthen women's decision making to access productive resources and control over income. The Region noted the current crises of Russia's war in Ukraine, compounding the effects of the global pandemic, other conflicts, and climate change, underscored the need for timely, reliable, gender and age-disaggregated data that can drive informed decision making and evidence-based policy and programming. Canada and the United States recognized the dearth of nutrition-related data that measures the impacts of these crises on nutrition outcomes, such as malnutrition, quality of diets, and cost of diets.

58. The Region encouraged the FAO to implement its Strategic Framework (2022-2031) and use it to advise countries on what would be needed to enact food systems policies that would nourish people, particularly those most in need such as women and girls, in all their diversity.

59. The Region said FAO should position large-scale food fortification and biofortification as essential food systems actions and drive increased investments and integration of food security, including food safety and nutrition, into agriculture development strategies.

60. Canada and the United States urged the FAO to advise Agriculture Ministries to position nutrition and improve diets more centrally in food systems transformation.

61. The Region said the FAO should support countries to prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment, and the protection of the rights of women and girls, in all their diversity, in the context of food security and nutrition including advancement of active engagement of men and boys to promote nutrition as a joint household responsibility.

62. The FAO could work towards greater diversity and inclusion in its strategic policies as well as in its programming work to address the needs faced by Indigenous and marginalized women, LGBTQ2+ individuals, and individuals with disabilities, including their meaningful engagement in decision-making in the context of food security and nutrition.

63. The Region supported the FAO's efforts to expand 'cost of diet' monitoring beyond staple foods to also include other nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, and animal-source products.

64. Canada and the United States called on the FAO to continue promoting data collection and providing technical assistance in designing and executing data collection, particularly around measuring the quality and quantity of diets in key target groups including pregnant women and children in their first 1,000 days of life.

65. The North American Region also called on the FAO to utilize its role as host of the coordination hub for the UN Food Systems Summit to ensure these coalitions support countries in enabling food systems approach for improved diets.

Standard Setting Bodies

66. Codex and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) are top priorities for Canada and the United States. The Region expressed appreciation for the work and efforts of the Codex & IPPC Secretariats in adapting to the virtual environment over the past two years.

67. Recognizing a need for the FAO and countries to innovate and adapt to different and flexible approaches, the North American Region looked forward to a resumption of physical meetings of the standards setting organizations, as abbreviated virtual meetings could not replace the stimulating exchanges and enriching discussions that take place in a face-to-face setting.

68. As indicated in previous INARC meetings, the Region noted the FAO added most value when delivering the critical functions of its core mandate: supporting standard-setting work; scientific, evidence-based, and impartial analysis; and serving as a knowledge aggregator. Canada and the United States encouraged the FAO to ensure the Codex and International Plant

Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariats continue to have the appropriate resources to meet program needs and support standard-setting activities, as well as strong leadership and management to follow the founding principles of Codex Alimentarius and the IPPC.

69. The North American Region recognized the crucial importance of timely scientific advice to the work of Codex standards development, and for ensuring funding sustainability for the provision of scientific advice. To ensure the provision of scientific advice to Codex committees responds adequately to Members' needs, Canada and the United States continued to support the need to find a way forward, both in the short term and the long term, that allowed for appropriate and predictable funding from both parent organizations for the scientific advice program.

70. Notwithstanding the increase in funding provided by the FAO to the Joint FAO/WHO food safety scientific advice program to address the backlog of related work (CL 163/REP), the Region emphasized adequate funding and technical capacity to support the provision of scientific advice which underpins the development of science-based standards as a concern. The Region supported revisiting the recommendations of the FAO Committee on Agriculture Open-ended Working Group on the Funding of FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme to increase sustainable funding. Canada and the United States proposed renewed discussions pertaining to effective mechanisms within the FAO for non-state actors to contribute financially or by other means towards the provision of scientific advice.

71. The Region recognized the capacity of the Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Program to make food safety recommendations was also contingent on having access to a sustainable pool of experts. WHO and FAO were leading initiatives to recruit and train new experts in the areas of pesticide residue assessments. Canada suggested consideration be given not only to funding options, but also the sustainability of scientific expertise. Training the next generation of experts now is also key in addressing resource limitations and working toward a sustainable Scientific Advice Program resourced to face increased demand.

72. The North American Region thanked the FAO for the transparent staffing process that took place to replace the IPPC Secretary. The IPPC was well positioned with the new Secretary, Dr. Osama El-Lissy, in place. Canada and the United States looked forward to working with all contracting parties of the IPPC in advancing the strategic objectives of the IPPC under El-Lissy leadership.

73. The Region recognized staffing and capacity continued to be a major concern as demands on the IPPC Secretariat grew and countries looked to the IPPC to deliver more plant health services. The North American Region encouraged the FAO to support El-Lissy's arrival by:

- a. Allowing him time to visit, take stock of, and assess IPPC members' views of future work and procedures that required his attention as the newly appointed Secretary;

- b. Confirming the reporting line between the new Secretary and the Assistant Director General so that IPPC maintained its semi-autonomous character and important role in the overall FAO structure;
- c. Enabling the new Secretary to assess and present a new strategic plan regarding future staffing and hiring, including new approaches for extending, retaining, and lengthening the terms of service for short-term contract employees, especially the high performers, and;
- d. Supporting the new Secretary in reaching out to external stakeholders to explore new potential partnerships that may result in new resources for the IPPC.

Private Sector Strategy

74. Director of the FAO's Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Partnership Division Alex Jones briefed on the FAO's approach to private sector engagement. The implementation of the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement shifted FAO's approach from being risk averse to being risk aware in its partnerships with the private sector, he said. The FAO currently had 43 formal agreements and was emphasizing engagement with private sector associations due to their abilities as multipliers to reach entire sectors. Jones noted the FAO applied the Strategy's criteria for determining partners to engage, including avoiding any apparent and unfair advantage, undue influence, or risks to intellectual property.

75. The North American Region said ongoing implementation of the FAO Private Sector Engagement Strategy was encouraging, and the FAO should look to expand the number of partner organizations, particularly in underrepresented regions and prioritizing outreach to small- and medium-sized enterprises. The North American Region supported the FAO's continued efforts to promote and document the benefits of trade including for sustainable food systems, food security, climate change, and sustainable development, and encouraged the FAO to continue to provide technical assistance activities which could develop the trade capacity, frameworks and systems needed to expand Member participation in the global trading system and to realize the associated sustainable development benefits. The North American Region called for the results to be regularly communicated to Members.

76. The Region said FAO should continue to seek engagement with stakeholders to mobilize private sector knowledge and expertise in the development and implementation of new technologies and innovative tools, such as biotechnologies, critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals while ensuring the FAO's impartiality.

77. The North American Region reiterated its encouragement of the FAO to deepen its private sector outreach to small- and medium-sized enterprises, as well as more diverse engagement from underrepresented FAO Regions.

78. The Region believed it was appropriate for the FAO to review and develop arrangements to clarify the ways in which the private sector can engage with the membership in formal FAO meetings and initiatives.

79. Through the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, the Region believed the FAO had an opportunity to fully harness the benefits of technology in agriculture. Canada and the United States reiterated the central role of science, innovation, and technology application in this area.

80. As the new Science and Innovation Strategy and updated Strategy for Climate Change are adopted, the Region encouraged the FAO to explore synergies between its work in these sectors and its robust private sector engagement approach, capitalizing on partnerships in both scientific and climate change fields to spur innovation in food systems.

81. The North American Region urged the FAO to ensure sufficient allocation within the regular budget to support engagement of Private Sector partners.

82. The Region welcomed the creation of the Private Sector Advisory Group and request that updates be communicated with Members, including the timing of the completion of the Terms of Reference, and meetings of the Group.

83. The North American Region looked forward to the Private Sector Engagement Strategy Implementation Plan update at the 133rd Session of the Program Committee in May 2022 and the 170th Session of Council in June 2022.

Regional Discussion on One Health, ASF, AMR, and CODEX

84. The FAO's Chief Veterinary Officer, Keith Sumption, and the Head of Global Programs Support Team Rosanne Marchesich, presented on international developments on the One Health Approach, including the creation of the One Health High Level Expert Panel and the expansion of the Tripartite of the FAO, World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) to a Quadripartite including the UN Environment Program (UNEP) as a full partner. The Quadripartite created a One Health Joint Plan of Action, which each of the four international organizations was currently considering through consultations.

85. In preventing the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF), the North American Region commended the efficient use of early notification and notification protocols and underlined the importance of animal health infrastructure and food security considerations. During the fight against ASF, Canada and the United States learned best practices for the control and eradication of the disease and encouraged the application of these practices including on sanitary health and supporting countries with smallholder farmers with biosecurity approaches to support

livelihoods. To bolster preparedness, the Region encouraged the FAO to assist countries in need for the assessment of their readiness for ASF incursion, including readiness plans.

86. The delegations appreciated the FAO's integration of the One Health Approach in work on food security, sustainable agriculture, food safety, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), nutrition, animal and plant health, fisheries/aquaculture, and livelihoods. The United States noted its recent \$10 million USD contribution in this regard to institutionally strengthen the One Health Approach. The North American Region looked forward to further development of the Quadripartite One Health Joint Action Plan. The delegations emphasized that Member States should be consulted and kept apprised of the Quadripartite's One Health work.

87. Canada and the United States welcomed receiving updates on the implementation of the FAO AMR Action Plan, activities of the FAO regarding the Tripartite Integrated System for Surveillance of AMR/AMU (TISSA) and implementation of the International FAO Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring (InFARM) data platform.

88. The Region recognized CODEX guidelines provided valuable information (i.e. guidelines, terminology, and principles) that could assist the FAO in implementation of its AMR Action Plan. Canada and the United States encouraged the FAO to support the World Organization for Animal Health's (OIE) efforts to standardize procedures of veterinary pharmaceuticals in areas of manufacturing, documentation practices, storage practices and management practices, and encouraged the FAO to provide assistance to low and middle-income countries to bolster controls regarding oversight of antimicrobials used in animals. The Region encouraged the FAO to continue to provide support and guidance with Member States on their national action plans.

89. The North American Region requested the FAO to provide regular updates, consultation, and other engagements on Quadripartite work and use its positions to increase its transparency and engagement with Member States. Consistent with this, Canada and the United States encouraged the FAO to look for opportunities to increase alignment, streamline content, and reduce duplication across the Quadripartite organizations.

90. The North American Region believed the FAO should examine what behavioral change is needed within food systems for adoption of One Health best practices, including for training of professionals.

91. The Region urged the FAO to continue to explore its role in One Health considerations for ecological health.

Food Loss and Waste

92. To support Members in reducing food loss and waste as a key contributor to achieving sustainable and resilient food systems, the North American Region encouraged the FAO to:

- a. Improve food loss measurement protocols and data quality, particularly to address data gaps at key supply chain stages, such as pre-harvest and manufacturing/processing, and key commodities, such as fruits and vegetables;
- b. Improve the organization of information on the FAO Technical Platform on Food Loss and Waste Reduction in order to improve accessibility of national strategies, feasibility studies, and implementation plans;
- c. Undertake analyses that help to build the “business case” for action on Food Loss and Waste (FLW), including cost-effectiveness across various solutions to identify and model in order to assess the impacts of FLW reduction on nutrition and climate change indicators (e.g. methane emissions), particularly as tied to the implementation of the FAO’s Nutrition Strategy and Strategy on Climate Change;
- d. Share evidence, including case studies and cost-benefit analysis, on the development and adoption of innovative solutions to prevent and, where unavoidable, recover value from food loss and waste including circular economy approaches. Examples included promoting composting in regenerative agriculture conversations and policies and directing inedible food into streams for livestock production when it meets regulatory requirements; and
- e. Continue fostering multi-sectoral collaborations, exploring new partnerships, and aligning global efforts on FLW as part of the implementation of the FAO’s Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

Governance

93. The North American region emphasized the importance of strong internal governance at FAO as a specialized agency of the United Nations. Commending some of the work FAO undertook to flatten the organization, improve internal accountability through Human Resources, Office of the Inspector General, and other reforms, as well as increasing transparency in strategy and policy development through increased consultation with members, the United States and Canada urged continued attention to governance matters by the Organization.

94. The North American region noted its unique perspective and ability to build bridges to consensus and promote non-traditional issue-based alliances that can further the FAO delivering on its mandate. The North American Region emphasized its commitment to working toward consensus solutions, in concert with cross-regional member states to create and reinforce current partnerships and coalitions.

95. Noting the primacy of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals as the underpinning for FAO's Strategic Framework (2022-2031), the United States and Canada recalled the importance that decision-making in the Secretariat and throughout the FAO's policy products should be driven solely by science and evidence, and called on the FAO to be a model among UN specialized agencies of an effective, efficient, relevant, transparent and accountable UN organization that supports a rules-based international system. The North American Region reiterated the need for the FAO to draw on internationally-negotiated and agreed language in its strategies, policies, programs, and products.

96. North America urged FAO to reinforce and empower existing governance structures to maintain and improve efficiency of guidance and decision-making at Council and Conference.

97. The North American Region requested the FAO take all necessary steps for the swift scheduling, conduct, and report publication to Members of the planned and postponed 2021 UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) management and administration review, noting the role of the JIU as the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations system mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide, and the responsibility of the FAO as a UN system actor to collaborate and cooperate fully with its work. The North American Region took note with appreciation the commitment of Director General Qu in his closing remarks to do so expeditiously.

98. The Region continued to embrace timely assessment and evaluation of FAO governance and management, noting such opportunities offered FAO a means to demonstrate the effectiveness of recent management reforms, while obtaining feedback on areas for further attention or development that could enhance FAO's delivery on its mandate and ensure the Organization remained fit-for-purpose to meet ongoing and emerging global challenges in food and agriculture.

99. The United States and Canada similarly encouraged the FAO to institute procedures for situations involving investigation of the executive head of agency (per recommendation from JIU/REP/2020/1, JIU/REP/2018/4, JIU/REP/2009/8), a North American priority across the UN system and a best practice for organizational risk management, and an essential body of work to take forward at a time when the organization is not facing any investigation, allegation, or other challenge.

100. Turning to finance and expenditures oversight, the North American region encouraged FAO's regular auditing of financial statements and pointed to unfunded liabilities as an unaddressed area of concern. The United States and Canada noted a slight rate of decrease in members' rate of payments of assessed contributions, encouraging FAO to reiterate the need for

full and on-time payments of dues to protect the financial health of the Organization and preserve its ability to deliver on its mandate and programming.

101. In the context of the FAO's financial stability, the North American region encouraged the development of member-agreed criteria and procedures, consistent with the Basic Texts of the Organization, to clarify and reinforce the process for applying for the reinstatement of voting rights by the FAO Conference for member states in arrears of more than two years.

102. Related to financial oversight, the North American region appreciated the FAO Director-General's repeated calls for member states to consider the impact of rising voluntary contributions to the Organization compared to the assessed budget and agreed member states should enhance oversight and increase awareness of FAO's activities funded by voluntary contributions. In this context, the United States and Canada suggested initiating a conversation with FAO about its process for developing Country Programming Frameworks, including ensuring their harmonization with the UNCSD reform process, considering member state accountability and oversight in their approval, and taking into account greater member interest in country-level programming stemming from the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit and the FAO-hosted follow-up hub's work on national pathways, and as a result of worsening global food insecurity exacerbated by Russia's war in Ukraine and the need for country-level adjustments to address supply chain issues and potential shortages of food and fertilizer.

103. The North American region encouraged the FAO to deliver and implement best-in-class anti-corruption and transparency tools and policies and to serve as an example to other UN specialized agencies.

104. Recalling its emphasis on election integrity within the UN system, discussed in the 6th INARC Report (CL 2021/LIM/1), the North American region reiterated its desire to see FAO robustly engage in facilitating member consensus on a strong Code of Conduct for Voting. The United States and Canada appreciated three successful in-person secret ballot elections conducted by FAO for member-elected leadership positions in 2021-2022. Canada and the United States encourage the FAO Secretariat and the Independent Chairperson of the Council to continue their efforts to develop a Code that consolidates Members' shared goals of free and fair elections, the secrecy of the ballot, and the prevention of conflict of interest.

105. The North American Region called for FAO's continued attention toward promoting a zero-tolerance workplace culture for sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse, and welcomed the progress being made to strengthen preventative policies and practices while encouraging an open reporting culture and proactive steps to address cases when they arise. The Region commended ongoing efforts in this regard.

106. The North American Region reiterated its expectation that it receive equivalent treatment to other FAO regions in all policy and consultation processes.

Concluding Remarks

107. The productive exchanges during the 7th biannual INARC laid a solid pathway for the North American Region's engagement with FAO. Remarks in the closing session hearkened to the perilous realities of global food insecurity stemming from Covid-19, conflicts, and climate change prior to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war in Ukraine, and solemnly acknowledged the large extent that Russia's war is compounding the global crisis. Speakers praised the recent FAO Council decision (CL 169/REP) that formally linked Russia's actions to increased global hunger and called on the FAO to provide sufficient resources and attention to the crisis, including by producing relevant and timely policy guidance and encouraging Member States to avoid stockpiling of food and fertilizers. The delegations signaled FAO's response to Russia's war in Ukraine as an opportunity to demonstrate the impacts of recent reforms to make the organization more agile and effective.

108. Closing speakers noted that the exceptionally strong partnership between North America and the FAO is grounded in a strong commitment to science, innovation, and the Organization's global role supporting normative and standard setting work for food and agriculture. The Strategy on Climate Change and Science and Innovation Strategy were praised for the central role that innovation, both technological and social, plays in achieving the FAO mandate. The North American Region highlighted the critical role food systems must play in emissions reduction and the need for technology to accelerate food system transformations. Concurrently, the delegations emphasized the importance of increasing the role of women, girls, youth, and Indigenous Peoples in resilient food systems and encouraged progress on the FAO's Gender Action Plan.

109. The North American Region lauded the FAO's support of open agricultural trade, its Private Sector Strategy, work in nutrition and standard setting bodies, and the Agricultural Market Information System. The North American Region signaled strong support for continued improvements in the FAO's governance, including the Organization's support to facilitating member consensus on a robust voting code of conduct and its urgent commitment to collaborating with the JIU on the rapid rescheduling and conduct of a management and administration review. The North American Region envisioned an agile, accountable, and effective FAO delivering world-class tools, advice, and public goods to address current and emerging threats to global food security.

Appendix A – INARC Pre-Brief and Plenary Agenda

North American Pre-INARC Briefings, April 6-11, 2022

Audience: United States, Canada, FAO

Participation to Pre-Brief Sessions	
Date and Time (EST)	Session
April 6, 2022: 9-11am	Pre-brief: Forestry
	Pre-brief: Land and Water
	Pre-brief: Fisheries
	Pre-brief: Biodiversity
	Pre-brief: FAO workplace (Harassment etc)
	Pre-brief: UNFSS
	Pre-brief: RBA
April 7 2022: 9-11:20am	Pre-brief: Partnerships - Private Sector
	Pre-brief: Partnerships - Indigenous Peoples
	Pre-brief: Gender Equality
	Pre-brief: Emerging Threats and Emergencies
	Pre-brief: Trade
	Pre-brief: International Standard Setting Bodies (Codex, IPPC, etc.) ISSBs
	Pre-brief: Innovation
	Pre-brief: Plant Production & Protection

	Pre-brief: Biotechnology
	Pre-brief: Communications
April 11 2022: 9-11am	Pre-Meeting
	Pre-INARC High-Level Bilateral Meeting

Informal North America Regional Conference, April 12-14, 2022

INARC Plenary

INARC Official Sessions	
Date and Time (EST)	Session
April 12 2022: 8:30-11am	Opening Session
	FAO's Analysis of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine
April 12 2022: 11:15-1:15am	(With FAO Officials) FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and workplan
	(With FAO Officials) FAO Climate Change Strategy and workplan
April 12 2022: 2:15-3:30pm	(Closed U.S.-CAN session) Regional Discussions on Science & Innovation and Climate Change Strategies
April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: Global initiatives: UNFSS Coalitions and COP 27
April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: Protein
April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: Gender and Indigenous Peoples & climate change impacts
April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: COFI

April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: COFO
April 12 2022: 3:30-5pm	Breakout Session: Food systems for improved diets
April 13 2022: 9-11am	(With FAO Officials) COVID and resilient food systems
April 13 2022: 11-12am	Closed Door Session for North American Ambassadors
April 13 2022: 1-4pm	(Closed Door session) Governance
April 13 2022: 3:15-4:15pm	Breakout Session: ISSBs
April 13 2022: 3:15-4:15pm	Breakout Session: Private Sector Strategy
April 13 2022: 3:15-4:15pm	Breakout Session: One Health (Tripartite+, AMR & ASF)
April 13 2022: 3:15-4:15pm	Breakout Session: Food Loss and Waste
April 13 2022: 4:15-5pm	INARC Report Drafting Session
April 14 2022: 9-10am	Review of FAO's Uptake of 6th INARC Recommendations
April 14 2022: 1-2pm	High Level Closing Event

Appendix B – List of Participants

CANADA

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Paul Samson, Associate Deputy Minister
Tom Rosser, Assistant Deputy Minister
Aaron Fowler, Director General and Chief Agricultural Negotiator
Marie-Noëlle Desrochers, Executive Director
Lisa Charette, Director
Claire Mullen, Director
Daryl Nearing, Deputy Director
Diane McLaughlin, Deputy Director
Patrick Verreault, Deputy Director
Sandra Newsome, Deputy Director
Lisa Wellman-Patterson, Deputy Director
Joe Hawkins, Deputy Director
David Turcotte, Acting Deputy Director
Brad Fraleigh, Senior Science Manager
Anna Larson, Senior Policy Analyst
Asha Creft, Senior Policy Analyst
Zeshawn Awan, Senior Policy Analyst
Darlène Dessureault, Senior Trade Policy Advisor
Moriah Lepage, Senior Program Officer
François Cloutier, Analyst
Bipasha Chakravarty, Policy Analyst
Tim Mcallister, Research Scientist
Marjorie Hercule, Policy Analyst
Tonya Temple, Policy Analyst
Meredith Marshall, Policy Analyst
Kathryn Forrester, Trade Policy Advisor

Global Affairs Canada

Christine Campbell, Director General
Hong-Won Yu, Director
Flora Mak, Acting Deputy Director
Soraya Hassanali, Deputy Director
Heather McBride, Deputy Director

Anatoliy Shatkovskyy, Senior Analyst
Jill Guerra, Senior Advisor
Olusola Sotunde, Senior Analyst
Elizabeth Brilliant, Analyst
Paul Sjoberg, Policy Officer
Nicole Brandt, Policy Analyst
Pierre-Luc Saindon, Policy Analyst

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Reem Barakat, Deputy Director

Canada's Permanent Mission to the Rome-Based UN Agencies

Elissa Golberg, Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN Agencies in Rome
Maarten de Groot, Deputy Permanent Representative
Julie Émond, Alternate Permanent Representative

Crown-Indigenous Relations and North Affairs Canada

Christopher Starr, Analyst

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Renée Sauvé, Director
Rose Labreche, Manager
Seth Reinhart, Manager
Barry Green, Manager
Benny Guttman, Policy Analyst
Nadija Paznar, Senior Officer

Health Canada

Meghan Quinlan, Manager
Jeffrey Leung, Senior Policy Analyst

Natural Resources Canada

Maureen Whelan, Manager
Christa Mooney, Senior Policy Advisor

Public Health Agency of Canada

Steven Sternthal, Director General
Carolee Carson, Acting Director
Linda Ristani, Director
Tanya Lary, Director
Janelle Lanoix, Manager
Kyna Caminiti, Manager
Stavroula Tsamitros, Senior Policy Analyst
Andréanne Goyette, Senior Policy Analyst

Ministère des Relations Internationales et de la Francophonie, Government of Quebec

Rachel Levesque, Conseillère en relations internationales

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Washington:

Alan Huddleston, Director, Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service
Andrian McAdams, International Trade Specialist, Foreign Agricultural Service
Anna Lieth, International Trade Specialist, Foreign Agricultural Service
Caitrin Martin, Senior Policy Advisor, Foreign Agricultural Service
Cathy McKinnell, Division Director, Foreign Agricultural Service
Claire Cvitanovich, International Economist, Foreign Agricultural Service
Dan Kovich, Science Advisor, Foreign Agricultural Service
Elise Golan, Director for Sustainable Development, Office of the Chief Economist
Jean Buzby, USDA Food Loss and Waste Liaison, Office of the Chief Economist
Jennifer Conje, Assistant Director for Policy, U.S. Forest Service
Joe Hain, Director, International Organizations/Multilateral Affairs, Foreign Agricultural Service
Ken Lowery, Senior International Issues Analyst, U.S. Codex Office
Marielsie Avila, Senior Trade Advisor, Foreign Agricultural Service
Mark Myers, International Trade Specialist, Foreign Agricultural Service
Neena Anandaraman, Veterinary Science Policy Advisor, Office of the Chief Scientist
Paul Welcher, International Relations Advisor, Foreign Agricultural Service
Sean Cox, Agricultural Attache, Foreign Agricultural Service
Yibo Woods, Global Coordinator/Senior Nutritionist, Food and Nutrition Service

U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies, Rome (USUN Rome):

Cindy McCain, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
Jennifer Harhigh, Deputy Chief of Mission, INARC Moderator
Alison Storsve, Political-Economic Section Chief
Hammad Hammad, Political-Economic Officer
Silvia Giovanazzi, Political-Economic Program Specialist
Sean Cox, Foreign Agricultural Service Attaché (USDA)
Nathan Miller, Agricultural Specialist (USDA)
David Hegwood, Senior Development Officer (USAID)

U.S. Department of State in Washington:

Michele Sison, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organizations
Nerissa Cook, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organizations
Adam Cornish, Agricultural Advisor, Office of Agricultural Policy
Corey Watts, Program Analyst, Office of Agricultural Policy
Deidre Warner-Kramer, Deputy Director, Office of Marine Conservation
Jack Bisase, Food Security Advisor, Bureau of International Organizations
Jeffrey Giauque, Director, Office of Agricultural Policy
Jessica Kuntz, Economic Officer, Bureau of International Organizations
John Tuminaro, Senior Food Security Advisor, Bureau of International Organizations
Makarios Jackson, Officer Management Specialist, Bureau of International Organizations
Paul Brown, Coordinator, Office of Global Food Security
Rebecca Wintering, Officer, Office of Marine Conservation
Robert Boenish, Food Security Advisor, Bureau of International Organizations

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Washington:

Jeff Goldberg, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator
Shawn Baker, Chief Nutritionist
Ahmed Kablan, Senior Scientist
Angela Records, Agricultural Resilience Advisor
Biniam Iyob, Senior Policy Advisor
Carolyn Hirshon, Program Specialist
Christine Jost, Senior Livestock Technical Advisor
Daniel Bailey, Agriculture Development Officer
Emily Bondank, AAAS Fellow
Evania Robles, Program Analyst
Hallie Heinzen, Intern USAID Center for Nutrition
Hannah Guedenet, Senior Nutrition Advisor
Jennifer Horsfall, Division Chief USAID Center for Resilience
John Peters, Strategic Advisor

Keith Dokho, Private Sector Engagement
Louise Boothe, Global Engagement Technical Consultant
Lucia Wittenberg, HCTM
Mark Huisenga, Senior Program Manager
Matthew Thielker, RFS Fellow
Meera Chandra, Technical Consultant
Meghan Anson, Nutritionist
Meredith Soule, Inclusive Development Division Chief
Michelle Snow, Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Nacasi Green, Humanitarian Affairs Officer
Nika Larian, AAAS Fellow
Noel Gurwick, Natural Resources Officer
Regina Eddy, Program Officer
Sezin Tokar, Senior Hydrometeorological Advisor
Shivana Leonard, Senior Aquaculture and Fisheries Advisor
Tracy Powell, Plant Geneticist

U.S. Department of Commerce:

Cheri McCarty, Foreign Affairs Specialist, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Fisheries

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Qu Dongyu, Director-General
Beth Bechdol, Deputy Director-General
Maximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist
Ismahane Elouafi, Chief Scientist
Beth Crawford, Director, Office of Strategy
Rein Paulsen, Director, Office of Emergencies and Resilience
Alexander Jones, Director of Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Partnerships Division
Mina Dowlatchahi, Director of Project Support Division
Marcela Villarreal, Director of Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division
Lynnette Neufeld, **Director of Food and Nutrition Division**
Benjamin Davis, **Director, the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division**
Lauren Phillips, **Director and Deputy Director, the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division**

Keith Sumption, Chief, Zoonoses Center, the Joint FAO/WHO Centre (CODEX Food Standards and Zoonotic Diseases)

Boubaker Ben BelHassen, Director of Markets and Trade Division

Zitouni Ould-Dad, Deputy Director, Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment

Rosanne Marchesich, Senior Emergency & Rehabilitation Officer

Jocelyn Brown Hall, Director, FAOLOW

Thomas Pesek, Sr. Liaison Officer, FAOLOW

James Cordero, FAOLOW

Ahdi Mohammed, FAOLOW

Robin Guinot, Strategic Communications, FAOLOW

Elena Clark, Congressional Affairs Officer, FAOLOW

Alexandra Richter, Partnerships Officer, FAOLOW

Appendix C – Overview of the INARC

110. The INARC was established in 2010 as a forum for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) North American Region (United States and Canada) to strengthen collaboration between Region members and the FAO.

111. The FAO does not implement technical assistance programs in the North American Region. Nonetheless, the countries of the North American Region are active participants in the organization, including the FAO’s numerous technical and governing body committees and an active Liaison Office (FALOW) in Washington, DC, which conducts advocacy and awareness-raising activities and fosters collaboration to advance FAO’s goals. Both countries have significant agricultural, fisheries, and forestry sectors and are fully committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and the FAO’s goal “*to achieve food security for all, and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.*” Given this engagement, INARC meetings have sought to express the North American Region’s views on FAO’s work and activities globally, as well as the Region’s views on effective institutional governance.

112. The INARC is “informal” because the meeting has not been formally sanctioned by the FAO’s Conference. The North American Region has chosen to keep this informal approach to significantly reduce the costs and administrative burden for the FAO. While the INARC format is informal, the priorities detailed in the INARC report are considered to be a formal declaration of the North American Region’s views regarding the FAO’s strategic programming. The North American Region expects that these views be given equal consideration as the reports from other regional conferences in the FAO’s budgetary and operational planning and reporting.

113. The INARC playlist can be accessed at the following link:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3hENp9i1DU3UJfiLNvSKTL?si=7db9ddc20509471a>

Appendix D – Summaries of Plenary and Closing Remarks

Opening Remarks

Opening Remarks from Deputy Assistant Secretary Nerissa Cook

114. U.S. Department of State Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs Nerissa Cook, reminded the plenary the INARC convened amid a dire and worsening global food security situation exacerbated by Russia’s unprovoked war on Ukraine. She expressed gratitude to FAO and Canada for their virtual participation in the INARC meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. She noted regional conferences were an important source of Member State input for the FAO, and the INARC was an opportunity to consider high-level priorities in a flexible and candid way. Recalling the successful efforts from the FAO and others to combat the desert locust plague in North Africa and the Middle East less than two years ago, Cook highlighted the positive impact that only becomes possible with tight-knit international cooperation. She underlined the urgent need for expanding climate resilience and adaptation work in FAO’s program of work, specifically the need for climate-smart agriculture for reducing agriculture’s greenhouse gas footprint and the importance of reducing agricultural methane emissions.

Opening Remarks from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Assistant Deputy Minister Tom Rosser

115. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Assistant Deputy Minister Tom Rosser expressed concern for the ongoing challenges to global food systems, including Russia’s invasion of Ukraine which resulted in soaring food prices and aggravated the existing issues of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. He underlined the importance of raising the North American voice to support collective action in the food production sectors to become more resilient and sustainable. He further argued the FAO was the best forum to discuss science and innovations to overcome these challenges.

Opening Remarks from Global Affairs Canada Director General Christine Campbell

116. Global Affairs Canada Director General Christine Campbell expressed gratitude to the United States for hosting the INARC and to the FAO for its active engagement. She underscored the value of these discussions, especially in the current context of rising levels of global hunger. Her remarks explained how the unprovoked Russian invasion created a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and worsened food security across the world. She recalled the critical importance of the mandate of the FAO and therefore the need for an effective, efficient and transparent Organization.

Opening Remarks from Associate Administrator Clay Hamilton

117. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Associate Administrator Clay Hamilton underlined the importance of FAO's work on climate change and science and innovation and supported the ongoing development of FAO's strategies on these topics. He emphasized that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has worsened global food security and FAO had an important role in providing timely and accurate information and encouraging countries to keep agricultural trade open by avoiding trade restrictive measures including export prohibitions and restrictions. Hamilton also highlighted the importance of INARC as a forum for FAO to hear the North American priorities.

Concluding Remarks

Closing Remarks from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Associate Deputy Minister Paul Samson

118. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Associate Deputy Minister Paul Samson gave closing remarks underlining the essential role of sustainable productivity growth in overcoming the current challenges to global food systems, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted the ongoing work towards the development of the updated FAO Strategy on Climate Change and the new Science and Innovation Strategy, arguing for the central role of innovation, both technological and social, in achieving the mandate of the Organization. He spoke about furthering FAO's partnerships with the private sector, nutrition, working with the Agricultural Market Information System to analyze fertilizer supply, and the importance of open agricultural trade. He expressed gratitude to the FAO for its engagement and to the United States for hosting fruitful regional discussions.

Closing Remarks from Global Affairs Canada Director General Christine Campbell

119. Global Affairs Canada Director General Christine Campbell acknowledged the profound impacts that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on global food systems and called on to FAO provide sufficient resources and attention to the crisis, including by producing relevant and timely policy guidance, and encouraging Member States to avoid stockpiling of food and fertilizers. Campbell reiterated the need to prepare for the reconstruction of the agriculture sector inside Ukraine. In this regard, the FAO's work in assessing the loss and damage is essential. She argued the FAO should be an example of a more effective, efficient, relevant, transparent and accountable UN organization that supports a rules-based international system. Her remarks underscored the important role that FAO needs to play, delivering world-class tools, advice and public goods to address current and emerging threats and be a champion for resilience building.

Closing Remarks from Assistant Secretary Michele Sison

120. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Michele Sison noted the perilous realities of global food insecurity prior to Russia's unprovoked, unjustified, and full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which only compounded and worsened the crisis. She underscored the importance of the recent FAO Council decision (CL 169/REP) that linked Russia's actions with exacerbating global hunger and called on FAO to lead within the UN system on the global response addressing food insecurity. Sison thanked Director-General Qu for the robust analysis the FAO provided on spiking food and fertilizer prices. She called on FAO to urge Russia to withdraw from Ukraine for the sake of global food security, as Russia's reversible actions had a direct effect on FAO's primary mandate: ending global hunger. She encouraged the FAO to seize the opportunity to demonstrate the impact of recent reforms to make the organization more agile and effective. Sison discussed the importance of the Climate Change and Science & Innovation strategies as FAO continues to focus on the challenges of the future. She noted how critical it was for food systems to be integrated in emissions reduction and noted technology's role as an accelerator for transforming food systems. Sison also highlighted the importance of governance issues including zero tolerance for sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse, elections integrity and U.S. support for a robust Code of Conduct for Voting, and FAO's commitment to engaging the JIU to reschedule a management and administration review at the earliest opportunity.

Closing Remarks from Director-General Qu Dongyu

121. FAO Director-General (DG) Qu highlighted rising food insecurity due to war, humanitarian crises, and climate change. The DG noted the 80-year fruitful collaboration between FAO and North America, noting both countries' role in the establishment of the FAO. The DG said the war in Ukraine would cause production, supply chain, and logistical disruptions and impact food security. He outlined how FAO was responding through land preparation, planting, and harvesting to support producers and minimize disruptions. Qu called attention to FAO's Ukraine Rapid Response Plan request of \$115.4 million to support 330,000 farming households, for which less than 10% was funded. The DG also highlighted the Hand-in-Hand initiative, the One Country One Product initiative, and the Green Cities initiative. The DG thanked Canada and the United States for the Region's support for FAO's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Program. He highlighted FAO's Science and Innovation Strategy, as cross-cutting for FAO's work, as well as the Strategy on Climate Change, to strengthen and improve FAO's capabilities in addressing the climate impacts on agrifood systems.

*Closing Remarks from North American Ambassadors in Rome,
Cindy McCain and Elissa Golberg*

122. In closing remarks, Canadian Ambassador to the Rome-based UN Agencies Elissa Golberg noted the productive exchange during the INARC was a solid pathway for North America's engagement with FAO. Ambassador Golberg noted successive unprecedented challenges that were bringing focused attention on global food systems. She said the FAO needed to lead with courage and foresight through these challenges with a focus on SDG 2, ending hunger. Ambassador Golberg highlighted the devastating effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on global food systems. She also noted the importance of continued progress on the FAO's Gender Action Plan. U.S. Ambassador to the Rome-based UN Agencies Cindy McCain said partnership between North America and FAO was grounded in a strong commitment to science, innovation, and the organization's global role supporting normative and standard setting work for food and agriculture. Ambassador McCain urged deepening good governance, implementation of FAO's ten-year Strategic Plan, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. She reiterated U.S. support for ambitious Science & Innovation and Climate Change Strategies. She noted the importance of increasing the role of women, girls, youth, and indigenous peoples in food systems. Ambassador McCain closed by urging FAO to use its voice, data, and policy recommendations to implement the Council's decision to address the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.