

**REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**WORLD FOOD COUNCIL**  
**on the work of its sixth session**

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**3-6 June 1980**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION**

**SUPPLEMENT No. 19 (A/35/19)**



**UNITED NATIONS**

**New York, 1980**

## NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

/26 August 1980/

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## ABBREVIATIONS

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FAC	Food Aid Convention
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GNP	Gross national product
IEFR	International Emergency Food Reserve
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWC	International Wheat Council
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFC	World Food Council
WFP	World Food Programme

PART ONE

MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

12. Ministers further recall the Council's charter to keep the world food situation under constant review, co-ordinate and monitor the mobilization of support and strive to ensure the coherence of over-all efforts of Governments and agencies to solve world food problems. To assist in these considerations, the secretariat was directed by the Council to prepare in collaboration with the agencies concerned a comprehensive list of international agencies, both within and outside the United Nations system, involved in food and agricultural development, along with a description of their roles, and a cross reference of their various activities. It was hoped that this would assist the Council and the international community to contribute towards a more fully integrated, coherent and visible approach in the implementation of the global food and agricultural strategy first enunciated by the World Food Conference of 1974 and in continuous evolution in subsequent meetings of the World Food Council at Manila, Mexico, Ottawa, and now at Arusha, as well as in the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Rome.

### I. FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION ISSUES

13. While overcoming hunger and malnutrition is the common responsibility of the international community, immediate action should focus on food problems of those developing countries where production is inadequate and hunger widespread. Developing countries recognize that the solution of their food problems requires in the first instance their determined action, and it is on this basis that they seek and need the increased support of the international community.

#### National food sector strategies

14. The resolve of many developing countries to give greater priority to overcoming their food problems has been demonstrated inter alia by the response to the Council's food sector strategy initiative. Thirty-two developing countries have requested assistance for the food strategy endeavour and 10 developed countries as well as the World Bank, FAO, the Inter-American Development Bank and UNDP are supporting their efforts. This demonstrates wide acceptance of the strategy approach as a means for developing countries to give new impetus to their food production and distribution efforts and to attract the additional international resources which are necessary.

15. The Council endorses these efforts. The implementation of food strategies or plans and systems, as some countries call them, would be dependent upon the mobilization of additional resources, internal and external. The Council calls for further and rapid increases in external resource flows to the food sector as one of the prerequisites to the success of the food strategy approach. Such resources may be increasingly channelled through multilateral agencies.

16. Food strategies naturally should be formulated within the over-all framework of national development plans and adapted to the circumstances and needs of each individual country in accordance with its national objectives. Where the government so desires, a food strategy can be designed to support rural development and agrarian reforms, co-operative forms of production and other progressive measures in the food and agricultural sector, in accordance with the Declaration of Principles and the Programme of Action adopted by the

World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, 4/ and endorsed by the Council last year.

17. It is fully understood that technical assistance for the preparation of food sector strategies should be complementary to the national planning process which should be largely undertaken by the national institutions. Such assistance also should respect the sovereign right of each government to make its own decisions. To enable developing countries to rely increasingly on their own national expertise for the preparation and implementation of food strategies a much greater effort is necessary to provide appropriate training.

18. A number of countries have indicated that they have the elements of a food plan, system or strategy already incorporated in their over-all development plans, though not explicitly using the term "food strategy". It is the right of each government to judge whether greater priority attention is required and whether specific food sector planning - by whatever name - is useful for it in stimulating more co-ordinated and effective action, identifying gaps in its present plans and policies and for launching the means to fill these gaps and attracting additional resources. Countries which have not opted for food strategies as such cannot be regarded a priori as not having an appropriate plan for their food sector. The Council reiterates its previous declaration that development assistance agencies should not make the preparation of a national food strategy a condition for development assistance.

19. While food strategies must be flexible and specific to individual country needs and preferences, the Council sees value in the broad general guidelines already provided in response to the Council request at Ottawa. The Council directs its secretariat to further develop these guidelines in the light of emerging experiences of the Governments and agencies.

20. Consultations for dissemination and exchange of information on progress, experience and implementation of food strategies will help enhance co-operation among countries and agencies.

21. The Council stresses that the resources of the International Fund for Agricultural Development should be replenished at a level sufficient to provide for a realistic attainment of its operations. Member States should respond actively and urgently to the call of the Governing Council of the Fund.

22. The Council agreed that the availability of strategic agricultural inputs to the farmers in the developing countries was an important element in their efforts to increase food production. The Council therefore agreed to consider the suggestion that international arrangements should be evolved to make strategic agricultural inputs available at reasonable costs; however, the delegations of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America believed that the proposal needed clarification before they could consider it.

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4/ See Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Rome, 12-20 July 1979 (WCARRD/REP); transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/34/485).



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23. The Council notes the efforts under way to address the problem of tsetse fly infestation, which involves 36 African countries south of the Sahara through the establishment of the FAO Commission on African Animal Trypanosomiasis. The Council calls for strong support for the Commission.

#### Food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes

24. Chronic hunger affects some half a billion people in the developing countries. The waste of human and development potential involved in continued hunger makes it imperative to strengthen direct actions for the early relief of hunger. Direct action programmes should be so designed as to provide particularly the landless and near-landless poor with access to adequate amounts of food to sustain a healthy life and contribute to national economic development, including increased food production.

25. The Council notes that a number of countries have succeeded in helping large numbers of their low-income people to achieve a better and more adequate food intake by such measures as rationing and food subsidy schemes which improve both food and income distribution.

26. The Council suggests that governments, therefore, consider within their over-all development objectives, and according to their particular socio-economic conditions, the use of direct-distribution programmes clearly targetted to the hungry. Fundamental to this approach is recognition that alleviating large-scale hunger and malnutrition can promote over-all social and economic development.

27. Experience has shown that extension of such measures is limited by their cost, by management constraints and by a concern that they may increase dependency, particularly on imported food, and provide disincentives to local production. These concerns are real and need to be examined on an individual country basis. In particular, it is important to develop food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes which contribute to the immediate relief of hunger and at the same time stimulate food production and agricultural development. They also should be planned in relation to on-going food aid programmes, which should be increasingly directed through multilateral channels.

28. For the least-developed and most seriously affected countries, food-entitlement programmes will only be possible on a significant scale with additional international support. Such support should be provided through existing development assistance channels, preferably on a multi-year basis and as flexible programme aid on a grant basis. Such programmes should, of course, be regarded as interim, to be phased out within a realistic time span as food production increases and consumption standards become more adequate. Governments should note the need to ensure that on-going assistance programmes are not adversely affected by allocation of resources to food-entitlement programmes.

29. The Council encourages interested developing countries to develop food-entitlement programmes within the context of their national plans and policies, including national food strategies. It calls upon the developed and other donor countries to support their efforts as a recognition of their commitment to a world without hunger.

30. Ministers request the secretariat to consult with interested Governments and agencies in the further development and evaluation of food-entitlement programmes.

31. These consultations and the experience of countries undertaking and supporting entitlement programmes should provide the Council with a more precise picture of the scope, feasibility, effectiveness and resource requirements for entitlement programmes as the basis for advancing more detailed proposals for national and international food-entitlement action.

## II. FOOD CRISIS CONTINGENCY PLANNING

32. The Council notes the positive conclusion of a new food aid convention, as proposed at its last meeting, which increased the guaranteed minimum level of food aid from 4.2 to 7.6 million tons. At the same time, it is a matter for regret that the new Convention should be limited to a floor level of 7.6 million tons of food aid, still short of the 10 million-ton minimum target recommended by the World Food Conference. Ministers strongly urge that every effort should be made both to enlist new contributors and to increase the commitments of existing ones so that the new Convention can be renewed by mid-1981 with a firm assurance that 10 million tons will be the absolute minimum flow of assistance, even in times of high prices and food shortage.

33. Ministers last year requested that the International Monetary Fund consider, within the context of its financing facilities, the feasibility of providing additional balance-of-payments support to assist low-income food deficit countries to meet increases in their food import bills. Ministers recognize that the low-income food deficit countries are in no position to cope with the sudden increases in their food import costs to which they are increasingly exposed. The Council therefore urges its member Governments to give most careful and urgent consideration to the outcome of the study which the IMF is undertaking.

34. The Council also endorses the initiative of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes to examine at its next session the proposal of FAO that the International Emergency Food Reserve should be made a legally binding convention.

35. Ministers express concern that the food outlook is even more serious for many developing countries in the 1980s than in the past, which is seen as a food crisis-prone decade unless the necessary measures are implemented. The potential magnitude of such crises will be increased by the much greater dependency of developing countries on food imports and perhaps by competing uses for food grain which a number of countries are now beginning to consider as a source of fuel alcohol.

36. In these circumstances, there is clearly an urgent need for comprehensive arrangements which will enable such crises to be met with a co-ordinated response so as to minimize in particular the hardships it will inflict on the poor in developing countries and to avert the threat of starvation. The Council has a responsibility to press for the development of such arrangements. Recognizing the value of the International Undertaking on

World Food Security and FAO's Five-Point Plan as a framework for action, the Council calls on the international community to give careful consideration to the urgently needed additional arrangements as discussed below.

37. The Council reiterates its position that a new International Wheat Agreement with legally binding provisions for the constitution of reserves together with other related economic provisions should constitute the core of world food security. The Council has been informed that discussions in the International Wheat Council have again reached a point at which there is some ground for hope that an early conclusion of a new International Wheat Agreement will be possible. The Council encourages these efforts and calls on all concerned to bring them to an early and successful conclusion. In this connexion, the Council again underlines that the level of the reserve has to be adequate to meet both market stability and world food security objectives.

38. To enable such an Agreement to make its proper contribution to world food security, it will need to provide for the prompt constitution of a substantial internationally-agreed reserve. All Council members, with three exceptions, sustained that the new Agreement should also include provisions for special multilateral or bilateral assistance to developing countries so as to enable their full participation in the Agreement. The three dissenting members, while considering with sympathy the problems of developing countries, believed that this matter will be more appropriately dealt with in the International Wheat Council negotiations. If the International Wheat Agreement, despite current expectations, cannot be brought to a successful conclusion by mid-1981, serious consideration should be given by the international community, in consultation with the International Wheat Council, to alternative ways of establishing at least a contingency reserve of an adequate size in advance of, and for eventual incorporation in, a new International Wheat Agreement. The establishment of such a reserve should guard against unduly disrupting grain markets.

39. The Council has already recognized the need for stepped-up efforts to assist the developing countries to strengthen food security at the national level and asked that FAO and the World Bank consider a systematic assessment of the needs as a basis for a major investment effort. The Council urges developed countries, other countries in a position to do so and international agencies, particularly FAO and the World Bank, to intensify their efforts to assist developing countries to build up their food security infrastructure and food stocks.

40. Ministers considered the proposal for a Food Crisis Contingency Pledge, under which a code of conduct among interested Governments would be accepted in order to avoid actions which destabilize the international food grain market in times of tight grain market conditions. This could be a major help towards meeting a major world food crisis as happened in 1973-1975. Logistic stand-by procedures, the need to provide more predictability to the world grain trade and special provisions for developing countries in cases of global food crisis were also considered as part of the proposal. The Council believes that a form of food crisis pledge or international understanding covering various aspects of crisis management needs further examination and directs its secretariat to explore further the possible modalities of such arrangement, with the the appropriate agencies, taking into account, inter alia, the work of the ad hoc Working Group established by the Committee on World Food Security.

41. The World Food Council should continue to monitor progress on all aspects of food security arrangements; the importance of progress on food security should be taken up in the forthcoming global negotiations.

42. The Council agrees that prevention of food losses, including post-harvest losses, could make an important contribution to food security. It therefore commends the efforts of multilateral and bilateral donors in this regard and hopes that such actions would be further expanded and consolidated.

### III. FOOD TRADE

43. The Council has always recognized that the long-term solution to the problems of poverty, hunger and malnutrition in the developing countries is intimately linked with their over-all development, for which a sustained expansion in their trade is important. Expanding efforts will allow developing countries not only to develop their economy but to meet their immediate import needs, especially food supplies.

44. The Council therefore reiterates its concern with the increase in protectionist trade practices that affect the economic development of the whole international community and, particularly as they reduce the export possibilities of developing countries, affect their economic potential and reduce their capacity to import food they need. In this context, the Council urges all countries to make their best efforts to avoid growing protectionist policies. It further urges developed countries to opt for adjusting those sectors of their agriculture and manufacturing economies which require protection against developing country exports. Developing countries should also review their trade policies with a view to liberalizing and expanding their trade, therefore further contributing to the solution of their food problems.

45. The Council notes that the public in many countries, particularly in developed countries, is not always aware of the negative effects of protectionist measures on their own well-being and on the advancement of developing countries. Such measures inhibit the solution of structural constraints leading to inflation, unemployment and low productivity. The Council repeats its recommendation made at Ottawa last year that Governments should make intensive efforts to inform the public on the true cost of protectionism.

46. In addition, Ministers have this year given particular attention to the growing geographical concentration of grain production and imbalances in the world food economy. The dependence by most of the world on imported grain supplies is the cause of concern to many Governments, which fear that climatic, logistic and even political factors could disturb the delicate balance of the world food economy and impose particular hardship on importing developing countries. On the other hand, the Council recognizes that the principal grain-exporting countries have made a valuable contribution to world food security. In these circumstances, it is desirable to explore measures to promote increased and more regionally balanced food production and trade.

47. The Council also agrees on the need to focus attention on developing countries where food imports are growing especially fast, particularly where they are associated with reduced consumption standards, and to develop special measures to assist them.

48. Proposals to these ends will be considered at the next meeting of the Council within the wider framework of trade relations and their impact on the food situation of developing countries.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

49. The Council is confident that, despite the many problems which continue to inhibit action, sustained progress in overcoming hunger and increasing food production is possible. Neither the need for nor the possibility of such progress can be disputed. In this connexion, the Council recognizes that the solution of the food and other major social and economic problems facing the developing countries depends primarily on progress towards strengthening international peace and security, the relaxation of tensions and the achievement of real disarmament. Only under these conditions will States be able to channel towards development objectives, including the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, an increasing proportion of the resources now spent on building up armaments.

50. The Council expresses concern over the growing food crisis in many developing regions and, in particular, reaffirms its appeal for additional food assistance for the African countries currently experiencing very severe shortages.

51. As the nations of the world prepare to define together their common development strategy for the new decade and to resolve their major economic differences in unprecedented global negotiations, the Council, in accordance with its charter, wishes to put before them the need to keep at the centre of their deliberations the imperatives of food and hunger:

(a) Neither development nor peace can be sustained in the face of widespread and growing hunger;

(b) Only a concerted effort can overcome world hunger and accelerate development, including substantial increases in food production;

(c) The essence of such an effort is a framework of mutually supporting actions by developed and developing countries to achieve structural change in the food economy by stepped-up investment flows within the context of an increasing over-all level of development assistance and greater national priority for the food sector - the food strategy approach is widely accepted as a means to this end;

(d) This should be supplemented by national and international support for appropriate food entitlement and other direct distribution programmes, recognizing a common human responsibility to ensure adequate food for all;

(e) Food security should best be achieved by an internationally co-ordinated system of nationally-held reserves, preferably if early action proves possible, within the framework of an International Wheat Agreement, with related economic provisions;

(f) This should be supplemented by the development of appropriate infrastructure, including assistance for stock building, and consideration of a food financing facility, a higher level of guaranteed food aid, a legally binding International Emergency Food Reserve, and agreed arrangements for food crisis management;

(g) All countries should consider a major long-term expansion and shift in trade, which will be related to adjustments in production, so as to provide developing countries with greater trade opportunities and eliminate constraints to an expanding world economy.

52. The Council believes that realization of these objectives is an essential contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order and to the International Development Strategy for the decade ahead.



PART TWO  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

## CHAPTER I

### ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

#### A. Opening of the session

1. The sixth ministerial session of the World Food Council was held at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 3 to 6 June 1980. It was preceded by a Preparatory Meeting in Rome, from 28 to 30 April 1980.
2. The session was inaugurated in the Arusha International Conference Centre on 3 June 1980 by the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency the Honourable Edward Moringe Ole Sokoine. A statement was made by the President of the World Food Council, the Honourable Arturo R. Tanco, Jr. A personal message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations was read by the Executive Director of the Council. The President read messages from the Director-General of the ILO and the President of IFAD.
3. In his statement, the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania called for a global effort to bring the food problem under control and noted that the Council had effectively encouraged member Governments to adopt and implement measures directed towards solving the enormous agricultural and food problems which existed in developing countries. Development could only be meaningful if people at all levels of society were involved, as they were in the Tanzanian "ujamaa" programme for the promotion of self-reliant villages, which had proved successful as an over-all development effort. The Tanzanian Government believed that agricultural development was an absolute prerequisite for a successful development effort, and it had therefore taken important steps to facilitate such a breakthrough by stimulating domestic institutions and inviting the assistance, in many areas, of bilateral and multilateral agencies. Finally, he hoped that the Council would make a serious effort to devise ways and means of making capital and technology available to exploit developing nations' resources to the maximum extent possible.
4. The President of the World Food Council said that, notwithstanding the political and military turmoil in many parts of the world, mankind should not lose sight of the world's most important problem - the problem of hunger. The right to food, as the first of human rights, transcended peace and war, and the eradication of hunger from the face of the earth should therefore be of foremost concern.
5. An outstanding feature of the progress made since the Council's fifth session in Ottawa had been the enthusiasm shown by developing and developed countries alike in adopting and supporting national food strategies. Over 30 developing countries - the majority of them from Africa - had expressed interest in such strategies. Growing awareness in the developed countries that co-operation and concrete action were essential if a major crisis was to be averted, would facilitate the solution of the problems before the Council. The Council must stimulate re-examination of the attitudes and positions on which the process of decision-making by Governments and international organizations was based, and generate the political will necessary for accelerated support by the international

community since only through such action could a world free of hunger be brought about.

6. He hoped that the Council's present session would meet in a spirit of co-operation, remembering that "no man is an island, entire of itself, that every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main, that every man's death diminishes us, because we are involved in mankind".

7. In his message to the Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said that unless the international community could direct greater national and international efforts towards the establishment of a just and equitable world food system, peace and progress in the world would be seriously imperilled. He commended the Council for playing a role worthy of its charter as the co-ordinating organ on global food issues for the United Nations, and noted its accomplishments in promoting food sector strategies in order to give food policies higher priority in national development efforts, as well as its important role in facilitating the negotiation of a new food aid convention, independently and in advance of a full International Wheat Agreement. The proposals before the Council on food entitlements and food crisis contingency planning could be of significant value and deserved very close examination. Food would be a crucial element in the forthcoming global round of negotiations on economic matters and in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The international community looked to the World Food Council to continue its efforts to mobilize the political determination for timely action.

#### B. Members of the Council

8. At present, the Council consists of the following 36 States:

Australia***	Honduras***	Romania***
Bangladesh***	India**	Senegal***
Barbados***	Iran*	Sri Lanka*
Botswana**	Iraq**	Sudan***
Canada**	Italy*	Thailand**
Colombia**	Japan*	Trinidad and Tobago*
Denmark*	Liberia**	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics***
Ethiopia**	Malawi*	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**
Gabon*	Mexico**	United States of America**
German Democratic Republic*	Morocco*	Venezuela*
Germany, Federal Republic of ***	Netherlands*	Yugoslavia**
Ghana***	Nicaragua***	
	Philippines***	

\* Term of office expires 31 December 1980.

\*\* Term of office expires 31 December 1981.

\*\*\* Term of office expires 31 December 1982.

#### C. Attendance

9. All members were present at the session except Gabon, Iran, Nicaragua and the Sudan.

10. In addition, the following States and organizations were represented:

States non-members of the Council

Angola	Guinea	Sierra Leone
Argentina	Holy See	Sweden
Belgium	Indonesia	Switzerland
Burundi	Kenya	Syrian Arab Republic
China	Nigeria	Tunisia
Finland	Norway	United Republic of Cameroon
France	Pakistan	United Republic of Tanzania
Greece	Rwanda	Zambia

United Nations

United Nations Children's Fund  
United Nations Development Programme  
United Nations Environment Programme  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
World Food Programme

Specialized agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
International Fund for Agricultural Development  
International Labour Organisation  
World Bank  
World Health Organization

Other organizations

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

Intergovernmental organizations

African Development Bank  
Arab Organization for Agricultural Development  
European Economic Community  
International Wheat Council  
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Non-governmental organizations 5/

Environment Liaison Centre  
International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage  
Tanzania Carton, Limited  
Members of the Italian and European Parliaments

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5/ Several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were granted ad hoc observer status under the terms of rule 63 of the Council's rules of procedure.

#### D. Officers

11. At the 2nd meeting of the session, on 3 June 1980, the Council elected Mr. Gonzalo Bula Hoyos (Colombia) as a Vice-President to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of Mr. Luis Fernando Londono (Colombia), who was unable to continue.
12. At the same meeting, Mr. Doeke Faber (Netherlands) was elected as Rapporteur to fill the vacancy of Mr. Hans Linnemann (Netherlands), who was unable to continue. The officers for the session were:

President: Mr. Arturo R. Tanco, Jr. (Philippines)

Vice-Presidents: Mr. Gonzalo Bula Hoyos (Colombia)  
Mr. Abdellatif Ghissassi (Morocco)  
Mr. Erwin Neu (German Democratic Republic)

Rapporteur: Mr. Doeke Faber (Netherlands)

#### E. Agenda

13. The Council adopted the following agenda (WFC/1980/1/Rev.1) for the session:
1. Opening of the session.
  2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
  3. Food production and consumption issues:
    - (a) Food sector strategies -- progress and guidelines;
    - (b) Towards the eradication of hunger: food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes.
  4. Food crisis contingency planning.
  5. International food trade.
  6. Items and activities for future sessions of the World Food Council.
  7. Report of the Council to the General Assembly.

#### F. Documentation

14. The documents before the session are listed in annex II to the present report.

## CHAPTER II

### FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION ISSUES

#### A. Food strategies - progress and guidelines

15. The World Food Council discussed progress in the implementation of food sector strategies and development of guidelines for their formulation on the basis of documents WFC/1980/2 and WFC/1980/2/Add.1. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that increasing international concern for the growing imbalance of food availability and mounting national commitment to remedying that situation had led the Council, at its fifth session, to propose the preparation of national food strategies for developing countries, as part of their over-all national development plans, in order to enable them to intensify their efforts to meet food needs. At the same time, the Council had urged developed countries and international agencies to provide additional assistance for such efforts.

16. Since the fifth session, 32 developing countries had started to prepare food strategies; over half of them had received firm offers of assistance, and arrangements for the preparation of their food strategies were well under way. Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had made firm offers of assistance, and other developed countries had now indicated their support for the endeavour. The Council was working actively with those Governments to facilitate and accelerate their assistance arrangements. In addition, the World Bank, FAO and the Inter-American Development Bank were already in the process of providing assistance to a number of developing countries.

17. The response to the Council's initiative demonstrated a growing resolve to take more effective action to overcome food problems. Food sector strategies provided developing countries with a means of identifying the significant gaps in their present national policies and plans and launching measures to fill such gaps in essential requirements by strengthening institutions to prepare investment proposals, filling in critical services to farmers, clearly identifying the important infrastructure needs, placing to the fore the essential financing package, or ensuring that those whose food needs could now only be met by special programmes became capable of earning an adequate income. In identifying the packages of requirements, the food strategy approach lent itself flexibly to the situation and policy direction of each individual country. In short, as indicated in the report before the Council, the essential elements of a food sector strategy were (i) a broad planning framework to define objectives, review policies and establish selected priorities for action; (ii) the institutional means to act on those priorities; and (iii) the accelerated identification of food projects and programmes, to be followed up by mustering additional technical and capital resources.

18. About two thirds of the countries requesting assistance for the preparation of food strategies were in Africa, where the food problem was in many ways most acute and the means of addressing it least adequate. The widespread emphasis on national food strategies by African Governments was both a sign of their determination to

solve the food problem once and for all, and a challenge to the international community for large-scale support to that unique effort. Higher priority to increasing food self-sufficiency within the context of over-all and rural development in developing countries had been a central objective of the Council since 1975. National commitments to realize that higher priority through food plans systems or strategies - the name mattered little - merited the Council's full backing, and the support of the international community to make the necessary resources available on a priority basis.

19. During the debate on the agenda item, the Council expressed its satisfaction with the increased priority given by a significant number of developing countries to addressing their food problem through a comprehensive food sector planning approach. That 32 developing countries had adopted such an approach was a reflection of their desire to use a food strategy as a key mechanism for giving food higher priority within their over-all development objectives, and to ensure effective co-ordination and action both nationally and internationally. The Council was in general agreement with the statement made by the Group of 77 in Rome on this subject and supported the further development of food sector strategies and stressed the need to incorporate them fully into national development policies and plans. It emphasized, however, that under no circumstances should the existence of a national food strategy be made a prerequisite for development aid.

20. It was agreed that a food strategy should lead directly to operationally relevant policy, programme and project investment decisions by the country concerned. While the Ministers agreed that the strategy should give equal attention to the production, distribution and consumption aspects of the food and hunger problem, some indicated that it should also deal with other national and international structural policy issues related to food security and development. It was also felt that the food strategy should in addition include measures for generating the technical and financial inputs required for successful implementation of its projects and programmes. A majority of delegations felt that additional resources must be furnished for the development of food strategies, so as not to detract from or interfere with ongoing projects and programmes.

21. The meeting was encouraged by the fact that a number of major development assistance agencies, such as UNDP, the ILO, the World Bank, FAO, the Inter-American Development Bank and OECD, had indicated strong interest in helping developing countries formulate and implement their food strategies. A number of Ministers called upon those and other international agencies to expand their assistance in that respect. In that connexion, it was stressed that the pattern of income and food distribution had a direct bearing on hunger and malnutrition. Multilateral development agencies were particularly well equipped to assist developing countries in their efforts, through a more equitable distribution system, to relate increased food production with consumption.

22. Most delegations from the developing countries recognized, however, that the ultimate solution of the food problem lay within their own hands. Increased per capita consumption must in the long run come from increased domestic production. In that connexion, one delegation suggested that not nearly enough resources were allocated to agricultural research in the developing countries on the improvement of production methods and technology.

23. Most delegations agreed that food strategies should facilitate the mobilization of additional financial resources for the food sector and should give rise to further technical assistance and lending programmes in support. It was stressed that appropriate policy and project packages, however, would not be sufficient on their own. To mobilize the resources required, developing countries' efforts would have to be supplemented by increased assistance from developed countries and international agencies. The success of the food strategy endeavour would be critically dependent on the willingness of the development assistance community to make the food and agriculture sector a special concern in their assistance programmes to those countries which sought such help, and to provide the additional capital and technical resources necessary for their implementation. Some delegations urged the Council to dovetail the core elements of a national food strategy with an international food sector strategy to be followed up by WFC. In so doing, special consideration should be given to evolving a set of measures to contain the escalating costs of inputs and ensure supplies commensurate with national strategies.

24. Many delegations restated the importance of reaching the basic development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as soon as possible. If, in particular, the four large DAC countries, which together accounted for 74 per cent of the GNP of DAC members, made every effort to increase their development assistance levels closer to the target, that would lead to substantial increases in development assistance. Some delegations also felt that the Council should expand its efforts to reach as soon as possible the benchmark of \$US 8.3 billion (in 1975 prices) for increasing food production, of which \$US 6.5 billion should be concessional. While total external resource flows directly committed to food and agriculture in 1978 had reached \$US 5 billion in 1975 prices, an increase of 28 per cent over 1977, rapid increases in the flow of external assistance would be needed to supplement more effectively the increasing efforts of developing countries to develop and implement their food sector strategies, systems or plans.

25. The Council noted with great satisfaction the decision of the Italian Government, as reported by its representative, to increase its official development assistance, by 1983, to the average ODA level provided, in terms of percentage of GNP, by the OECD countries. That would represent an increase of \$US 5 billion in three years, 60 per cent of which would be allocated to food and agricultural assistance. The representative made a plea for a 10 per cent reduction in military expenditure, the resources thus released to be earmarked for the food and hunger problem.

26. There was general agreement that increased international co-operation was required for the successful preparation and implementation of food sector strategies. All three stages of the food strategy undertaking: the preparation stage, the implementation stage and periodic review, needed special attention.

27. With regard to the preparation stage, the Council agreed that, while the developing country concerned must be responsible for determining the objectives and the composition of the food strategy, there should also be intensive consultations among interested developing countries and donors to draw up a framework within which the food strategy should be designed and to define the required technical assistance and institutional arrangements.



28. For the implementation stage, effective co-operation between the developing country and development assistance agencies was of crucial importance: its absence had often led to disappointing results. A number of Ministers felt that the Council should help organize investment follow-up meetings between developing countries and interested donors at which participants would commit themselves to providing finance and co-ordinating their efforts for the implementation of food strategies. There was general agreement that this effort should be co-ordinated by the Council's secretariat, which would report to the Council on progress made in that respect. One member delegation, however, considered the creation of such a food investment forum not necessary.

29. To ensure effective implementation of food strategies, especially in view of the limited experience of the approach so far available, it was proposed that a review of progress should be conducted on a regular basis. It was suggested that the Council should, as part of the task of reviewing such progress, organize regional consultations or workshops to exchange and evaluate the experience of developing countries and agencies undertaking food sector strategies, with a view to preparing a comprehensive set of strategy guidelines. Several multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies expressed their interest in facilitating, where necessary, the participation of all interested countries, while the delegation of Mexico offered to share its Government's experience with the Council so that others might learn from its approach, and circulated a paper describing the related activities. The Council agreed to keep the review of food strategies and progress in their formulation and implementation on its annual agenda, and instructed its secretariat to provide for annual reviews of food strategies, in co-ordination with the countries concerned, in the form of a progress report including information on experience gained.

30. The Director General of the International Labour Organisation, in his telegraphed message to the Council, expressed strong support for the Council's food strategy approach integrating food production, distribution and consumption measures to overcome hunger and malnutrition. The ILO could make a useful contribution to the formulation of food strategies by providing the Council and Governments involved with the result of its employment surveys, and was also prepared to participate in food strategy reviews covering employment and income distribution aspects and to emphasize the food and agriculture sector as a major element in the work of its regional employment teams.

31. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme said that food sector strategies would also need to address the long-term issue of arresting the deterioration of the natural resource base, and building it up to ensure sustainable food production. Some delegations emphasized the need for an all-out effort to eradicate trypanosomiasis.

32. The Council unanimously approved the proposal made by the Canadian Minister for Agriculture that the Council request the secretariat to prepare a catalogue, or listing, of "who" does "what" at the international level of food aid and agricultural development. Such a listing should probably cover agencies and organizations both within and outside the United Nations system. The secretariat should also, in collaboration with the agencies concerned, work out some kind of cross-reference system to make it possible for the Ministers to see how these agencies and their programmes combined to deliver the global food sector strategy which should incorporate almost the same types of elements as national food plans -

emergency food aid, programme food aid, assistance to agricultural development, agricultural research, perhaps including the application of science and technology for food and agricultural development, food import financing, food crisis management, food reserves and storage and transport. One delegation suggested that such an inventory should start at the subregional level.

33. The Council agreed that, with access to such a document, Ministers who were required to take important decisions concerning the welfare of a great many people would be in a better position to understand the system they were dealing with, identify areas of confusion and difficulty and avoid giving conflicting or inconsistent direction to the international community of agencies. While advising developing countries to follow a fully integrated approach, the Council should not forget its own mandate to monitor the world food situation, mobilize support and strive to ensure the coherence of over-all efforts by Governments and agencies to solve world food problems, and in so doing should concentrate on the causes of world food insecurity and continue working towards the goal of a more fully effective global strategy for the food and agriculture sector.

34. The Council noted with satisfaction that the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development had unanimously decided that it was necessary to replenish the resources of the Fund. Ministers called upon all member States of IFAD to respond actively and urgently by increasing their contribution, at IFAD's forthcoming pledging conference, to ensure that the Fund, which was concerned especially with small and landless farmers, could play an expanded role in the process of solving the world food problem.

35. The representative of the United Kingdom wished to place on record that, while his Government's aid strategy would continue to have regard for the particular needs of the poor and for the role of food and agriculture in development, recommendations for increased official development assistance, whether in total or for specific purposes, would have to be considered against the Government's planned reductions in public expenditure over the next three years.

36. A number of delegations said that the solution of the food and other major social and economic problems facing the developing countries depended primarily on progress towards the strengthening of international peace and security, the expansion of détente and the achievement of real disarmament. Only under those conditions would States be able to channel towards development objectives, including the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, an increasing proportion of the resources now spent on building up armaments.

B. Towards the eradication of hunger: food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes

37. The Council considered agenda item 3 (b), "Towards the eradication of hunger: food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes", on the basis of documents WFC/1980/3 and WFC/1980/3/Add.1. In his introductory statement, the Executive Director pointed out that present development and relief programmes did not adequately address the problem of world hunger, and more direct measures were essential to reverse the tide of growing mass hunger. There was no substitute for and no alternative to substantial growth in food production and wider

availability of food. Any additional, more direct measures must be designed in ways that would progressively reduce dependence both by countries and by families within countries. Fundamental to any direct attack on hunger was the recognition that alleviating large-scale hunger and malnutrition could promote over-all development.

38. At its fifth session, the Council had instructed the secretariat to assess experience with various food consumption and nutrition measures, emphasizing the importance of linking them with food production efforts within the framework of over-all food and development plans. The results of the secretariat's assessment of consumer food-subsidy or food-entitlement programmes in selected countries indicated that they could be an effective instrument for increasing the food consumption of those in need, in ways which advanced development objectives, and clearly had a place in the arsenal of development policies and programmes, as interim measures to be phased out as food production and distribution improved. Special assistance should be given to developing countries committed to achieving relative food self-sufficiency and reducing hunger and malnutrition. That meant both stepped-up project aid for specific investments and over-all programme aid to provide the necessary flexibility for achievement of the objective. His proposal for food entitlement programme grants in the context of specific country food plans was aimed at supporting measures dealing with both the need for immediate relief and the underlying causes of hunger. While directed to the hungry, entitlement programmes should be designed to stimulate increased production. They should also be carefully planned in relation to ongoing food aid programmes.

39. The Council's deliberations reaffirmed the need for stepped-up direct measures to deal immediately with hunger and malnutrition, which must clearly be complementary to, and supportive of, development efforts aimed at increasing food production and generating employment and incomes for low-income populations. The hunger problem, it was pointed out, was a social problem and required socio-economic and socio-political action, including such measures as those contained in the plan of action adopted at the 1979 World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

40. Consumer food-subsidy or entitlement programmes were recognized as one practical option for direct action. It was noted that in some countries such programmes had been successful in helping increase food consumption among the population in need, while permitting an incentive farm price policy necessary to increase food production. The meeting also noted, however, the limited experience gained so far and the significant administrative problems that must be faced in implementing entitlement programmes. Some delegations counselled caution in advancing entitlement programmes, referring to the risk that they might increase developing countries' dependence. Concern was expressed about the cost of such programmes, and how to strike the right balance between investments in development and consumer subsidies for the hungry. One speaker said that for his country, which had a long history of consumer food subsidies and direct distribution programmes, subsidies - even at a level at which they exercised great strain on the national budget - were a moral duty: "Inputs" for human resources were at least as important as inputs into agricultural production. The idea that consumer subsidies would negatively affect domestic food production was a misconception in his country's experience; food production had increased while an extensive subsidy scheme was maintained.

41. A few delegations supported the Executive Director's proposal in document WFC/1980/3 for an international entitlement scheme, but most delegations considered it premature, in the light of the limited experience with national entitlement programmes and the over-all situation of development assistance, which had fallen far short of the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNP. There was, however, consensus on the need to explore and study the feasibility of national entitlement programmes in individual interested countries. In exploring entitlement options, it was considered essential to develop programmes, linked to employment and income generation efforts, that would stimulate food production and contribute to development, as opposed to "charitable" measures. In the view of one delegation, it would in that context be important to apply subsidy schemes only in cases where the potential for increased local production existed and where they would be linked to specific employment opportunities for programme beneficiaries, avoiding duplication with ongoing programmes and averting increased dependence of countries and families within countries. To achieve those objectives, it was generally agreed that entitlements could best be dealt with in the context of food strategies and national development plans.

42. To advance efforts along those lines, the meeting urged the secretariat to consult with interested Governments and agencies during 1980 with a view to further studying the feasibility of various entitlement approaches in different socio-economic conditions and further exploration of feasible modalities for international co-operation in support of national food entitlement programmes. The results of the consultations and the experience of countries undertaking and supporting entitlement programmes, together with further technical studies, should provide the Council at its seventh session with a more precise picture of the scope, feasibility, effectiveness and resource requirements of entitlement programmes, on the basis of which more detailed proposals could be put forward for national and international food entitlement action. Some countries offered to share their own experience in the further study of and assistance to national entitlement efforts.

43. Concerning international financial assistance to national entitlement programmes, the Group of 77 proposed that consideration of assistance modalities should be guided by the following principles:

(a) Resources provided must be additional to existing and projected development assistance (in one country's view over and above the ODA target of 0.7 per cent GNP), and must especially have no adverse effect on WFP's pledging target for 1981-1982, which should even be exceeded;

(b) Assistance should be on a 100 per cent grant basis and with multiyear commitments as flexible programme rather than project aid;

(c) No new institutional mechanism should be established for the purpose;

(d) Further dependence should be avoided and contribution made to solving developing countries' production, distribution and consumption problems.

44. A major concern of the meeting was the relationship between food entitlements and food aid. The need for increased food aid in support of expanded direct distribution programmes such as food-for-work and feeding programmes for vulnerable groups was widely supported. The representative of FAO stated that his organization had no disagreement with the objective or the principle

underlying the WFP proposal regarding food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes. But his organization shared the concern that a food-entitlement scheme might divert scarce resources away from effective ongoing programmes and, in particular, from WFP's food aid programmes. Worried about the continuing shortage of resources of WFP, FAO attached first priority to the attainment of the pledging target of \$US 1 billion for 1981-1982 and to the augmentation of WFP's resources in the future. The representative of WFP informed the meeting that over 60 per cent of the Programme's new commitments in 1979 were aimed at supporting agricultural and rural development programmes, and another 15 per cent for feeding programmes for vulnerable groups. WFP's emergency food aid had risen twelve-fold from \$US 10.6 million in 1972 to \$US 120 million in 1979. WFP was concerned to reach the people in need and sought to link food aid more closely with production and nutrition concerns and efforts to enhance the role of women in development. He also stressed the importance of joint programming between WFP and other agencies.

45. In that connexion, the representative of Iraq said that his country was giving considerable assistance to like-minded developing countries in overcoming the effects of inflation. It had already given more than \$250 million as long-term interest-free loans, and more than \$1,500 million as loans, donations or other types of assistance for various purposes, including the development of agricultural production potential.

46. In a message to the Council's President, the Director General of the ILO emphasized the importance of food strategies and food subsidy and direct distribution programmes as instruments to fight poverty, hunger and malnutrition and to contribute to increasing real incomes. Entitlement programmes would have a lasting impact if they were linked to employment and income generating schemes. The World Bank representative said that the Bank was making efforts to help design cost-effective food delivery systems and overcome the numerous difficulties in that field. He wished, however, to place on record that the Bank was not ready to finance consumption activities. In reply, one delegation also wished to record that such a decision was up to the Bank's member Governments. Another delegation recalled that the chief objective of the Council's deliberations was to respond to the plea of the landless or near-landless poor and hungry.

47. In supporting the Council's food sector strategy and food equity concept, the representative of UNICEF proposed a range of complementary measures to improve the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, including family production of nutritionally critical foods, nutrition and health education, linkage of food distribution measures with primary health care and monitoring of children's health and nutrition, and offered UNICEF's co-operation with national and international bodies in this field.

48. Summarizing the deliberations on agenda item 3 (b), and taking into account the hesitations expressed by two delegations, the President stated that there had been "mild agreement" with the food entitlement concept. The feasibility of implementing it would need to be further explored on a country-by-country basis, and the secretariat should begin consultations to that end with interested Governments and agencies.

49. The Council also expressed deep concern over the critical food shortage currently being experienced in Africa, and appealed to all countries and international agencies to undertake, on a special emergency basis, additional

food assistance to, particularly, Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia and to the Sahelian countries. Available information indicated that in East Africa alone, current food import needs for the coming 12 months, after current crops were harvested, would be between 1 and 1.5 million tons. It also urged all relevant international institutions and Governments in a position to do so to take immediate steps that would assist African countries severely hit by drought to receive food relief supplies, as a short-term measure; as a long-term measure, priority assistance should be provided to the countries concerned, on request, to assist them in preparing and implementing national food strategies.

## CHAPTER III

### FOOD CRISIS CONTINGENCY PLANNING

50. The Council considered agenda item 4 on the basis of document WFC/1980/4. Introducing the discussion, the Executive Director affirmed the Council's phased approach to progress in international food security, consisting, in the first instance, of expanded support at the national level for food stock building and storage and infrastructure related to national programmes for increasing food self-sufficiency. He also mentioned the important role the Council had played in increasing the level of guaranteed food aid through a new Food Aid Convention, and in formulating a proposal for a food financing facility, now under consideration by the International Monetary Fund. The Council should call for an intensification of related efforts by the World Bank and FAO, and encourage Governments to take appropriate steps for setting up a food financing facility and for renewing the Food Aid Convention at a level of 10 million tons.

51. Two major additional steps for achieving world food security were being proposed for the Council's consideration for the first time, as ways of coping with a situation in which international commodity markets had become particularly volatile because of economic, monetary and political instability, leading to sharp movements and speculation. Cereal markets were particularly vulnerable to weather variability and rising demand. The 1980s would be a food-crisis-prone decade, and the Council needed to consider specific measures against such crisis.

52. The first such measure needed was the constitution of an international contingency reserve of about 12 million tons to be held either in advance of or as part of a new International Wheat Agreement. Developing countries might hold up to 5 million tons of such a reserve, financed through OPEC and developed country assistance, and to enable them to do so would be a commendable objective for the global round of negotiations being launched by the United Nations. The second such measure was the proposed food crisis pledge, a bold initiative which admittedly needed further consideration by Governments. Its elements included an undertaking on the part of countries to act, in periods of tight international food grain markets, to minimize unilateral or destabilizing action, and to establish specific logistical stand-by procedures. The proposal also included special provisions for assistance to developing countries during an eventual world food crisis, and reiterated the need for the establishment of a food financing facility in IMF and an additional food aid flow in case of global crisis.

53. The Council shared the Executive Director's concern for the coming decade, unless the necessary measures were implemented. Greater dependency of developing countries on imported food and competing uses for food grains, particularly as a source of fuel alcohol, were seen as factors which could increase the potential magnitude of the foreseeable food crisis.

54. Members acknowledged the progress made in the world food security field since the last session through the conclusion of an expanded new Food Aid Convention, in accordance with a specific recommendation of the Council. Some developing countries, however, indicated that that was only a partial step forward, as the

Council had clearly called for a minimum of 10 million tons to be included in a new Convention, while no more than 7.6 million tons had in fact been achieved. Developed countries and a developing country member of the Convention responded that the guaranteed minimum level of food aid had been almost doubled, and that for several donors the new FAC had meant a real increase in food aid flows. They urged the incorporation of new members, in particular oil-exporting countries. Mention was also made of the need for socialist country membership. The fact that the new FAC would have to be renewed by 30 June 1981 encouraged members to urge that every effort be made both to enlist new contributors and to increase the commitments of existing ones so that the Convention can be renewed at or beyond the 10-million ton minimum level.

55. Representatives of developing countries commended the proposal now under study by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of WFP for the establishment of the 500,000-ton International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) under a legally binding convention, and expressed the hope that the Committee would reach a decision at its next session. Developed countries endorsed the initiative that the proposal be further considered at the next session of the Committee later in 1980. A major contributor to IEFR, however, cautioned against it, arguing that a legally binding convention could make it more difficult for donors to maintain even their present level of contributions.

56. The debate on the need for a food financing facility to be established by IMF to allow developing countries debilitated by balance-of-payments difficulties to finance short-term emergency food import requirements was preceded by an appeal by the Council's President to Council members who were also members of the IMF Executive Board to study the matter carefully and sympathetically, and raise it at the Board's next meeting.

57. Developing countries' representatives expressed strong support for the IMF food financing facility proposal, which, it was pointed out, had already been endorsed by the Council, as well as by the FAO Conference and the General Assembly of the United Nations. Some delegations also mentioned that the Brandt Commission and the United States Presidential Commission on World Hunger had made a positive recommendation regarding the proposal. Developed countries generally agreed that the Council should urge IMF to speed up deliberations in an effort to reach a conclusion, but they were not prepared to discuss its details before studying the forthcoming IMF document on the subject, nor to prejudge decisions that, in their view, should be appropriately left to that institution.

58. Lengthy discussions took place on the new International Wheat Agreement and on the proposal for the establishment of a food crisis contingency reserve. Several countries, particularly developed countries, shared the view that a fresh start had been made by the International Wheat Council (IWC) towards the negotiations of a new agreement, and that the new approach being considered had gained sufficient support to justify a fair degree of optimism. The Executive Secretary of IWC reiterated his views as expressed during the Preparatory Meeting, confirming the above feeling. Several countries, however, particularly developing countries, while agreeing that some positive signs had emerged from recent deliberations in IWC, recalled the disappointments of the past few years and warned against over-optimism. There was nevertheless a broad consensus that responsibility for formulating a new agreement rested with IWC, that new proposals were being considered by that body and that WFC should encourage its efforts and urge it to speed up negotiations so that a new and substantial agreement was firmly in place



by mid-1981. The Chairman of the FAO Committee on World Food Security, a member of the delegation of Ghana, urged that the five-point plan should be made complementary to the international grain agreement. However, there was also a general feeling that should IWC fail again in its attempt, Ministers and the international community would have to give serious consideration, in consultation with IWC, to alternative ways of establishing at least a contingency reserve of an adequate size in advance of, and for eventual incorporation in, a new international wheat agreement. The modalities for the establishment of such a reserve would have to guard against disrupting grain markets.

59. All delegations agreed that to fulfil the objectives of market stability and world food security, the new wheat agreement would have to be legally binding. There was also consensus that it would have to include, together with other economic provisions, legally binding provisions for the constitution and management of adequate reserves. All developing countries, and developed grain-importing countries, said that the new Agreement should equally incorporate specific provisions for assistance to developing countries, arguing that most developing countries could only participate in the Agreement if assisted to do so, with specific financial and technical support for building storage capacity, and acquiring and holding their share of the reserve. Grain-exporting countries recognize that need as a real one, but were not prepared to prejudge the relevant discussions in IWC. They acknowledged that the concept of special assistance for developing countries had been accepted in the negotiations in 1978 and early 1979 before they were suspended, but, in their view, consideration of a new approach and new market circumstances reopened all aspects of a new agreement. Developing countries were unanimous in their disappointment at that position.

60. Regarding the proposed food crisis pledge, most countries appreciated the Executive Director's initiative in a new and little explored field. There was general agreement that the concepts included in the proposal were interesting and worth pursuing further. Developing countries expressed their support for the proposal, and several suggested the need for early negotiations on it. Developed and socialist countries, however, reacted more cautiously to its different elements. Developed countries generally took the view that no detailed positions could yet be expressed because the proposals were still at an initial stage of development. Several participants considered that more time and study would be needed to realize the full scope and implications of the Executive Director's views. It appeared, however, that a new area of world food security had been touched upon.

61. The delegation of the USSR stated that the implications in the Executive Director's report as to the partial responsibility of that country for the world food crisis of 1972-1975 were unfounded. Paragraphs 34 and 35 of the report were unjustified and lacked serious analytical foundations. The report did not take into account the results of IWC's recent work. In its view, participation of States in the agreed arrangements for contingency planning should be on a voluntary basis.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTERNATIONAL FOOD TRADE

62. In discussing agenda item 5, the Council had before it copies of a statement by the Executive Director which included a section on a restatement of international food trade issues. In it, he again deplored protectionist trends in developed countries and reiterated that the slowness of industrial countries to adjust various parts of their agriculture had imposed a heavy burden on developing countries, diverting potential investment in agriculture to less effective uses and worsening the over-all allocation of resources. Equally affected were many developing country industries, which through exports could provide substantial employment and incomes to stimulate their own development, their food production and the earning of foreign exchange to import necessary food.

63. The Council also had before it the Executive Director's report (WFC/1980/5) emphasizing issues related to developing countries' food imports. The Executive Director pointed out that the concept of a food import gap could be usefully disaggregated on a country basis, as over-all figures for developing countries did not provide an adequate indication of the variety of problems involved. The report was a first attempt in that direction and concluded that while developing countries as a whole seemed to be spending a smaller proportion of their foreign earnings on food than they had two decades before, many countries had maintained that proportion, and some had increased it. The relative import gap, i.e., the relation between food availability and total imports, was also analysed in the context of each country's per capita average calory intake: the analysis showed that some countries, predominantly those in the lowest income category, had increased the proportion of their total imports accounted for by food, but had suffered a reduction in the per capita calory intake over the period. The Executive Director's proposal that countries in that category should be identified and their problems studied in detail for priority assistance received wide support.

64. The Executive Director's report also called attention to the growing concentration of international grain supplies in North America over the past decades, and the need to diversify the sources of supply. Such diversification could not mean a reduction, and probably not even a stagnation, of grain exports from North America, but rather that the projected growth of the world grain market should be shared as far as possible by exports from other areas. Many other countries, and particularly developing countries, had the potential to develop significant grain exports. Greater continuity of access to markets, financial capacity and investment would be necessary to realize that potential. The report suggested that measures designed to promote increased and regionally more balanced food production and trade, particularly from and to developing countries, should be explored.

65. Developing countries were unanimous in their condemnation of protectionist trade measures that affected the expansion of their exports, and called for a more substantive and concrete effort by developed countries to reverse current protectionist trends. They generally agreed that the slowness in adjusting energy intensive agriculture and manufacturing sectors in developed countries had adverse effects on the world economy, especially on their own development prospects. Developed countries pointed to the economic and political difficulties involved in the adjustment process, which however continued in spite of recession and

unemployment. Some also indicated that protectionism, often in more extreme forms than those applied by developed countries, was implied in the policies of other countries. There was agreement, therefore, that all countries should seek to avoid protectionist policies and apply their efforts instead to restructuring their agriculture and manufacturing industries so as to permit the best possible internal and international allocation of resources, which would in the long run benefit all parties concerned. It was accepted that the public in many countries was not always aware of the potential benefits implied in trade expansion and liberalization. The arguments which had been discussed and endorsed by the Council in its last meeting were again restated with a renewed call on Governments to make intensive efforts to inform the public of the true cost of protectionism.

66. There was broad agreement on the need to ascertain, and analyse in detail, the food situation in those countries that were experiencing a growth in food imports relative to total imports while, at the same time, worsening their over-all nutritional standards. Countries in that category were at the core of the world food problem and needed particularly urgent attention.

67. The growing concentration of international grain supplies caused concern to most countries, although there was general acknowledgement that the major grain exporters had made a significant contribution to world food security in the past and that the continuity of their production and trade would continue to be of great importance in the future. However, the risks involved in over-concentration of food supplies were too great, in the view of a majority of delegations, for the international community not to take some action at least to curb the trend, and if possible to reverse it. Various countries mentioned potential climatic, logistic and political constraints as arguments in support of that view. The representatives of some major grain exporters said that their countries had responded satisfactorily to the growing demand in the past and were prepared to continue doing so in the future. One of them did not see grounds for concern in that respect. There was general consensus, however, on the desirability of exploring possible measures to promote increased and more regionally balanced food production and trade.

68. The delegation of the USSR proposed that the Council confirm its conviction that the normalization and expansion of world food trade on a mutually beneficial basis were impossible without strict adherence to such important principles as respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and equality among nations as well as rigorous observance of the spirit and letter of international agreements and understandings. In response to that proposal, other delegations, while not disagreeing with its literal content, could not accept including it in the conclusions as the subjects it dealt with had not been discussed during the session.

## CHAPTER V

### FUTURE PROGRAMME OF THE COUNCIL

69. As recommended by the preparatory meeting, an item 6, "Items and activities for future sessions of the World Food Council", was added to the provisional agenda for the sixth ministerial session of the World Food Council.

70. In the deliberations on the future programme of work of the Council, based on the Executive Director's report (WFC/1980/4), it was recognized that the Council was a political instrument for realizing the objectives embodied in the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition in the framework of the new international economic order. The Council acknowledged with satisfaction the prominent and renewed priority being given by the international community to the problems of hunger, food and agriculture, as expressed, among many other initiatives, in the current work of the Committee for Development Planning, in the Preparatory Committee for the New International Development Strategy, and in the Committee of the Whole which was preparing for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly to launch the global round of negotiations. Participants emphasized that the Council should therefore be prepared to engage actively in its unique political role both in support of the new international development strategy during the next decade and for the global round of negotiations.

71. A number of delegations commented on the subjects that should be considered at future sessions of the Council. The representative of Yugoslavia, as the host country for the Council's seventh session, suggested that the Council could consider the following subjects at that session:

(a) Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade in food and agriculture;

(b) Progress reports on:

(i) Food strategies, including policies of lending agencies;

(ii) Food security;

(c) International food trade issues.

72. A number of delegations agreed with that suggestion, and the spokesman of the Group of 77 in Rome, supported by other delegations, pointed out that, among others, these issues had also been suggested in the Group of 77 paper on the agreed items for the current session, which had also included as a priority item for examination by the Council the role of transnational corporations.

73. A strong plea was made for the Council, in discharging its responsibilities, to keep the world food situation under constant review. One delegation reiterated in that connexion its request made during the debate on food strategies (see chap. II, sect. A above) for a comprehensive descriptive listing of the agencies

involved and their activities. That would help the Council and the international community contribute towards a more fully integrated, coherent and visible approach in the implementation of the evolving global food and agricultural strategy.

74. Some delegations felt that there was a need to build up an international food sector strategy from the national food sector strategies - some suggested that a detailed country-by-country study of protectionist measures impeding the expanded participation of developing countries in international trade should be made in collaboration with UNCTAD and, if necessary, with FAO. The need was also felt for a complete picture of international trade policies on grains and agricultural inputs. A number of delegations, however, expressed doubts as to the usefulness of such an approach.

75. A number of delegations expressed strong support for the examination by the Council of the adequacy of national and international agricultural research, including science and technology issues. Fisheries was also suggested by one country as an important item on the Council's agenda.

76. The following list summarizes the views expressed on the subjects that should be considered in the Council's future programme of work:

(a) Review and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade in food and agriculture;

(b) Preparation, in collaboration with the agencies concerned, of a comprehensive list of international agencies, both within and outside the United Nations system, involved in food and agricultural development, with a description of their roles and a cross-referencing of their various activities;

(c) Progress in food sector strategies;

(d) Progress towards world food security;

(e) International trade issues;

(f) Adequacy of national and international agricultural research, including issues of science and technology;

(g) Role of transnational corporations;

(h) Fisheries.

## CHAPTER VI

### DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSIONS

77. The Council decided at the 8th meeting of the session that it would convene its seventh session at Novi Sad, Yugoslavia, during the last 10 days of May 1981.
78. At the same meeting, upon the invitation of the representative of Bangladesh, the Council agreed to hold its eighth session in Bangladesh in 1982.
79. The representative of Mexico stated that he wished to see the items to be considered on the agenda as well as the place and date of the next session included in the present report.
80. The President noted that the agenda for the next session would be drawn up in close consultation with the host Government based on the specific proposals made by the Council.

## CHAPTER VII

### OTHER MATTERS BEFORE THE COUNCIL

81. The President said that, given the Council's mandate to stimulate political action to eliminate hunger, there was an increasing need to inform the public about the political aspects of the problem and the possible political solutions to it. In order to promote more effective dissemination of information about the World Food Council's efforts, a small information budget of the order of \$US 20,000 would be necessary. The Council approved the proposal.

82. The President also informed the Council that, in the absence of any objection, he intended to take up with the Secretary-General the question of upgrading the post of Executive Director of the Council from the Assistant Secretary-General to the Under-Secretary-General level. There were no objections.

## CHAPTER VIII

### REPORT OF THE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### A. Organization of work

83. The Council decided to follow, in the conduct of its work at the sixth session, the procedure agreed upon at Ottawa at its fifth session. 6/

84. At the 5th meeting of the session, the Council established an informal group to assist the Executive Director in finalizing the draft conclusions. The group was composed of Ethiopia and Ghana (Africa); Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela (Latin America); Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia (Socialist States of Eastern Europe); Iraq and Japan (Asia); Italy and United States of America (Western European and other States). The Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur attended the group ex officio, while the President relinquished his seat on the group to the representative of Bangladesh.

85. The representative of the European Economic Community (EEC), as well as other representatives interested, also participated in the work of the informal group. Following the completion of the group's work, the Executive Director submitted the draft conclusions to the Council at the 8th meeting of the session, on 6 June 1980.

86. At the same meeting, the draft was considered by the Council, amended and adopted as a whole, without a vote.

#### B. Positions and observations on the conclusions and recommendations

87. Upon the adoption of the conclusions, various delegations made comments, observations or reservations as follows:

(a) The representative of Canada wished to place on record that the World Food Council had been set up, in 1974, because the existing United Nations agencies dealing with food issues were doing so ineffectively, and required guidance and co-ordination. He therefore found the repeated efforts by a specialized agency, seeking to advise the Council, out of place; rather, it was the Council which should recommend to the United Nations what such agencies should do in relation to food. The sole aim of paragraph 12 of the conclusions was to generate a fully integrated coherent and visible approach which might eventually lead to a global food strategy;

(b) The delegations of Denmark, Germany, Federal Republic of, the Netherlands, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland wished to place on record that paragraph 22 of the conclusions lacked

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6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 19 (A/34/19), para. 87.



clarity, and they could therefore not endorse it; the representative of Japan said that he reserved his position, both on grounds of the ambiguity of the text and because the availability and cost of certain products was mainly a matter of private enterprise. His Government was not in a good position to regulate such issues;

(c) Regarding paragraph 44, the delegation of Canada wished to place on record that trade barriers and other protectionist trade practices should be removed by all countries;

(d) The Soviet delegation proposed an addition to paragraph 44. However, in order to avoid discussion on issues of a political nature, the President requested the Soviet delegation to agree to the inclusion of its proposal in the narrative part of the report. In acceding to that request, the Soviet representative stressed that the issues referred to in the proposal had been discussed, directly or indirectly, at the session. The reaction of two delegations to the Soviet proposal clearly demonstrated their negative attitude to the progressive principles of international trade, including food trade, proclaimed by the General Assembly, the World Food Conference, UNCTAD and other relevant international forums;

(e) Regarding paragraph 44, the representative of Japan wished to place on record that any structural adjustment in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors should take into account the economic and social structure and the economic, social and security objectives of the country concerned, as stated in resolution 96 (IV) E of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development;

(f) The representative of Canada reserved his position regarding paragraph 45.

ANNEX I

Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of the  
United Republic of Tanzania a/

The World Food Council,

Having convened its sixth ministerial session in Arusha, at the kind invitation of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania,

Appreciative of the thoroughness of the administrative arrangements made and the excellent facilities of the Arusha International Conference Centre, which enabled the Council's work to be organized with efficiency and smoothness,

Deeply grateful for the outstanding generosity and warmth of welcome accorded to all Ministers, Plenipotentiaries and other representatives,

1. Applauds the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the enormous efforts which they have devoted to the preparation and organization of the sixth ministerial session and for the outstanding success of those efforts;

2. Records its profound appreciation of the generous hospitality and universal friendship accorded to participants in the session by the people of the United Republic of Tanzania from all sectors;

3. Requests the President of the Council to express the Council's deep gratitude to the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, to the Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Edward Moringe Ole Sokoine, and through them, to the Government and all the people of the United Republic of Tanzania.

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a/ Adopted by acclamation at the 8th meeting of the sixth ministerial session, having been proposed by Mr. Michael P. Calingaert, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Resources and Food Policy, Department of State of the United States of America.

## ANNEX II

List of documents before the Council at  
its sixth ministerial session

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
WFC/1980/1/Rev.1	2	Provisional agenda with annotations
WFC/1980/2	3 (a)	Food sector strategies - progress and guidelines
WFC/1980/2/Add.1	3 (a)	Resource flows
WFC/1980/3	3 (b)	Towards the eradication of hunger: food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes
WFC/1980/3/Add.1		Assessment of selected food-subsidy and direct-distribution programmes. WFC informal consultation, Castelgandolfo, Italy, 10-14 December 1979
WFC/1980/4	4	Food crisis contingency planning
WFC/1980/5	5	International food trade
WFC/1980/6		Current world food situation
WFC/1980/7		Progress toward and prospects of achieving the objectives of the United Nations World Food Conference (1979-1980)
WFC/1980/8		Report of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
WFC/1980/9		Rural Development in Africa: Trypanosomiasis control can help make it a reality
WFC/1980/10		The role of fisheries in improving nutrition
WFC/1980/11		Report of the Committee on World Food Security on the work of its fifth session
WFC/1980/12		Fifth annual report of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes
WFC/1980/13		Report of the Preparatory Meeting for the Sixth Session
WFC/1980/14	6	Future programme of work
WFC/1980/15		Proposal by Canada
WFC/1980/L.1		Suspension of the rules of procedure for the United Republic of Tanzania
WFC/1980/L.2		Election of the Rapporteur

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
WFC/1980/L.3		Election of a Vice President
WFC/1980/INF/5		List of documents before the sixth ministerial session of the Council
WFC/1980/INF/6		List of participants at the sixth ministerial session

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