

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

11-15 June 1984

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 19 (A/39/19)



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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.

[14 August 1984]

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFDB	African Development Bank
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EEC	European Economic Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IDA	International Development Association
IEFR	International Emergency Food Reserve
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWC	International Wheat Council
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCARRD	World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

PART ONE

MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL
AT ITS TENTH MINISTERIAL SESSION

1. The tenth ministerial session of the United Nations World Food Council was convened in Addis Ababa, hosted by the Government of Ethiopia. The year 1984 marks the tenth anniversary of the World Food Conference which gathered in Rome, and which solemnly proclaimed that the eradication of hunger is a common objective of all countries and "called upon all peoples expressing their will as individuals, and through their Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations, to work together to bring about the end of the age-old scourge of hunger". 1/ That Conference affirmed the determination that full use be made of the United Nations system in the implementation of its decisions. The World Food Council decided to review progress towards meeting the objectives of the 1974 World Food Conference, to identify what still needs to be done and to recommend policies to complete the unfinished tasks.

The world food system 10 years later

2. In reviewing the progress made during the last decade, the Council noted that the global food situation has become more complex, interrelated and in some ways more precarious. It also noted the growing imbalances and distortions that have characterized the world food economy over the past decade. It regretted that, despite an overall aggregate world food supply situation which has steadily improved over the past decade, the risks of food insecurity are now greater for many low-income developing countries, particularly in view of natural and man-made calamities.

3. The world is feeding nearly 1 billion more people in 1984 than in 1974, and there is ample food produced globally for all the world's people, yet there remain hundreds of millions of hungry and malnourished people. The World Food Conference's goal, which is also that of all humanity, of achieving the elimination of hunger and malnutrition within a decade has proved unattainable. The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980, acknowledges this fact, stating that "hunger and malnutrition must be eliminated as soon as possible and certainly by the end of this century".

4. The Council reaffirmed that hunger and malnutrition can be eradicated in our time, and emphasized that the central issues emerging from the experience of the past 10 years must be forcefully addressed. It noted that much greater focus must be given to food and development problems.

5. The Council agreed that the present world food economy is characterized by large imbalances in the world agricultural economy between the performance of the major food-exporting countries and that of the food-deficit, largely, low-income countries. Many factors which contribute to these imbalances are attributable to recurrent drought, desertification, unfavourable international trade, fluctuating exchange rates, balance-of-payments difficulties, high interest rates, debt burden, adverse terms of trade and the trend towards greater protectionist policies facing developing countries, inadequate food policies and macro-economic policies in some developing countries - all of which need to be dealt with in a concerted fashion by the international community. In the opinion of many delegations, the solution of the world food problem could be found only within the general process of

restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis and establishing a New International Economic Order.

6. The Council agreed that Sub-Saharan Africa is now at the centre of the food problem - in terms of both inadequate levels of food production and the relative proportion of hungry and malnourished people to total population.

7. Asia, despite its remarkable record in approaching food self-reliance, is still the developing region where most of the world's chronically undernourished live. Asian countries must not only find ways to reach these people, but also manage to feed an additional 900 million people by the end of the century.

8. Latin America has made rapid advances in its commercial food and agricultural sector but, generally speaking, at the expense of the subsistence farm sector. Latin America must now confront its food problems in the light of a rapidly urbanizing population and in the wake of tremendous social and economic dislocations ushered in by the global economic recession and the financial crisis.

9. To varying degrees, many countries, particularly developing countries, rely on agricultural exports for the enhancement of their national economic performance and to provide the foreign exchange necessary to meet their increased import demands. Despite the significant expansion of international food trade over the past decade, stability and predictability of agricultural markets have not improved.

10. The inward-looking and autonomous agricultural policies of the major developed countries are detrimental to the performance of world commodity markets. Import restrictions and export subsidy programmes and analogous practices focused on domestic market stability have had a destabilizing effect on international markets and the food security of developing countries. The risks of this induced market instability are high in terms of misallocation of resources, worsening trade relations, and possible shortages and high prices due to possible policy shifts by major exporters, as occurred for cereals in the early 1970s. The absence of political will to conclude improved international commodity agreements, especially as regards grains, which would make it possible to stabilize trade flows and world market prices has been detrimental to the harmonious development of international trade.

11. The Council recommended that all countries should seek to avoid all self-centred policies and to promote real dialogue about measures to improve the performance of both international commodity and financial markets.

12. The Council noted that many developing countries face a difficult dilemma between those food and agricultural policies which will improve their trade and foreign-exchange position, at the expense of what may be a more difficult route of achieving a more equitable distribution of food for all their citizens. Equally disturbing is that some developing countries may be compelled to take short-term actions which effectively preclude initiating the longer-term policy choices upon which food self-reliance is ultimately built.

13. How this policy conflict will be resolved is a matter for individual Governments to decide. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that a Government will necessarily have to choose between one policy direction or the other. Given a long-term political commitment, national decision makers can deal with both objectives simultaneously, but many developing countries will require the more active support of the international community.

14. Ministers concluded that to meet the objectives of the World Food Conference the major tasks ahead include:

(a) Sustained efforts by the developing countries at national or regional level to increase food production and improve access to increased food supplies, the integrated food strategy approach playing an increasingly important role in the years ahead;

(b) A renewed commitment to an accelerated reduction of chronic hunger and malnutrition, integrating more effective direct hunger-reducing measures into the process of economic and social development;

(c) A major concerted effort by African countries and the international community to resolve the African food and development crisis, and the concomitant need for increased resources and for further improvements in the utilization of resources;

(d) Further identification and negotiation of measures for strengthening the access of developing countries to food supplies in the event of global food shortages;

(e) Real efforts by developed countries to reduce trade protectionism and international market instability, in support of food security and development objectives of all countries;

(f) Efforts to resolve the serious financial problems in general and liquidity problems in particular, confronting the developing countries, which are caused to a large degree by the impact of the increases in interest rates;

(g) A commitment to sustained and increased development assistance, with a strengthened role for multilateral agencies, and improved international assistance co-ordination.

Disarmament, food security and development

15. The Council reaffirmed that peace and disarmament were prerequisites to improved economic conditions and enhanced food security, and that food was a universal human right that Governments endeavoured to guarantee their people. In that context, the Council again stressed its belief in the general principle that food should not be used as an instrument of political pressure. The attention of the Council was drawn to the importance of the implementation by the World Food Council of General Assembly resolution 38/188 J of 20 December 1983, on institutional arrangements relating to the process of disarmament. It was suggested that funds thus liberated should be channelled to the food production efforts of the developing countries.

New emphasis on national food policies and agro-food systems

16. Reviewing the international economic environment, the Council recognized the possibility that the economies of the developed countries will grow more slowly for the rest of this decade than in the past. This indicates that for most developing countries a strategy of outward adjustment and orientation or over-dependence on international trade as the main motor of development cannot realistically be based principally on recovery and renewed growth in the industrial North, as hoped by many.

17. More autonomous economic growth strategies are imperative. In particular, since many developing countries are still largely agrarian, the pace of development of their food and agricultural potentials is even more crucial now than it has been in the past. Enhanced food production and its more effective distribution provide a widely beneficial economic stimulus for internal market development and mobilization of domestic resources.

18. The circumstances add urgency to the recognized priority for national food strategies, which encourage improved co-ordination of food and agricultural policies with technical operations and investments. Some countries that have made significant progress with their food supply and distribution objectives are those which have had integrated food strategies as a central element of their development programmes.

19. Development strategies must be designed in harmony with individual country potentials, needs and socio-political frameworks. Regardless of differences among countries, more self-reliant growth demands a higher priority for food and agriculture, better structural integration among sectors and a judicious balance between internal market development and exports - coupled with sustained and increased external assistance. These are among the development imperatives for accelerating growth in most developing countries at mid-term in the current decade. In this context, Ministers emphasized the importance of the respective roles of the private, public and co-operative sectors, and expressed the view that developing countries should fully consider - when necessary - the appropriate use of such sectors.

20. Ministers recognized that the integrated food strategy approach will be of even greater importance in the future. World population will be at least 6 billion by the year 2000. Population increases and migration trends will result, in many areas of the developing world, in explosive growth in urban centres, as well as in increased pressure on land in rural areas. Despite the current problems of slow economic growth, rising real incomes are likely to result in changing dietary patterns in the years ahead. Consequently, there will be a substantial increase - perhaps a doubling in the demand for food in the next two decades.

21. All of these developments will place emphasis on realizing two objectives at the national level: producing significantly increased amounts of food for very large urban populations and providing employment and income for the vastly increased rural and urban population. Development of the food sector is critical to meeting the first objective and a major contributing factor to achieving the other.

Facing up to the problems of chronic hunger and malnutrition

22. While Ministers derived satisfaction from the scientific and technical successes achieved by some developing countries on the food production front, they expressed great concern about the little progress in the reduction of hunger and malnutrition and rising population in many developing countries. The Council resolved that it must put greater emphasis on tackling the political, economic and social barriers that stand in the way of more equitable access to food by all people.

23. Increasingly, national food strategies have sought to link food production to food consumption requirements. This link is most evident in the case of small

farmers. Ministers called for greater attention to be directed to the improvement of production technology and economic incentive support for small-holders, for they are the backbone of agriculture in many countries.

24. In this context, the Council recalled the Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), with its emphasis on encouraging the initiative, energies and participation of rural people - men and women - in development efforts. The Council underlined the critical role of pricing policies which could truly benefit small farmers without placing impossible hardships on poor consumers, the importance of co-operatives in small-holder production and marketing and the building of agricultural institutions and services blending modern management practices with traditional cultural patterns and sensitivities. The availability of essential consumer goods was seen as an important element of farmer-incentive packages.

25. For landless rural labourers and low-income and unemployed people in urban areas, income and the availability of low-cost food were considered central issues. Actions to increase food consumption for these groups will involve much more urgent attention and support for:

- (a) Employment and income generation, which in the short run often means public works programmes, while calling for such measures as settlement schemes, land redistribution and industrial employment generation in the longer run;
- (b) Increasing the efficiency of food distribution systems, in terms of improving the logistics of marketing - both nationally and internationally - in order to lower food costs and improve access by rural dwellers;
- (c) Mobilization of existing rural savings;
- (d) Encouraging production and distribution of low-cost staple foods;
- (e) Selected and targeted use of price subsidies for the food staples of the poor;
- (f) Special food and nutrition interventions for people at risk, both in terms of emergency actions and for those who are most vulnerable, namely, mothers and young children of impoverished families.

26. In low-income food-deficit countries with limited institutional structures, a rededication to the eradication of hunger will require a more extensive international contribution, both to help increase food production and to improve the access of the chronically poor and hungry to food on a sustained basis.

Urgent need to reverse the trend of deteriorating food production and consumption in Africa

27. The Council expressed its concern regarding the serious food and agricultural situation in Africa and the high incidence of chronic hunger and malnutrition. It noted that the food crisis facing the region is now one of the gravest proportions. According to estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), almost half the African countries, with some 150 million people, were facing food shortages.

28. Ministers reaffirmed the World Food Council's concern about the deepening crisis affecting African countries and recalled that the Council has directed international attention to Africa since 1979-1980. For the last five years, in close co-operation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Food Council has worked with the African Governments and policy leaders in order to find more effective approaches and to mobilize increased support for the solving of food problems.

29. The food crisis is the more visible part of the deeper economic crisis which is currently affecting the Governments and people of most African countries. African countries have been hit hard by adverse factors such as drought, floods and man-made disasters, which have contributed to the degradation of their economies. Moreover, they have been hit by adverse external forces, including falling trade earnings resulting from the global economic recession. On top of the worsening terms of trade, the debt crisis has become acute for most countries. Investment has virtually ceased growing, and many countries are confronting now the painful process of enforced adjustments through devaluation, severe import limitations, and modification of price structures. All these external factors have seriously aggravated the domestic problems of many countries.

30. The Council strongly underlined that emergency measures have to be pressed forward urgently in order to maintain minimum consumption levels and ensure an adequate distribution of food and to alleviate human suffering. It called upon the donor community and multilateral agencies to step up emergency and relief supplies to the highly-affected African countries. It stressed the need for the mobilization of more financial resources for logistic support, including shortage and internal distribution. At the same time, the Council underlined the importance of greater integration of short-term relief with medium-term rehabilitation measures and the longer-term social and economic objectives set out in the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa (A/S-11/14, annex I).

31. The Council expressed solidarity with African Governments which inspired by self-reliance, had demonstrated evidence of their political determination to overcome their food problems, as some 34 African countries are at present attempting to realize their food objectives by implementation of national food strategies within their national development plans.

32. Progress in food strategy development and implementation in Africa has been encouraging but not without difficulties. Physical - mostly droughts - and economic constraints are exacerbated by administrative and structural difficulties, including constraints in information and planning systems, institutional and human resources, and above all lack of financial support.

33. Current efforts must not only continue but be stepped up, refined and consolidated. The major priority areas and critical issues on which internal and external resources should be concentrated during the next decade have been identified as: human resources development; research and technology; effective delivery systems; institutional development; restructuring of grain markets and improving pricing policies; support for small farmers and sustained emphasis, nationally and internationally, on action-oriented agricultural research and technology development, in addition to improvements in the role of women in food production and nutrition; greater integration of consumption and nutritional factors in production programmes; and a need to expand irrigation schemes.

34. The Council also stressed the need to promote regional and subregional co-operation. Water management, agricultural research, trade organization, management of agricultural commodity markets and the fight against desertification should be done regionally or subregionally as considered appropriate. The international community should therefore support initiatives taken by countries to that end.

35. The Council requested multilateral agencies, when developing the programmes within their mandates to deal with the problem of food and hunger in Africa, to take into account as priority areas those mentioned above. It recognized that such efforts require improved co-ordination among multilateral and bilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations and with the Government agencies concerned. It also noted with satisfaction that the Resident Co-ordinators of the United Nations were instructed to enter into consultations with Governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations to seek ways to enhance further the required joint efforts to assist African Governments.

36. The Council, on the occasion of its meeting in an African country and the African continent, reiterated its unconditional rejection of racial discrimination in all its forms and particularly the hateful system of apartheid, and it also noted the urgency for international organizations to try to change the worsening food and malnutrition situation in Africa.

37. As a step towards the promotion of interregional co-operation between Africa and other regions in the food sector, the Council was requested to organize, where feasible, an exchange of experience between African policy makers and their counterparts in other regions.

38. The Council expressed support for the efforts by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to increase international awareness of the economic and social crisis in Africa and promote additional international support. It appreciated the Secretary-General's initiative in the resolution of the African food crisis and welcomed the appointment of Mr. Adebayo Adedeji by the Secretary-General as his special representative to co-ordinate resource mobilization for the highly-affected African countries.

39. The Council noted the recommendation in the Special Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's economic and social crisis urging the Economic and Social Council to recommend a special session of the General Assembly to review developments in the emergency situation at its thirty-ninth session. It also recognized the efforts and initiatives of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the recommendation he has made to the Secretary-General for resolving the African food crisis. Noting with great concern the gravity of the food and agricultural situation facing the region, the Council expressed its full support for the above proposal, with due regard to the United Nations Secretary-General's initiative on the African crisis.

International co-operation in support of food objectives

40. The Council attached great importance to the fact that, in the years since 1974, the multilateral agencies undertook many of the specific proposals called for in resolutions of the World Food Conference dealing with emergencies and food security. In some respects they have gone even further. International agencies have been also at the forefront of efforts to provide technical and financial

resources in order to help developing countries improve their food and agricultural sectors. A majority of delegations regretted that international agencies have not been very effective so far as forums in helping to bring about the trade reforms and for establishing some of the international mechanisms which have been deemed necessary for a more responsive global food system. Some delegations regretted the slow progress for new trade agreements which have been deemed necessary for a more responsive global food situation.

Emergency and food security support by multilateral agencies

41. The means for meeting emergency situations have been much improved. FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System is in a position to identify production shortfalls and potential food crises. The International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR), administered by the World Food Programme (WFP), has proved to be a flexible means for mobilizing emergency assistance. Its annual target of 500,000 tons has been met since 1981. The annual level of food aid has averaged about 9 million tons over the decade, below the target of 10 million tons advocated by the Conference. Furthermore, an awareness of the potentially adverse effects of food aid has been affirmed and efforts have been made to curtail such effects.

42. The Council stressed the need to pursue efforts with a view to better integrating food aid with developing country policies and programmes. A larger proportion of total food aid is moving through multilateral channels, as had been proposed by the Conference. Nevertheless, food aid needs are larger today than a decade ago and food aid levels now represent a significantly reduced proportion of the growing cereal-import requirements of many low-income developing countries.

43. There has been a better conceptualization of the elements that comprise food security and their application:

(a) FAO now relates many of its ongoing programme activities to an integrated concept of food security and is attracting extrabudgetary resources to help make national food security systems operational;

(b) The World Food Council has placed world food security firmly within the context of national food strategies, as well as of international policies;

(c) Food aid, as carried out by WFP, now operates as a development resource and as a transfer of income, usually to the most needy people in the poorest countries;

(d) The IMF cereal facility, though it has been used only on limited occasions since its establishment in mid-1981, provides balance-of-payments relief to food-deficit countries that experience temporary increases in the cost of their cereal imports.

Multilateral technical and financial support

44. The multilateral agencies have generally placed a higher priority on the sector in the allocation of resources than have bilateral assistance agencies. Also, many of the multilateral agencies have specialized in promoting income, employment and other poverty-related measures for reaching chronically hungry and deprived groups. Their experience is an invaluable adjunct to a renewed commitment for the eradication of hunger. Ministers singled out especially:

(a) World Bank projects financed by the International Development Association (IDA) credits which are designed to disseminate simple input packages and low-cost technology to large numbers of farmers;

(b) The "Health revolution" for maternal-child food and health interventions carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);

(c) The technical assistance capabilities of FAO across a wide range of agricultural sciences, programmes and policies;

(d) Development of employment policy and special public works schemes of the International Labour Organisation (ILO);

(e) The unique project design capabilities of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for reaching small farmers and the rural poor;

(f) The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) inter-sectoral co-ordination capabilities for both policies and programmes at the country level;

(g) The regional development banks, which have been in the forefront of food and agricultural developments in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

The Council recalled the strategic importance of plant genetic resources relative to the achievement of food security objectives, and it was recalled that resolutions 8/83 and 9/83, on the constitution of an international undertaking and the creation of a commission on plant genetic resources, were adopted by the twenty-second FAO Conference. Many delegations urged that all Governments adhere to these resolutions.

Problems of developing country trade and earnings in relation to food

45. The Council expressed deep concern that the world-wide recession and the financial crisis have set back prospects of increased food security for developing countries as it is closely related to overall economic and trade conditions.

46. The important impact of the international agricultural environment on the development and the export earnings of many developing countries was stressed by Ministers. Proliferation of import restrictions and increasing export subsidization were seen to have contributed to international market instability and to growing distortions in the allocation of resources in developed and developing countries. All countries should demonstrate the requisite political will by refraining from creating tariff obstacles to agricultural imports, especially those from developing countries. Exporting countries should endeavour to limit export subsidies and analogous practices which might hinder trade, especially that of developing countries.

47. The Council agreed on the value of more open trade and affirmed that much more attention should be given to building support for more orderly adjustments in trade policies and related structural adjustments of the major trading countries. Renewed trade negotiations are essential to reduce protectionism and expand export earnings of developing countries. Ministers emphasized that the World Food Council should continue its efforts to mobilize the necessary political determination in the pursuit of such negotiations in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as well as discussions in other forums.

48. The Council reaffirmed its position against the use of food as an instrument of political pressure. In this regard, the majority of delegations requested the prompt re-establishment for Nicaragua of its sugar quota in conformity with the resolution of the Contracting Parties of GATT adopted on 13 March 1974. The President of the World Food Council was requested to take steps in that direction. Efforts must also be stepped up to achieve a better balance between the domestic economic policies of developed countries and improved market opportunity and food security of the developing regions.

49. Many delegations stressed the major importance of the multinational agri-business corporations for agricultural production and for the trading of food products and the need that their activities coincide in so far as possible, with the interests and the development plans of developing countries. They also recalled that it was necessary to make progress in the drafting of a code of conduct for the transnational corporations and the importance of continuing to assess their activities.

Resource commitments to food and agriculture

50. The Council expressed concern that, in addition to the dismal trade outlook for developing countries since 1980, there appears to be an erosion of the 1974 international understanding for increased financial assistance in support of the food and agricultural sectors of developing regions.

51. The Council noted with appreciation that the impetus of the World Food Conference resulted in a doubling of external resources, in real terms, to food and agriculture. Internal investment for the sector increased sharply in many countries during the 1970s. The multilateral financing agencies played an important and innovative role in this process and their assistance helped to shape development policies, as well as many of the substantial results achieved in food production and distribution.

52. The Council made special reference to the report on a "global assessment of resource flows through the United Nations system to the food and agriculture sector", prepared by the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs at the request of the World Food Council, as called for by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1983/77. Ministers commended the report as a valuable contribution to the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council.

53. The Council reviewed the main conclusions of the report and noted that since 1974 the international community has accelerated its resource commitments and disbursements in response to the consensus achieved at the World Food Conference. Resource flows to the food and agriculture sector through the United Nations system increased during the years 1974-1982 at the impressive rate of 13.7 per cent annually in real terms. None the less, the magnitude of resource flows, bilateral as well as multilateral, has remained short of widely-acknowledged resource needs. In addition, the rate of growth of commitments for food and agriculture is declining, with a consequential effect on disbursements in the near future.

54. The aggregate volume of the current assistance is inadequate to achieve agreed world food objectives. Aid to food and agriculture has fallen in the last two years. Bilateral aid to the sector is down. The \$US 9 billion replenishment of the International Development Association does not permit significantly increased assistance to low-income food-deficit countries, particularly Africa, nor does the

current level of pledges of UNDP. Ministers strongly emphasized the need to reverse the tide of declining aid to food and agriculture and increase it to adequate levels, through all channels.

55. The negotiations towards the second replenishment of IFAD, particularly between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) donors, have shown the most discouraging results to date. Some countries have not fulfilled their obligations under the first replenishment. Ministers emphasized the particularly valuable contributions of IFAD in the campaign for the elimination of hunger. A large number of delegations appealed to country members of IFAD that:

(a) All countries fulfill their pledges under the first replenishment as soon as possible;

(b) All countries in all categories announce the level of their contributions without further reference to percentage shares, so as to enable IFAD to continue its activities at an adequate level at the end of the current year;

(c) A call be launched to the good offices of the World Food Council to achieve the early conclusion of the second replenishment.

Some delegations pointed to the importance of the issue of burden-sharing between OECD countries and OPEC countries.

56. The Council considered positively the Executive Director's recommendation that donor countries could well devote more of their aid flows to promoting the implementation of food strategies of low-income developing countries. The assessment of the last decade shows that in order to make progress with food problems Governments must renew their priority to agricultural investment in their domestic resource allocation, and have sufficient resource flexibility to meet essential consumption as well as investment requirements, as they step up incentives for increased production in the rural areas. Most low-income countries will be unable to achieve this flexibility without increased aid.

57. Any such increased aid and investment to food and agriculture are to be channelled entirely through the existing agencies, both multilateral and bilateral, for more effective implementation of ongoing efforts. The Executive Director recommended increases of at least \$US 5 billion in external resources over five years, starting in 1986, in roughly equal proportions for both programme food aid and technical and capital assistance. The two forms of aid are highly complementary.

58. The benefit of this approach would be to lead to a major reorientation of programme food aid uses, as concluded by Ministers at the ninth World Food Council meeting, as it would minimize the risk of creating market distortions and hold out a realistic hope for gradually phasing out food aid as policy reforms and related investments result in increased food production.

59. The operational modalities of utilizing programme food aid in support of the food strategies and programmes of specific developing countries will require further examination in terms of individual needs of each country. While most programme aid will have an impact on both balance of payments and national budgets, the additional resources for food policy adjustment link the application of

programme food aid directly to food sector objectives, particularly those relating to producer incentives and consumption goals.

60. At the national level there is now a better recognition of the need for greater integration of technical, financial and food aid and greater flexibility and exchangeability in the development of various kinds of aid. As developing countries strengthen their policy framework, an improved basis is emerging for gradually increasing the level of programme aid. The momentum for greater understanding and more flexible procedures of co-operation must be sustained in the years ahead.

Increased challenge for co-ordination and co-operation

61. The Council affirmed that the commitment to the elimination of hunger and malnutrition implies not only sustained and increased assistance to countries facing increasingly complex food problems but also improvements in the quality of international co-operation and changes in national decision-making structures.

62. Governments are increasingly aware of the social and economic dimensions of the problems of food and hunger. National food strategies highlight the fact that the objective of hunger eradication transcends sectoral demarcations. Many Governments have begun to expand the process of food policy development beyond the agricultural sector, co-ordinating macro-economic, fiscal and monetary policies, with a view to maximizing nutritional and developmental benefits. Increasingly, Ministers of Agriculture, Planning, Finance, Trade and Labour jointly review national policies to meet food and hunger objectives.

63. The Council noted that these national changes have yet to be fully reflected in the international system of development co-operation. Co-ordination of multilateral agencies in the field and at their headquarters remains a concern of the Council. In this context, the Council also examined their interactions with bilateral programmes, non-governmental organizations, and the efforts of national Governments.

64. Moreover, the Council noted that efforts to co-ordinate the food and hunger-related activities of the polycentric multilateral system have largely focused on the major food agencies. But the real problem of co-ordination lies not only in the food agencies themselves, but also in the different objectives and policy orientations of non-food agencies, particularly the financial institutions. The diverse advice of different external agencies might compound the difficult tasks of national Governments in gaining coherence and effectiveness in the implementation of their policies.

65. The Council acknowledged that there is a need for greater participation of non-governmental organizations in dialogue and in a better co-ordinated international co-operative effort.

66. We Ministers:

(a) Affirm that hunger can no longer be blamed solely on humankind's inability to produce enough food for all; hunger today is largely a man-made phenomenon; human error or neglect creates it, human complacency perpetuates it and human resolve can eradicate it;

(b) Assert that the single most important task for the World Food Council in the years ahead is to maintain the confidence that hunger can be eradicated in our lifetime. In order to achieve this goal, it is the responsibility of the World Food Council to monitor constantly, assess accurately, prescribe competently and continue to advocate innovative approaches to the solution of the problems of world hunger;

(c) As members of the World Food Council - the instrument created by the international community gathered in the General Assembly of the United Nations - we commit ourselves to continue to act as catalysts for concerted action by all, in a sustained campaign for the elimination of the cause of hunger, and to remain the guardians of the spirit of the 1974 World Food Conference;

(d) Command to the Economic and Social Council that a special session of the General Assembly on Africa be convened. In view of the gravity of the situation, this should be done either immediately before or immediately after the next regularly scheduled session of the General Assembly;

(e) Invite the international community to renew its commitment to eradicate hunger and malnutrition as soon as possible and by no later than the end of the century, and complete the unfinished tasks to meet the objectives set by the 1974 World Food Conference.

Notes

1/ See A/CONF.65/20 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3).

PART TWO
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

1. The tenth ministerial session of the World Food Council was held at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, from 11 to 15 June 1984. The ministerial meeting was preceded by a preparatory meeting held in Rome, from 30 April to 3 May 1984. The purpose of the meeting was to review the progress achieved since the World Food Conference in 1974 and establish the direction for future actions required to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, the central objective of the Conference.

2. Delegates were welcomed to the official opening of the session by Comrade Mengistu Haile-Mariam, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council and of the Commission for Organizing the Party of Working People of Ethiopia, Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary Armed Forces of Socialist Ethiopia, and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. Chairman Mengistu Haile-Mariam stressed the significance of the tenth ministerial session, noting that the review and assessment theme of the meeting would give Ministers the opportunity to formulate recommendations for wiser policies and actions for the future. He observed that the problem of hunger and malnutrition confronting the world remains disquietingly grave. Today, hundreds of millions of people simply do not have enough to eat and, as a consequence, large segments of mankind remain vulnerable to disease. The African food problem is especially critical and the economy of most African countries is based on an agricultural sector which is weak and backward, lacking scientific know-how, proper technology and the capital required to improve development.

3. There are those who do not wish the brotherly African peoples to co-operate among themselves to solve their own problems, he said. This, coupled with the continued movement of rural people from the effects of encroaching deserts, has led to the creation of 10 million refugees in Africa. He said that the international economic crisis has hurt the national economies of developing countries as a whole, noting, in particular, the decline in the price for export agricultural goods to a point at which prices obtained sometimes do not cover the costs of production, and increasing international prices for industrial products. Comrade Mengistu Haile-Mariam urged delegates to assign priority attention to solving food problems, recognizing that there cannot be a speedy resolution to such lingering and chronic problems. He drew delegates' attention to the anomaly between food surpluses in some regions and food shortages in others. He suggested that this ministerial session should: explore ways and means of creating international co-operation to improve food distribution mechanisms for the benefit of the hungry; recommend an agricultural price system for developing countries which could be encouraging for producers and relevant to the international market; recommend areas for integrated subregional and regional co-operation among developing countries; and advise on and promote the adoption of food strategies integrated within national development plans to achieve production and consumption objectives, particularly in Africa.

4. The message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations was delivered by Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, his special representative for the crisis in Africa. The Secretary-General noted that the objectives established by the World Food

Conference are as valid today as they were in 1974. He said that the international community looks forward to the ministerial guidance of the World Food Council as to the direction for future actions for the eradication of hunger. He referred to the Council's record of achievements during the past decade, describing them as most impressive, and confirmed that the Council's recommendations to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly have contributed greatly to raising the international commitment to the elimination of hunger and malnutrition, and to keeping food issues in a prominent position on the global agenda.

5. The Secretary-General confirmed that hunger and malnutrition still tragically afflict many millions of men, women and children in developing countries. He made special reference to the critical food situation in Africa, noting that it was most appropriate for the Council to focus its attention on this crisis at its tenth session. He said that in January of this year, he had drawn the attention of the international community to the deepening economic and social crisis in Africa at which time he had emphasized the need for international support to assist African countries to counter this emergency situation and, at the same time, the need to restore and accelerate the pace of development in African countries. The Secretary-General is pursuing these efforts in close consultation with representatives of African Governments, the donor community and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system. In this context, he drew delegates' attention to the initiative taken by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in favour of those African countries most threatened by food shortages and to the Special Memorandum on the economic and social crisis in Africa, prepared in May by the ECA Conference of Ministers, for transmission to the Economic and Social Council and the Organization of African Unity. He noted the consensus reflected in the Lagos Plan of Action on the need to integrate measures to improve the food and agricultural situation.

6. The Secretary-General said that it is his intention to pursue vigorously, with Ministers of the World Food Council, his personal efforts to increase international awareness of the situation in Africa and to advocate additional support for strengthening existing programmes and projects. He observed that the tasks confronting the entire international community in the years ahead are great. He made special reference to the need for support for national efforts designed to reconcile problems of hunger and malnutrition, drawing delegates' attention to the capital, technical and food assistance required to achieve development objectives in developing countries. He called for continuing support for the international system and its institutions, and improved co-ordination between them. Support for the international system must not falter, he said. He noted the importance of substantial and timely replenishments for the International Development Association and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which are essential support for the efforts and adjustments being undertaken at the national level, particularly by low-income countries. He assured Council Ministers that the United Nations community, through the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, would eagerly await the conclusions and results of this session.

7. Mr. Eugene F. Whelan, President of the World Food Council and Minister for Agriculture, Canada, reminded delegates that they had a duty, mandated by the United Nations, to keep alive the spirit of the 1974 World Food Conference. In his introductory statement, the President thanked the Government and people of Ethiopia for inviting the Council to conduct its tenth ministerial session in Addis Ababa. He commented that the two principal functions of the World Food Council were to inspire others to direct more of the world's resources to food and life, and away

from war and death, and to help co-ordinate the policies of the United Nations family of food-related agencies. He was confident that progress would be achieved in both. The President expressed his hope that a genuine renewal of commitment would be reflected in ministerial deliberations, noting that he was most disturbed by the trend in multilateral aid spending by developed nations. He suggested that it was important to decide on ways of improving the performance and the perception of multilateral agencies, observing that this was an important part of maintaining the impetus for more development assistance.

8. He said that, if current levels of assistance are maintained, then rising populations, the increasing cost of producing food and the rising tide of trade protectionism suggest that not only would the international community be standing still but, in fact, would be losing ground. He noted that it was incumbent on Council Ministers to act to reverse this trend.

9. The President proposed for consideration by delegates a method by which they might bring efforts into clearer focus and raise the public level of support for increased production. He noted the tremendous production gains in Asia and in Europe, as well as in the traditional grain-exporting nations such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and Argentina. There was a proven capacity, he noted, to produce more than enough food to feed everyone and yet today there are at least as many seriously malnourished people as there were in 1974, no less than 450 million people. It was clear, he said, that very little progress in the field of food distribution to the very poorest had been achieved. He suggested that the Council place greater emphasis on the issues involved in improving the availability of food to all the world's people, suggesting that Council Ministers honestly attack the political, economic and social barriers that stand in the way of access to food. In this context, he suggested that the Council should review such thorny questions as domestic food pricing policies and that programmes should be implemented which will encourage production without causing impossible hardships for the poor. He advocated a more proactive and vocal role for the Council, which could lead to an improved trading environment for agricultural products. The Council should not usurp the power of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade or the International Wheat Council (IWC), but it was appropriate and proper for the Council to speak out on all matters which are related to food. He sounded a cautionary note with respect to the potentially negative effects of food aid and urged Ministers to have the courage to speak out on this matter as appropriate. Food aid, he claimed, is only justified in emergencies and when it is used as a tool for development.

10. A message from Mr. Francisco Merino Rábago, former President of the World Food Council, was read by the Secretary of the Council. Mr. Merino Rábago expressed his appreciation for the hospitality offered by the Government and people of Ethiopia in convening this tenth ministerial session in Addis Ababa. He expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the secretariat in support of his term as President and expressed the hope that the conclusions reached at the session would be positive, at a time when the world must continue to fight the great problems of hunger and malnutrition.

11. The Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Peter U. Onu, paid tribute to the Government and people of Ethiopia for hosting this important meeting. In reviewing the objectives established by the 1974 World Food Conference, it was his view that targets and objectives as envisioned had not been achieved. The situation in 1984 is worse, particularly in Africa, he said. He referred to the Lagos Plan of Action, noting the consensus in the formulation of that Plan to deliberately place food in its first Chapter. African Heads of State

and Government had rightly reflected the genuine concern and obvious importance of the subject of food, as expressed by various meetings preparatory to the Summit Meeting. The Plan had to be understood as an integrated approach to African economic problems, he said, noting that other sectors are all treated from the point of view of their respective contribution, first and foremost, to the production and supply of food.

12. He stressed that food aid must never be allowed to become a permanent factor to survival and expressed concern about the various reports being made to international organizations about the food aid being made available to Africa. What African countries badly need, he said, is technological as well as financial assistance to improve their own self-help schemes geared towards the production and supply of food to feed their increasing populations. He also noted that African countries must first put their houses in order and specifically and deliberately adopt appropriate policy incentives for food and agriculture. In concluding, the Secretary-General of OAU observed that, in the interests of maintaining world peace, the developed countries and the international community should assist in the development of African countries as trading partners in an indivisible world economy.

13. The President of IFAD reviewed the role and functions of the Fund since its creation by the World Food Conference. He noted that the principal elements of the IFAD mandate were to assist developing countries in their efforts to: create a food production base which could keep pace with population growth; establish an equitable system of food distribution; and develop approaches to combat poverty and, hence, alleviate hunger and malnutrition. He commented that Fund commitment activity had declined as the result of a shortfall in payments by some donors. Discussion and negotiations for a second replenishment of the Fund are inconclusive, he said, noting that the key issue was one of burden-sharing between donors. There are virtually no committable resources available for 1985.

B. Members of the Council

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

Argentina***	France***	Morocco***
Australia**	Gambia*	Nicaragua**
Banladesh**	German Democratic	Nigeria**
Botswana*	Republic**	Pakistan***
Burundi***	German, Federal	Thailand*
Canada*	Republic of**	Union of Soviet Socialist
Central African	Ghana**	Republics**
Republic***	Greece*	United Arab Emirates**
Chile***	Hungary***	United Republic of
China*	India*	Tanzania*
Colombia*	Iraq***	United States of America*
Ecuador**	Italy***	Venezuela**
Ethiopia**	Japan***	Yugoslavia*
Finland***	Mexico*	

* Term of office expires on 31 December 1984.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 1985.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 1986.

C. Attendance

15. All members of the Council were present except the Central African Republic, Ecuador and the United Arab Emirates.

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

States non-members of the Council

Angola	Indonesia	Romania
Austria	Iran (Islamic	Rwanda
Belgium	Republic of)	Sierra Leone
Benin	Israel	Spain
Bulgaria	Ivory Coast	Sudan
Cameroon	Jamaica	Sweden
Chad	Kenya	Switzerland
Congo	Lesotho	Turkey
Cuba	Liberia	Uganda
Czechoslovakia	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	United Kingdom of Great
Denmark	Malawi	Britain and Northern
Egypt	Mozambique	Ireland
Equatorial Guinea	Niger	Viet Nam
Gabon	Norway	Zaire
Guinea	Philippines	Zambia
Holy See	Poland	Zimbabwe

United Nations

United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa
United Nations Industrial Development Organization
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Development Programme
World Food Programme
Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organisation
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAO/WHO/OAU Joint Commission for Food and Nutrition for Africa
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
World Health Organization
World Bank
International Monetary Fund
International Fund for Agricultural Development

Intergovernmental organizations

African Development Bank
Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahelian Zone
CIRDAFRICA
Commonwealth Secretariat

Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa
European Economic Community
Organization of African Unity
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Organization of Islamic Conference
OPEC Fund for International Development

Non-governmental organizations

Agri-Energy Round-Table
Ba'Hai International
Canadian Hunger Foundation
Caritas Internationalis
Christian Relief and Development Association
Catholic Relief Services
Church World Service/Lutheran World Relief
Evanqelical Church Mekana Yesus
Friends World Committee for Consultation
International Co-operative Alliance
International Commission of Jurists
International Committee of Red Cross
International Council of Voluntary Agencies
Interfaith Action for Economic Justice
Iowa State University
League of Red Cross Societies
Lutheran World Federation
Mennonite Economic Development Associates
Norwegian Church Aid
OXFAM
Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
Society for International Development
World Council of Churches
World Federation of Trade Unions
World Organization of the Scout Movement
World Veterinary Association

D. Officers

17. The following officers of the Council were present:

President: Mr. Eugene F. Whelan (Canada)
Vice-Presidents: Mr. Saihou Sabally (Gambia)
Mr. Karl Friedrich Gebhardt (German Democratic Republic)
Rapporteur: Mr. Reaz Rahman (Banqladesh)

18. In the absence of elected officials, the Vice-Presidents from Banqladesh and Nicaragua were represented by Mr. Reaz Rahman and Mr. Humberto Carrión, respectively.

E. Agenda

19. The Council adopted the following agenda (WFC/1984/1) for the session:
1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda.
 2. Review of progress toward the eradication of hunger, 1974-1984.
 3. Food strategies in Africa and review of agency co-ordination.
 4. Renewal of the commitment for the eradication of hunger.
 5. Future programme of the Council and other business.
 6. Report of the Council to the General Assembly.

F. Documentation

20. The documents before the session are listed in annex I to the present report.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARD THE ERADICATION OF HUNGER, 1974-1984

21. Discussion on this agenda theme was introduced by the Executive Director of the World Food Council, who reviewed the principal lessons learnt from the Council's assessment of progress achieved during the past decade. He noted that experience showed that increased production is a function of producer incentives and the supply response was independent of political ideologies. The assessment also revealed that solution of food problems requires policies and programmes, not just projects; that sufficient resources were necessary to achieve consumption and related investment objectives, particularly in rural areas; that an expanded use of food aid was valid in the context of national food sector strategies reinforcing food policy redirections; that the agricultural policy and trade objectives of both developed and developing countries need to be adjusted to reduce hunger; that effective domestic economic policies, coupled with stability in international economic conditions, was essential; and that international agencies on the whole have performed well in carrying out food-related tasks where Government policies and programmes were reasonably coherent.

22. If donors were prepared to tangibly help countries undertake food policy adjustment, including the improvement of producer incentives, then a reaffirmation of the commitment to resolve food and hunger problems had particular significance at this session. In this regard, the Executive Director proposed an 8 to 10 per cent increase in the level of assistance to the food and agricultural sector, in the amount of \$US 5 billion over a five-year period, to be channelled through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, half of which could usefully be made available in the form of food aid within the framework of well-conceived national food strategies. The Executive Director concluded that the proposal for increased external resources respects the funding priorities for institutions and supports the Secretary-General's initiative for Africa.

23. Mr. Arturo R. Tanco, Minister of Agriculture of the Philippines and former President of the World Food Council, in referring to positive food developments during the past decade, noted that Asia, despite an improved production record, still had the largest number of hungry people in the world. Commenting on the current African food crisis, he noted that African countries, formerly net exporters of food, had imported 85 million tons of food in 1980. In spite of the suggestion in Council documents that perceptions of the global food problem had shifted during the past decade, he observed that an increase in food production is still the ultimate solution to problems of hunger and malnutrition.

24. He acknowledged that a doubling of external resource flows to the food and agricultural sector since 1974 had been significant in resolving some food problems. Notwithstanding that, there was a continuing need to step up investment if food production were to be significantly increased in the next decade. He noted that the establishment of a rational system of international food trade and reduced protectionism in food-exporting countries could lead to significantly improved earnings for developing countries. In concluding, he observed that there has been insufficient national focus on policies and programmes to benefit the poor. New targeted programmes aimed at the poor were required, he said.

25. Discussion centred on the report of the Independent Panel and on the report prepared by the Executive Director. There appeared to be consensus among delegates that real progress had been achieved during the past decade. Many delegates noted that, although there were almost 1 billion more people in the world today than in 1974, the majority of these were being fed.

26. There was general agreement that the multilateral institutions had performed commendably during the past decade, but there was still some concern about the effectiveness and accountability of multilateral delivery systems. A number of delegates felt that there must be quantum improvements in the effectiveness of institutions, given current resource scarcities. The mechanisms to ensure this are in place and continuing problems cannot be ignored.

27. A number of delegates acknowledged that many of the difficulties faced during the past decade were not anticipated in 1974. Indeed, world grain production has reached record levels and producer prices have declined. Some delegates observed that the Independent Panel's assessment of this situation could lead to overly-optimistic conclusions, and cautioned against complacency. On the other hand, a number of delegates concluded that the nature of the food problem has changed since 1974 and that a new agenda, to include a better balance of the roles of food aid and official development assistance and reflecting the importance of investment and trade and positive policies at the national level in support of agriculture, was urgently needed.

28. Many delegates observed that there was a growing gap between global production and consumption and that the current international economic situation had weakened production plans in many developing countries. Some delegates emphasized the importance of economic growth to the eradication of poverty, seen by many as the substantive cause of hunger and malnutrition. Many delegates commented that the assessment documents prepared by the Council provided conclusive evidence of this correlation. One delegate suggested that international organizations should concentrate on actions and measures to eradicate poverty. A number of delegates referred to the objectives established by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, calling for their full implementation to ease rural poverty. One delegate observed that WCARRD objectives had not been well supported by developed countries. Some delegates urged more support for the private sector.

29. A number of delegates were able to endorse the measures proposed by the Executive Director, but the feasibility of some proposals, particularly those regarding a new International Wheat Agreement and an expanded use of the Food Financing Facility of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was questioned by at least one delegate.

30. All delegates agreed with the Executive Director's call for liberalized trade. Many delegates urged that producer and export subsidies should be reduced and eventually eliminated. A number of delegates expressed support for a new round of negotiations in GATT with respect to improving trade conditions for agricultural products. In this respect, one delegate suggested that the World Food Council should focus its activities on measures to strengthen multilateral channels, which offered an opportunity for linking agricultural problems with global negotiations. A number of delegates urged that immediate attention be focused on measures to correct current international finance and trade conditions, which are adversely affecting developing countries.

31. All delegates emphasized the importance of a favourable policy environment for the development of the food and agricultural sector. They agreed that one of the most important elements of a food and agricultural policy was an appropriate pricing orientation, one which provided remunerative prices to producers while at the same time ensuring that undue hardship was not created for the urban or rural poor. It was noted that a number of countries were already intensifying efforts to increase food production. Nevertheless, in many cases, there was still need for reappraisal of domestic food and agricultural policies and programmes. The Council recognized that there were structural difficulties and financial resource constraints which thwart national efforts to increase food production. The issues were complex and required an appropriate blend of policies.
32. On the question of the international cereal agreement, many delegates underlined the need for a grains arrangement with integrated price, food-trade and food-stock provisions. They highlighted the important contribution such an agreement could make to world food security and market stability and expressed the hope that negotiations that include new provisions would be resumed soon.
33. All delegates reiterated that a free and growing agricultural export trade was of fundamental importance for the maintenance of world food security. Increased foreign-exchange earnings would improve the capacity of low-income food-deficit countries to finance imports of food. This is especially important in view of the already strong claims on the foreign-exchange resources of these countries to service their debts and finance other imports urgently needed to promote their agricultural and economic development.
34. Many delegates emphasized that a number of negative factors inhibited the growth of their foreign-exchange earnings. These factors included the deterioration in their commodity terms of trade, the increased protectionism faced by their export products and the unfair competition posed by the use of export subsidies and other export-supporting mechanisms by all developed exporting countries.
35. Many delegates made reference to the assessment document prepared by the non-governmental organizations, expressing support for most of its recommendations, with the notable exception of that pertaining to food aid. Delegates of some developing countries emphasized that food aid was an important resource having a positive correlation with balance-of-payments positions and that it should be fully integrated into the agricultural plans and policies of recipient countries. There was general concern among delegates about the potential for dependency on food aid and agreement that food aid should not be institutionalized.
36. One delegate suggested that the World Food Council should be active in establishing a continuing relationship with the non-governmental organization community, particularly with regard to programmes in support of small producers.
37. In reviewing food developments during the last decade, one delegate observed that there was an increasing imbalance between global food supply and demand and that insolvency in a number of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, was growing, preventing such countries from buying the necessary amounts of food and making the necessary investment in domestic food and agricultural development. He noted that the present crisis and instability in the international food trade market and the policies adopted by developed countries were not likely to change quickly. He referred briefly to the results of the

recent Economic Summit of Industrialized Countries, noting that the financial decisions affecting global development were only slightly positive. He observed that the solution to the world food crisis, therefore, would not be quick and that the rules of the game must be changed, both nationally and internationally. Agricultural development, he said, cannot be sectoral, a view endorsed by other delegations. It was a function of a number of activities, he said, which were supportive of that sector. He emphasized the need for a better development balance between the rural and urban areas, noting that such balance was conditioned by Government policies regarding pricing and distribution.

38. Many representatives noted that policies to stimulate national agricultural development were not only subject to conditions in individual countries but were also significantly influenced by international trade practices. This must be taken into account when formulating appropriate food and agricultural policies. One delegate observed that exporting countries had food subsidies for production and exports and that many countries provided a "surplus price" which was above the international market price. It should not be surprising that some developing countries also sought to protect their agricultural sector, as was the case with India and China. By contrast, some African and Central American countries had weakened their agricultural position, by inappropriate policy formulation.

39. The same delegate, in referring to international trading arrangements, emphasized that it was only when countries reached a certain level of development that they could engage competitively in the international market. It was observed by a number of delegates that there were no appropriate GATT rules for agriculture, and yet it was recognized that a certain amount of protection for the agricultural sector was desirable for most countries. One delegate indicated that the forthcoming meeting of the International Wheat Agreement in Ottawa will have before it some suggestions which could be incorporated into arrangements for negotiating a new International Wheat Agreement. Factors to be considered at that meeting would include credit provisions and fund management, as well as a stabilization arrangement for import prices for food crops. The delegate concluded by noting that development would not "drop from the heavens", that the process was slow and that efforts within particular regions must be co-ordinated, so that there might be mutual support among and for small farmers; in that respect, notwithstanding other contingent liabilities, external resources must be custom-tailored to meet local requirements.

40. There was general agreement and it was repeatedly emphasized that the Council must pursue forcefully, under the auspices of GATT, the launching of multilateral trade negotiations focusing on agricultural trade matters. Several delegations stressed that a reduction by industrialized countries of the trade barriers affecting agricultural products would result in a large and measurable increase in export earnings for developing countries. They also expressed the view that the expansion of trade alone was not enough to achieve world food security.

41. Some delegates spoke of the need further to improve global food security. One delegate observed, however, that food security was a regional/national concept which was dependent on increased domestic production and could not be based on a global notion of food security which could increase dependency on external food supply. The same delegate observed that international trade per se would not lead to progress for all. Developing countries could not become full players in international trade until real development and growth were achieved, a view endorsed by some other delegates.

42. A number of delegates reaffirmed that food aid was necessary for a quick response to emergency situations, but that there was a danger that food aid, if not carefully managed and integrated within carefully conceived national food policies, could depress agricultural prices and change indigenous food habits. All agreed that these factors could otherwise be most damaging to local agriculture and programmes for increasing production.

43. A number of delegates expressed concern about the stagnation and slow-down of external resource flows to the food and agriculture sector, particularly through multilateral institutions. One delegate made reference to the "rigidities" associated with negotiations for a second replenishment of IFAD, and many delegates urged a full and adequate replenishment for that institution, as well as for IDA. There was near consensus among delegates that increased investment in the food and agricultural sector was imperative to attain stated food goals and objectives.

44. A number of delegates commented on the proposed increase in external resources of \$US 5 billion over a five-year period. Some delegates were supportive of the proposal, while others suggested that requests for additional resources could be entertained only in the context of revised food-price policies adopted by developing countries.

45. Ministers strongly reaffirmed that the efficient and effective use of financial resources was of critical importance. Appropriate recognition was given to the effective work in food and agricultural development of IFAD and IDA. Their adequate replenishment was essential in helping the low-income food-deficit countries to get the required additional development assistance to implement more effective food strategies and programmes directed to increasing food production and reducing hunger and undernutrition. The President of IFAD appealed to donor countries to fulfil their commitments for the first replenishment of IFAD's financial resources.

46. Some delegates noted with satisfaction that all sessions of the World Food Council had stressed the inseparable link between the maintenance of peace and the improvement of the food situation in the developing countries and, in addition, had deplored the use of food for political purposes. Many delegates expressed their strong belief that there was a close relationship between matters concerning international peace, security and disarmament and world food problems. In this context, the attention of the meeting was drawn to the importance of the implementation, by the World Food Council, of General Assembly resolution 38/188 J on institutional arrangements relating to the process of disarmament.

47. In the opinion of many delegates, the solution to the world food problems cannot be found beyond the general process of the establishing of the New International Economic Order on a just and democratic basis. One delegate underscored, within the world food security concept and strategies for economic development and growth, the importance of the Quito Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted by the Latin American Economic Conference last January, in view of the proposals it contains in the areas of food financing, food trade and food security. The Declaration was based on a framework of democratic principles respecting the sovereignty of all Latin American countries and the right to determine their own economic, social and political destinies.

48. Some delegates expressed the opinion that the severe food situation in some developing countries, which originated from colonial rule, would be further aggravated if efforts to end neo-colonial exploitation and relieve developing countries from the consequence of the capitalist system's crises were not successful. In this context, the necessity of shaping international economic relations on the basis of equality of rights and ensuring nations' sovereignty over their natural resources was mentioned. The infiltration practices of transnational corporations were condemned by some delegations and it was stressed that their activities should be regulated and controlled in order to eliminate the negative effects of their activities on the economies of the developing countries, especially their food and agricultural sectors.

CHAPTER III

FOOD STRATEGIES IN AFRICA AND REVIEW OF AGENCY CO-ORDINATION

49. The Minister of Agriculture of the Gambia and Vice-President of the World Food Council, Mr. Saihou S. Sabally, introduced the agenda item. He drew the attention of delegates to the disturbing figures which showed the gravity of Africa's food problems, and called for a massive plan to accelerate the food production of African countries to the point of food self-sufficiency. He likened Africa's agricultural capacity to the industrial capacity of Europe at the end of the Second World War, a situation of grave concern to the Governments of Africa and to organizations such as OAU, ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

50. Mr. Sabally recalled his participation at the twentieth anniversary meeting of the African Development Bank, held at Tunis in May 1984. He complimented AfDB, OAU and ECA for the excellent paper which they had prepared for review and consideration at that time. He himself had presented to that meeting five recommendations for tackling Africa's present food problems and he wished to restate them to this session of the World Food Council. These were:

- (a) Mobilization of resources, consistent with the recommendations of the Lagos Plan of Action;
- (b) Greater emphasis on the development of irrigation, as an obvious measure to counter the worst effects of drought and harness the continent's vast water potential;
- (c) Formulation and implementation of national food sector plans based on the recommendations advanced by the World Food Council in 1979;
- (d) Expansion of the African Development Bank's Special Relief Fund to address emergency food needs in collaboration with the Joint FAO/WFP Task Force;
- (e) Increased access to credit, through rural lending institutions, for small-scale, medium-scale and large-scale producers.

51. Mr. Sabally called upon the international community to contribute generously to efforts to mobilize resources for IFAD and urged substantial increases in resources for the Special Relief Fund of AfDB, the World Food Programme, FAO, UNDP and IDA, stressing the vital role of all of these institutions in these difficult times. He commended the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Adebajo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of ECA, as co-ordinator for Resource Mobilization in Africa and suggested that this excellent decision now be reinforced and institutionalized, by calling for a special conference or special General Assembly session in Africa on all aspects of the African food and economic crisis and the measures required to address it. He noted that a similar suggestion had come from the Director-General of FAO, in his statement to the recent meeting of ECA Planning Ministers in Addis Ababa.

52. The Executive Secretary of ECA observed that progress in the food and agricultural sector determined the rate of economic progress in most African countries. Agricultural development generates, among other things, jobs, incomes,

foreign trade and economic infrastructure. He stressed the need for African countries to mobilize their own natural resources and commit themselves to effective national development planning, in spite of existing constraints, many of which are of an external nature.

53. The representative of the European Community said that the Community did not intend that food aid be considered a "miracle drug". If a country becomes self-sufficient in food, the Community will continue its external assistance in other forms. The prerequisite for any successful food self-sufficiency strategy is a Government's commitment to making that strategy a priority, he said.

54. The delegate of Guinea spoke in his capacity as Chairman of the second session of the African Inter-Ministerial Committee for Food and invited the meeting to take into consideration the recommendations contained in the report of that Committee. The recommendations were generally endorsed by participants.

55. All delegates expressed their deep concern about the critical food situation in Africa. While other aspects of the food problem were important, its ultimate solution lies in increasing production. Food policies and strategies should therefore include appropriate measures to achieve this. A number of delegates made specific reference to the need for improved producer incentives and land tenure as important measures in the development of agricultural policies and programmes in Africa.

56. Delegates noted that Africa's need for food has outpaced food production, which has been the lowest of any developing region during the last 10 years. To cover the widening food deficits, Africa has had to import increasing quantities of food. Moreover, perhaps more dangerous, is that the increasing reliance of the African region on cereal imports and food aid threatens to create a new and serious structural dependence on cereals which cannot be grown easily in many parts of Africa.

57. All delegates pointed out clearly that the disturbingly low level of food production and the vast extent of hunger and malnutrition are the main products of poverty. Some of the principal interrelated economic and non-economic causes for Africa's food problems were also singled out: recurrent floods and drought, political upheavals and civil strife but, above all, the past neglect of food and agricultural sector policies, favouring low consumer prices at the expense of price incentives to food producers and pricing and investment policies which favour the production of agricultural exports, again at the cost of domestic food production.

58. African Ministers have recognized the severely adverse terms of trade for agricultural products, both within African countries and in foreign markets. Access to markets of developed countries of some agricultural products has actually decreased in real terms since 1979. The present economic environment has meant reduced demand for these commodities, lower prices and hence, lower foreign exchange earnings. Many delegates urged the World Food Council to direct its best efforts, through the appropriate organizations such as GATT, towards a removal of restrictions and trade barriers, especially to agricultural products. Improvement in the terms of trade and balance-of-payments position of African countries would enable them to implement domestic economic adjustment policies and formulate and implement food strategies.

59. A number of delegates from various countries and representatives of multilateral assistance agencies referred to the various programmes and projects through which they were assisting African countries, particularly in regard to the formulation and implementation of national food strategies, and pledged their willingness to continue this support. It was recognized by most delegates that international assistance was required to support national efforts. As in the previous day's debate, reference was made to the need for more effective co-operation among international and multilateral agencies, so that there might be improved effectiveness in the use of resources allocated to the agricultural sector.

60. A number of African delegates, however, expressed disappointment that there had not been sufficient resources available to implement national food strategies earlier and that the implementation of such strategies had been delayed. Some delegates suggested that the World Food Council should continue playing a leadership role in co-ordinating international action and mobilizing resources for the design and implementation of food sector plans and strategies. There was consensus that more resources were required in support of African food policies and programmes. In expressing concern at the alarming food situation in Africa, recognized as part of a much broader economic crisis, many delegates confirmed support for the Secretary-General's initiative, including his appointment of the ECA Executive Secretary as his special representative in Africa. The Special Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's economic and social crisis was supported by most delegates.

61. The African Ministers, supported by all international institutions and especially by the non-governmental organizations, stated forcefully that implementation of national policy must deal with the adoption of a broad-based strategy to alleviate poverty, the creation of a production base to ensure the sustained growth of food output and an equitable distribution of income. The main goals of such strategies must be to ensure that production keeps pace with population growth, improve conditions in vulnerable areas and improve the quality of life and nutritional status of the rural poor in African countries.

62. All Ministers emphasized that if African countries were to accelerate policy adjustments in the food and agricultural sector, external technical and capital assistance needed to be increased. In this connection, delegates lamented the lack of financial support in a number of countries for the implementation of strategy proposals in the agricultural sector and for general economic development and growth. The delegates requested that funding for UNDP, IDA and especially for IFAD be increased to maintain agricultural investment priorities. Close collaboration among Governments, policy makers and international financial institutions were imperative.

63. On the question of balance-of-payments problems, the Ministers emphasized that the rehabilitation of world trade and world economic recovery would increase the export earnings of African countries, improving their capacity to meet financial obligations and increased imports for economic development and growth. New external financing for food and agricultural development in Africa available through international finance institutions was a challenge to the policy and management capacity and the economic potential of the countries of the region, as they face a decrease in concessionary resources. Ministers made it clear that countries preparing their food and agricultural projects for financing should emphasize the importance of the social component and the significant contribution of the rural community in the preparation and implementation of such projects.

64. Many delegates expressed the view that the above factors, some of which were beyond Africa's control, namely those associated with the world economic recession, and with drought, floods and other disasters have, in recent years, borne the brunt of the blame for its current misfortunes. The political and moral imperative is to pursue measures to reconcile the domestic and international reforms required to improve the global economic environment. Reaching this goal would enable African countries to implement better national adjustment policies to overcome hunger and malnutrition, mitigate the impact of natural disasters and raise the standard of living and improve the well-being of the people of Africa.

65. Some countries had shown a clear political determination to confront their food problems when they adopted the Lagos Plan of Action, which spelled out the economic and social development objectives of African countries. They also recognized that solving their food problems and achieving food self-reliance would not cure all their economic and social maladies. The economic development and growth of African countries should be considered in an integrated manner, including the national economic planning and social development process.

66. All delegates requested the Council to intensify efforts in the proper forums to promote and increase the ability of developing countries to expand earnings from agricultural exports and to expand non-agricultural exports. Negotiations on agricultural import barriers must be pursued actively by the Council to help restrain growth in protection and further to reduce economic and non-economic barriers to trade. At the same time, all delegates recognized that prospects for expanding trade were most likely to occur through expanded market growth both within the African community and at the international level.

67. The representative of the non-governmental organizations observed that the assessment documents prepared by the Council clearly indicated that efforts to improve the global food situation during the past decade had, notwithstanding substantial gains, fallen short of the mark. He noted, however, that there was a better understanding of the global food problem, suggesting that the 1974 World Food Conference had approached the problem from a narrow perspective. As had other delegates, he emphasized that poverty was the root cause of hunger and, in this respect, the eradication of hunger and malnutrition had to be placed in an overall economic context. Another matter, not fully articulated in 1974, but now also better understood, was the extent to which the policies of developed countries impacted negatively on the developing world. Based on these new understandings, the representative proposed two corrective actions: government policies and programmes more explicitly directed towards the economic development of and by the poor and expanded utilization of multilateral institutions. The trend away from multilateral co-operation (for example, the resource position of IFAD and IDA) was cause for alarm. Bickering among multilateral institutions neither benefited the poor nor contributed to public confidence. The World Food Council, which deserved the ongoing support of Governments, he said, should more fully address resources allocations within the multilateral system, with a view to identifying those components which had the greatest potential for eradicating hunger and malnutrition. Regarding Africa, he noted that a multitude of non-governmental organizations existed and that there, as elsewhere, they were making a distinctive contribution through practical action programmes. Their work could be further enhanced by Governments interested in facilitating their efforts.

CHAPTER IV

RENEWAL OF THE COMMITMENT FOR THE ERADICATION OF HUNGER

68. The Executive Director, in introducing this agenda item, referred to some of the principal conclusions which emerged from the assessment process. These included the importance of trade and the negative effects of protectionism on the struggle for the eradication of hunger; the appropriateness of integrated food and agricultural policies; the importance of access to food and equity in its distribution; the effectiveness of channels of assistance and the requirement for increased investment in the food and agricultural sector in developing countries. The Executive Director stated that he wanted to focus on this latter conclusion and elaborate on his proposal to increase external resources for food and agricultural investment. Before doing so, however, he thought it appropriate that some comment be obtained on the study entitled "Global Assessment of Resource Flows through the United Nations to the Food and Agriculture Sector" (WFC/1984/9), prepared at the request of the Economic and Social Council.

69. The Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs spoke on the central analysis contained in the paper as regards resource flows and their geographic distribution since 1974. He commented, as well, on projected external assistance needs and established targets, noting that future investment requirements for the sector were significant. He noted that the greatest share of sectoral investment must be generated by developing countries but that this would require major improvements in the international economic situation.

70. The Executive Director emphasized that access to sufficient resources by developing countries is essential for stepping up food and agricultural production. External trade and increased export earnings were, in this respect, important but, until such time as these were improved, more external assistance was required. The purpose of his proposal to increase external resources in the amount of \$US 5 billion over the next five-year period was to reverse the trend of declining assistance to the sector. This was a minimum amount, which should be seen as additional to existing "base line" commitments, in support of food policy adjustments in developing countries, to be channelled through existing aid mechanisms and institutions.

71. Many delegates agreed and accepted that increased investment in the food and agricultural sector was imperative to maintaining and improving consumption targets. Delegates from developing countries emphasized that their ability to achieve these objectives was being eroded by the trade policies and practices of developed countries, price instability in international commodity markets and the state of the international financial market. Many delegates observed that these factors were not only hindering efforts to improve food production but had significantly slowed development progress in many countries. One delegate proposed the establishment of a financial fund designed to utilize surpluses in food-exporting countries for the benefit of the hungry and suggested that the Council should study and pursue this idea.

72. One delegate noted that the development of plant genetic resource was a key for improved food security, and urged all countries to participate in a special commission organized by FAO on this subject. The same delegate noted that

transnational corporations condition important events in developing countries and that their activities should coincide with both the interests and aspirations of these countries.

73. Many delegates referred to the funding priority for IFAD activities and urged, as a primary objective for increased external resources, that its second replenishment be adequately filled and successfully negotiated.

74. Most delegates expressed concern about the slow-down in commitments to the food and agricultural sector and were able to support the thrust of proposals designed to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Some delegates urged that the World Food Council support the activity of the GATT Committee on Agriculture to liberalize agricultural trade. One delegate observed that the Council should not recommend changes in international measures which currently function well and noted that in the case of IFAD it is the response to the emergency need which was important and not a target figure. Another delegate suggested that targets should be considered in their appropriate forums and, in the case of IFAD, the matter was for the consideration and responsibility of the World Food Programme Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes.

75. Other delegates noted that the Council documents and proposed measures make useful recommendations for developing countries on the need for national food policy adjustment, but insufficient reference was made to the need for developed countries to adjust their policies. The view was expressed that greater harmonization of policies between and among all countries was necessary to eradicate hunger. Clear and more specific recommendations, which address the different conditions which prevail in various countries, should be developed, it was noted.

76. Many delegates restated, as in previous debate, that poverty is the root cause of hunger. There was consensus that external assistance is required and should increase as long as the current international trade and finance situations prevail. A number of delegates stressed the importance of implementing the objectives established by WCARRD to increase output and generate growth in income and employment in rural areas. Some delegates advocated increased activity by State organizations and others advocated more initiatives by the private sector to this end.

77. A number of delegates supported the Executive Director's proposal to increase external resources by the amount of \$US 5 billion over a five-year period. One delegate observed that increased external resources in the amount proposed should be channelled through the World Food Programme and IFAD. There was consensus that needs outstrip available resources and a number of delegates described measures being advanced in their own assistance agencies which could result and were resulting in increased resource allocation for the food and agricultural sector. Some delegates noted that the private sector offered important potential for resource mobilization in the sector. Most delegates from developed countries indicated a willingness to assist developing countries in their efforts to restructure policies to promote new investment and growth but were unable to make a positive commitment to the Executive Director's proposal. One delegate observed that the proposal was not feasible as no implementation mechanisms had been identified.

78. All delegates urged improved effectiveness in multilateral operations, given scarce resource available and pressing agricultural investment needs. One delegate proposed that the World Food Council give consideration to conducting an examination of the work of multilateral agencies to ensure maximum effectiveness in the delivery of assistance to the sector.

79. One delegate, drawing on the experience in his own country, proposed that the World Food Council organize an exchange of experience between policy makers active in different regions as a step towards advancing co-operation among food sectors.

80. Some delegates emphasized the importance of family planning policies and programmes and the correlation these have with achieving food security for nations and people.

81. Most delegates reaffirmed that food should not be used as a measure or instrument of political pressure and there was consensus that peace and disarmament were requisite to the elimination of poverty and the eradication of hunger.

82. A spokesman for the non-governmental organizations made a statement encouraging Governments to redouble their efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, attuning their policies and programmes more closely to grass-roots realities. Non-governmental organizations expressed their willingness to work with Governments in the interests of empowering people to be more fully the agents of their own development. There were distinctive and indispensable roles for Governments, intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to play if the challenge were to be met.

CHAPTER V

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A. Organization of work

83. The Council established a working group to draft the conclusions and recommendations which emerged from the tenth ministerial session. The group was composed of Ethiopia and Ghana (Africa); Iraq and Japan (Asia); Colombia and Mexico (Latin America); Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the German Democratic Republic (Socialist States of Eastern Europe); and the United States of America and France, assisted by the European Economic Community (EEC) (Western European and other States). The President appointed Mr. G. I. Trant (Canada) as his personal representative to act as Chairman of the working group.

84. The conclusions and recommendations were read to the Council by the working group's Chairman. The Chairman stated that paragraphs 57, 58 and 59, concerning the Executive Director's proposal for increased resources in support of stepped up food programmes in developing countries, should not be interpreted as having the support of all member countries.

85. The conclusions and recommendations were adopted by acclamation. The President of the session pointed to the broad support for the Executive Director's proposals to increase assistance for food policies and strategies, and called upon the Executive Director to exert all possible efforts to mobilize at least an additional \$US 1 billion annually over the next five years for food and agricultural development.

86. Following the adoption by acclamation, the German Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Socialist States of Eastern Europe, confirmed acceptance of the Socialist States of Eastern Europe of the conclusions and recommendations and drew the attention of Council members to documents WFC/1984/12 and WFC/1984/13, which were being distributed at the meeting.

87. The delegate of the USSR, while accepting the adoption by consensus of the conclusions and recommendations of the tenth session of the Council, reaffirmed its basic position as stated in the report of the World Food Council on the work of its eighth session 1/ and also as reflected in the letter of the head of the delegation of the USSR of 10 May 1983 to the Chairman of the ninth session of the World Food Council (WFC/1983/12).

88. The United States of America made the following statement of reservation on paragraphs 10, 14 and 16:

"Regarding paragraphs 10 and 14, the United States believes that proposals for new international commodity and grains agreements as well as certain other proposed new market distorting practices can have serious negative side-effects on world food security. Such measures could cause greater problems than they would solve and we doubt that they are necessary.

"The United States is skeptical of the economic appropriateness of price-affecting commodity agreements but will continue to examine proposals for new agreements on a case-by-case basis. It is unlikely that we would support new ones.

"We agree with calling into question the importance to developing countries of a new international grains agreement. As the Independent Panel's paper (WFC/1984/6) pointed out, a new international grains agreement would probably not increase significantly the net amount of resources available to food-deficit developing countries, and since 1974, market adjustments have been made smoothly without a new international agreement.

"A new international grains agreement or similar mechanisms is not a prerequisite for world food security. The absence of a new agreement should not be an excuse for not making progress in establishing other elements of world food security, for example national grains reserves, and increasing food production, and building infrastructure.

"The United States believes that paragraph 16 is far too negative and fails to recognize the extremely beneficial potential of the world economic recovery, already underway in a number of developed countries. As the pace of the world economy recovers we would expect that developed countries' purchases of products produced in developing countries will increase substantially thus providing significant improvement in the export earnings and overall economies of developing countries."

B. Other points of discussion raised by Ministers

89. The delegate of Mexico proposed that Council Ministers issue a special appeal exhorting all Category I and II countries to complete commitments outstanding in respect of IFAD's first replenishment and make every possible effort to conclude the second replenishment at adequate levels.

C. Future programme of work

90. Drawing on the concerns and proposals advanced by delegates in their deliberations at both the plenary and private sessions, the Executive Director presented to the meeting a list of eight topics suggested by delegates for inclusion in the Council's future programme of work. In the course of an extensive discussion, several additional topics of interest were proposed by delegates. However, there was general recognition of the need to focus on priorities which would further the objectives of the Council in eliminating hunger. The Executive Director, after taking into account the views expressed by delegates and in consultation with the Chairman of the meeting, proposed the following future programme of work, which was endorsed by the Council:

(a) All work conducted by the Council will provide a priority focus on African food problems, as directed by the United Nations Secretary-General for all elements of the United Nations system. In this regard, a review of the implementation of national food sector plans and policies in Africa, and comparative regional experience, would be undertaken;

(b) Further, it was agreed that work would be undertaken on the means for improving the availability of food to the poor and malnourished, including a review of the effectiveness of delivery systems to that end;

(c) A review of resources requirements, priority and mobilization efforts, reflecting the concern expressed in the meeting about the decline in resource flows to the sector;

(d) Because international trade is a hunger and resource issue, the World Food Council would continue to review the progress in GATT, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other institutions pertaining to the liberalization of agricultural trade.

91. Additionally, in co-operation with other agencies and with Governments, utilizing existing knowledge and experience, the Council will review criteria for the assessment of the effectiveness of aid delivery, and the experience of international agro-business in furthering food and development.

92. All delegates expressed the view that the work programme and activities of the Council should be policy-oriented and should be directed to the intensification of efforts for the elimination of hunger. The Council would utilize, rather than duplicate, the work being conducted in other institutions and agencies. The Executive Director acknowledged the importance of this view and reaffirmed that the essential function of the Council is to stimulate and co-ordinate actions which will lead to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 19 (A/37/19), para. 121.

ANNEX I

List of documents before the Council at its tenth
ministerial session

<u>Document number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
WFC/1984/1	1	Provisional agenda with annotations
WFC/1984/2 and WFC/1984/2 (Summary)	2	Progress toward the eradication of hunger - a multilateral decade for food, 1974-1984
WFC/1984/3	3	Review of co-ordination among multilateral agencies in support of World Food Conference objectives
WFC/1984/4 (Part I)	3	Food strategies in Africa - progress and critical issues
WFC/1984/4 (Part II)	3	Food strategies in Africa - selected case studies
WFC/1984/5	4	Renewal of the commitment for the eradication of hunger - specific measures for Council consideration
WFC/1984/6	2	The world food and hunger problem: changing perspectives and possibilities, 1974-1984
WFC/1984/7		Current world food situation
WFC/1984/8		Report of the Preparatory Meeting for the tenth session
WFC/1984/9	4	Global assessment of resource flows through the United Nations system to the food and agriculture sector
WFC/1984/10		Report of the ninth session of the Committee on World Food Security
WFC/1984/11		Ninth annual report of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes

Document number

Agenda item

Title

WFC/1984/12

Letter dated 12 June 1984 from the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the President of the World Food Council

WFC/1984/13

Letter dated 13 June 1984 from the delegation of the German Democratic Republic to the President of the World Food Council

WFC/1984/NGO/1

The world's food - ten years after. An NGO perspective

Statement by non-governmental organizations on the issues facing
the tenth ministerial session of the World Food Council

1. Some 30 representatives of international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attending the tenth anniversary session of the World Food Council have prepared a statement of their concerns in the light of experience of the past 10 years. They wish to commend these to Governments, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs involved in, and concerned about, the current world food situation.
2. The community-based experience of NGOs provides clear evidence that hunger is not simply a food issue. It has been found to result principally from a lack of access to the means to grow food and from a lack of the purchasing power with which to secure a healthy and adequate diet. Hunger is, therefore, basically a poverty issue.
3. Hunger will be overcome only in the context of an overall social and economic development process based on policies that address the economic and political root causes of poverty.
4. Within such an approach to renewed and intensified efforts to overcoming hunger, NGOs place special emphasis on the following:

(1) Giving immediate priority to emergency and sustained action to reduce hunger in Africa. An all out emergency response is urgently needed to save the lives of millions of people in Africa who are currently victims of famine and malnutrition. Firm commitments must also be made to the immediate initiation of intensified medium-term and long-term development action to assist African people in their efforts to achieve self-reliance in food. This requires the formulation of food strategies, particularly at the regional level, that should include the following objectives:

- (a) access for the total population, notably those most adversely affected, to a healthy and adequate diet;
- (b) development of local food production;
- (c) promotion of food commodity trade at the subregional level;
- (d) rationalization of international trade.

The role of NGOs, especially African NGOs, in attaining these objectives would be crucial.

(2) Increasing support for actions by the multilateral system to reduce hunger. Whilst some bilateral development assistance makes highly effective contributions to efforts to reduce hunger, it is often coloured by the perceived political strategic or commercial interests of donor Governments. There is, moreover, a growing tendency for bilateral assistance to be provided at the cost of reduced multilateral assistance. These tendencies should be reversed. Firm commitments, beginning with a sharply-increased allocation of

financial resources, should be made to support more co-ordinated and effective action by the multilateral system to reduce hunger. There is an especially pressing need for additional commitments to be made to the replenishment of the funds of IFAD and IDA.

(3) Improving the effectiveness of food aid. There is no doubt that emergency food aid has saved millions of lives and that, given the necessary donor commitment, it will continue to do so. It is vital that both emergency and longer-term food aid contribute to the fullest extent possible to the alleviation of the root cause of hunger-poverty. It should encourage, rather than discourage, local food production. This is most likely to occur where food transfers are integrated into food strategies.

(4) Modifying agricultural, trade and other policies of industrialized countries to improve their effects on world food security. Many of the present agricultural, trade and other policies of industrialized countries contribute significantly to the existing disorder in international food markets and often have far-reaching adverse effects on developing countries and, particularly, on their efforts to attain food self-reliance. It is especially important that industrialized nations abandon restrictive protectionist measures and lift trade barriers that inhibit further economic development by poor nations. Policies that encourage production in developing countries of export crops, to the detriment of local food production, and prevent or diminish control by the poor of the land and other resources they need for food production should also be changed. Finally, sky-rocketing arms exports to developing countries and growing world-wide military expenditure further impoverish already poor nations.

(5) Increasing the role of women in the design and implementation of development programmes. Women are critical to the development process but are frequently worse off as a result of "development" activities. The historical disadvantages faced by women in the economic and cultural lives of their societies must be reversed if development programmes are to have a truly positive effect on the quality of human life as a whole. The enhancement of the role of rural women, who provide the basic needs of their communities - food, water, fuel, child care, maintenance of the elderly and sick - is essential to the development process. More specifically, the success of food strategies is dependent on the active participation of women in the design of all components of the production, distribution, consumption and nutrition chain. Education and functional literacy programmes for women are also essential elements of national food and basic needs strategies.

(6) Improving co-ordination of actions in support of efforts to reduce hunger. Continuing an increasing friction between international organizations, such as that between FAO, on one hand, and WFP and WFC, on the other, is highly disturbing and can only impair efforts to reduce world hunger as well as undermine public faith in the United Nations system. Such internecine strife increases the difficulties of the WFC in its role as a stimulator of greater co-ordination among agencies engaged in the struggle to reduce hunger. It is essential that multilateral agencies take prompt steps to improve co-ordination at the national and international levels - both amongst themselves and with governmental and non-governmental agencies. The effectiveness of such co-ordination would be greatly facilitated by the further development and implementation of food sector strategies.

(7) Encouraging greater participation of NGOs in action to reduce hunger. NGOs in industrialized and developing countries have a particular commitment as well as their own experience and capacities to contribute to renewed and intensified efforts to address the pressing problems of world hunger. NGOs in industrialized countries: engage in development education to increase public awareness and support; advocate public policy conducive to better relations between North and South and improvement of the quality of life of the poor; mobilize financial and other resources; act as channels for, and partners in, the effective implementation of official development assistance programmes and projects directed at reducing hunger - especially at the local level. NGOs in developing countries are often either themselves organizations of the poor and of local food producers or have close working relationships with them. They are particularly effective in enabling young people, who represent a considerable under-utilized resource for development, to contribute fully to the eradication of hunger. They play a key role in ensuring popular mobilization and participation in all actions to reduce hunger - including those involving NGOs from other countries and multilateral and bilateral agencies. For all these reasons, their role should be officially recognized and they should be more actively involved in the formulation and implementation of food sector strategies.

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