

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

10-13 June 1985

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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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.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
Abbreviations		v

PART ONE

Matters brought to the attention of the General Assembly

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL AT ITS ELEVENTH MINISTERIAL SESSION	1 - 51	2
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PART TWO

Proceedings of the CouncilChapter

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS	1 - 19	14
A. Opening of the session	1 - 13	14
B. Members of the Council	14	17
C. Attendance	15 - 16	18
D. Officers	17	19
E. Agenda	18	19
F. Documentation	19	20
II. FOOD STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, AID EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO FOOD BY THE UNDERNOURISHED	20 - 37	21
III. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS ON MEETING FOOD OBJECTIVES - THE NEED FOR EXPANDING WORLD TRADE	38 - 54	26
IV. REPORT OF THE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	55 - 66	29
A. Organization of work	55 - 58	29
B. Election of officers	59	29
C. Future programme of work	60 - 62	29
D. Other points of discussion raised by the Ministers	63 - 66	30

CONTENTS (continued)

Page

Annexes

I. Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of France	32
II. List of documents before the Council at its eleventh ministerial session	33
III. Statement by non-governmental organizations on the issues facing the eleventh ministerial session of the World Food Council	34

ABBREVIATIONS

CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
EEC	European Economic Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWC	International Wheat Council
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OEOA	Office for Emergency Operations in Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
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 ELEVENTH MINISTERIAL SESSION

I. REVIEW OF WORLD FOOD AND HUNGER PROBLEMS

1. The Ministers and plenipotentiaries of the World Food Council attending the eleventh session under the chairmanship of Mr. Eugene Whelan in Paris, from 10 to 13 June 1985, at the invitation of the Government and people of France, reviewed the state of world food and development and assessed the actions taken and the tasks ahead to give concrete expression to the renewed commitment for the elimination of hunger and malnutrition, determined by the Council a year ago in Addis Ababa.
2. In reviewing the global food and development situation, the Ministers reaffirmed that Africa's continuing economic and food crisis affecting millions of human beings remains at the centre of attention. While the international community has responded generously to Africa's emergency needs, the tasks ahead for African countries will require extraordinary and sustained international support in rebuilding all sectors of their national economies with priority attention to domestic food production and access to food by their populations.
3. At the same time, the Ministers expressed deep concern about the limited progress in other developing regions in tackling the silent and growing crisis of chronic hunger and malnutrition, a crisis exacerbated by global economic difficulties which weaken the efforts of the developing countries.
4. Conscious that, without forceful and sharply-focused development efforts, mass hunger and poverty will persist well into the next century, the Ministers directed particular attention towards programmes and measures for the protection of the already fragile food and nutrition levels of low-income groups and those essential to achieve a substantial reduction of hunger during the remainder of the century. 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.
5. Recognizing that implementation of the renewed commitment to the elimination of hunger and malnutrition is the responsibility of sovereign Governments and of the entire world community, the Ministers reviewed ways to improve the effectiveness of external assistance.
6. Improved and increased external assistance, while indispensable, cannot substitute for an improved and more equitable international economic, trade and financial environment with adequate provisions to reduce trade protectionsim substantially, resolve the debt problems of developing countries for the benefit of all countries, especially the developing countries, and improve international monetary stability.
7. It is very important to strengthen the relationship between peace, security and disarmament. Reference was made to General Assembly resolutions 38/188 J of 20 December 1983 and 39/151 E of 17 December 1984 as adopted, on activities pertinent to the cause of arms limitation and disarmament and those economic measures which should not be used as an economic and political pressure.

8. The summary of the conclusions and recommendations made by the Ministers is contained in the present report; the Ministers requested that Governments and international development agencies act on them as a matter of the highest priority.

II. THE FOOD AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN AFRICA: A PROGRAMME FOR RECOVERY

9. The Ministers expressed deep concern about the worsening of Africa's food crisis since the Council's tenth session. Millions of people, including growing numbers of refugees, continue to be threatened by famine. Cereal import requirements for 1985, estimated at 12.2 million tons by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), are 70 per cent above last year's imports by the 21 African countries affected by emergency. FAO estimates of food aid requirements at 7 million tons are more than double last year's food aid receipts.

10. The Ministers welcomed the generous response to Africa's emergency from developed and developing countries, multilateral agencies, private voluntary organizations and the people of many countries, and commended the United Nations Secretary-General for his direction of world-wide emergency relief efforts.

11. They noted with great satisfaction the initiatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for reaffirming the priority of the Lagos Plan of Action for food and agriculture and the determined effort of African countries to assert their self-reliance to the extent their resources permit. They commended the various other initiatives to establish intensified programmes of co-operation, including the Non-Aligned Plan of Action for African Agriculture, adopted at New Delhi (April 1985), the European Economic Community (EEC) Heads of State Summit Meeting at Dublin (December 1984), the Bonn Summit meeting of seven industrial countries (May 1985) and its Expert Group meeting to prepare follow-up proposals and the high-level economic meeting of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (June 1984).

A. Emergency relief to Africa must be paralleled by stepped-up rehabilitation and long-term development

12. Much remains to be done to ensure the timely delivery of food to those in need, including strengthening logistical capacities and internal distribution systems of African countries, as well as improving the administrative capacities of donors and recipients alike. These are matters which should be pursued with great urgency in order to lessen the risks that food will not reach in time those who need it most. At the same time, African countries and assistance agencies should do their utmost to prevent possible adverse effects of these massive food imports on domestic food production efforts by the improved national programming and timing of food aid deliveries, and by increasingly building African production capacities, as they improve, into the international relief and recovery efforts.

13. In this connection, the Council called upon the parties involved to ensure that the combined efforts in Africa of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations, the World Bank's facility to finance structural adjustment policies and rehabilitation, the agricultural rehabilitation plan of FAO and the operations and programmes of the World Food Programme (WFP) are well co-ordinated and closely related to the assistance programmes of the bilateral donors, so that overall coherence is assured.

14. The current concern with Africa's emergency, however vital, must not divert attention from the underlying problem of food production which has been declining steadily relative to rising population, thereby leaving African economies vulnerable to recurrent and even permanent crisis. This structural crisis has been the focus of concern of the Council in encouraging national food policies and strategies.

15. By implementing national food strategies and programmes, African countries are trying to address inadequate food policies and macro-economic policies and correct past constraints. While the Ministers were encouraged by some of the initial progress which has been made, they expressed regret that internal and external factors, including the diversion of energies to current crisis management, have slowed down the pace of food policy implementation. In that context, they welcomed the constructive discussions of African officials at the thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Africa, held at Harare in July 1984, and the Abidjan Workshop on Accelerated Food Strategy Implementation in Africa, held in February 1985, and endorsed their recommendations.

16. In particular, the Ministers:

(a) Endorse the proposal for training of African food policy analysts and improvement of statistical data within the framework of existing institutions, and request the Executive Director of the World Food Council to explore with interested Governments and organizations, including United Nations bodies, the means for its implementation;

(b) Support the recommendation for more systematic monitoring of food strategy implementation and the reduction of hunger, and urge all countries and agencies concerned to co-operate in the evolution of a common monitoring system along the lines proposed by the Executive Director of the Council. This should be carried out with due respect for the sovereign rights of States;

(c) Encourage African Governments to focus more specifically on the important role of women in food strategy implementation, as proposed by the Abidjan Workshop;

(d) Encourage African Governments to increase interregional, regional and subregional technical and economic co-operation in the production and trade of foodstuffs;

(e) Welcome the invitation of China to host in 1986 a workshop on an exchange of food policy experiences between Asia and Africa as part of interregional co-operation, particularly among developing countries;

(f) Agree that the Council should continue to devote a significant share of its efforts to the promotion of effective food strategy development and implementation, including assisting in the mobilization of the necessary external resources from the international community. Progress will be further reviewed in this field at the twelfth session of the Council at which we hope that better data will be presented on the trends and levels of domestic investments in agriculture, both in absolute terms and as a share of national budgets.

B. Major food and economic recovery programme

17. To solve its crisis, Africa will need to undertake a major food and economic recovery programme, which would include the elements mentioned in paragraphs 18 to 23 below.

18. First, efforts must be redoubled to implement national food policies and strategies as an instrument for establishing priorities, co-ordinating investment, applying improved technology and integrating emergency and development assistance. These strategies must constitute an integral part of long-term economic plans and programmes.

19. Second, within the context of national food strategies and programmes, emphasis must be placed on policies and reforms which provide improved incentives for producers, especially small farmers and herders; which provide for more balanced food-crop and export-crop policies; which intensify investment in small-scale irrigation; and which adjust national priorities to deal more broadly with rural poverty.

20. Third, the importance of human resource building must be fully recognized and more attention must be given to stepped-up investment in the upgrading of technical and managerial skills, affecting the realization of food production and nutrition objectives.

21. Fourth, African institutions and administration must be strengthened including restructuring the role of parastatals and strengthening the African managerial capacity to design and implement projects and programmes.

22. Fifth, population issues should receive increased attention in the context of individual countries' social and economic conditions.

23. Sixth, careful planning and programming, as well as sustained higher levels of net capital in-flows, with longer periods to achieve structural policy adjustment, should underlie the necessary reform of African pricing and marketing policies to increase food production. This will require commitments by both donor and recipient countries, which can be monitored within an improved framework for debt management and adjustment, with due regard to the sovereign rights of the countries receiving that aid. In the opinion of the Executive Director, at least \$US 1 billion more annually in concessionary aid, over and above the World Bank's \$US 1.2 billion special fund, will be needed until trade earnings recover.

24. Declining annual net external resources to Africa are not consistent with the need for recovery of its food sectors and national economies. Yet this is the situation affecting sub-Saharan Africa as a result of steadily rising debt service payments, which this year amounted to \$US 8.9 billion and are expected to rise to over \$US 12 billion by 1987. Without further debt adjustments and new capital commitments, annual net resource transfers to the region will continue to decline to \$US 3.4 billion in 1987, or about one half the 1984 level.

25. The Council reiterates its unconditional rejection of racial discrimination in all its forms and particularly the hateful system of apartheid.

III. EFFECTIVENESS OF AID IN SUPPORT OF FOOD STRATEGIES

26. Africa's crisis, coming after over two decades of development aid, has also brought to the fore questions concerning the effectiveness of external assistance. The deliberations of the Council have shown sometimes differing perspectives of donors and recipients, but it was generally agreed that the policy direction and environment established by developing countries for aid investment and the cohesion and policy orientation of assistance agencies are significant determinants of aid effectiveness.

27. Improving the quality of aid requires shifts in African domestic policies which are more supportive of agricultural development.

28. Given the plethora of external policy advice, improved aid effectiveness also demands that African Governments improve their planning systems to make the most appropriate use of such advice, and that they are enabled to become more selective about the focus and purpose of aid received, ensuring that these are in line with priority domestic objectives.

29. Aid agencies need to orient their policies and programmes to better support African countries' policy adjustments. A more focused approach to food and agricultural development and the extent to which the poor share in the benefits of this development should thus be central to policy changes by donor and recipient countries alike.

30. Current levels of massive food aid to Africa can risk undermining food production objectives and reinforcing an existing urban bias. Hence, the Council, within its mandate, should encourage improved programming and assessment within the existing concerned agencies, to monitor the impact of food aid vis-à-vis more self-reliant development objectives, including its effect on rural-urban migration patterns and on consumption habits.

31. Better co-ordination of recipient-donor efforts is critical to improving aid effectiveness. However, the issue is not solely one of more co-ordination but of improving the quality and vested authority of such co-ordination.

32. In the light of the deliberations of the Council, the Ministers stated that they:

(a) Believe that aid can be more effective in the quest to eradicate hunger, when it is used to supplement national policies and programmes aimed at increasing domestic food production and alleviating poverty, particularly in rural areas;

(b) Commend the work of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in assisting developing countries in raising local food production and alleviating rural poverty, and call upon the parties concerned urgently to achieve the conclusion of the second replenishment negotiations of IFAD in the spirit of partnership in which IFAD was established and of solidarity with the world's rural poor, in the light of the broad agreement achieved at the seventh meeting of the replenishment consultation; they also urge all Governments in a position to do so to contribute generously to the IFAD Special Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa;

(c) Urge fresh appraisal of the theories and practices of international aid - one which centres on the rural-employment and income-distribution consequences of

aid decisions taken by development partners - recognizing that there is not necessarily a trade-off between attempts to reach the poor and improving economic performance;

(d) Recommend that, in so far as possible, development food aid be programmed on a medium-term, multi-year basis and suggest an assessment system designed to measure the impact of food aid on national priorities and trends be incorporated in the Council's future work to encourage development of an analytical framework to monitor the progress of food sector strategy implementation;

(e) Support the strengthening of co-ordination mechanisms of the United Nations, particularly the UNDP round tables and the World Bank consultative groups, to give priority attention to national food plans and strategies in relation to the investments needed to reach the social and economic objectives of national development plans. In this context, they support the recommendations of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, adopted at its nineteenth session in May 1985, to include explicitly the roles and functions of food aid in the work of the World Bank consultative groups and the UNDP round tables.

IV. IMPROVING ACCESS TO FOOD BY THE UNDERNOURISHED

33. Renewal by the General Assembly in 1984 of the commitment for the eradication of hunger and malnutrition was based on the recognition that hunger and malnutrition are essentially man-made and can therefore be eliminated through human resolve. The millions of people in Africa threatened by famine today, the 15 million young-child deaths annually world wide from malnutrition and disease, and the growing numbers of chronically undernourished are, more than 10 years after the World Food Conference, a deplorable situation requiring a framework for renewed efforts and resolution.

34. Therefore, the Ministers strongly urge that Governments take determined and more sharply-focused action that makes the elimination of hunger and malnutrition a truly central objective in national development.

35. Specifically, the Ministers recommend that political determination be focused on four objectives providing a framework for accelerated and more effective action by all countries and development agencies:

(a) The prevention of the loss of life and the human suffering caused by famine, through both immediate action to improve disaster preparedness and management and longer-term efforts to remove the root causes of famine;

(b) A drastic reduction of infant deaths from malnutrition and disease and protection of the gains achieved, especially in times of economic crisis;

(c) Efforts to alleviate the factors which lead to growing world hunger in the immediate period ahead;

(d) Redirected programmes for a substantial reduction of chronic hunger in the 1990s.

36. In support of these objectives, the Ministers recommended the specific actions mentioned below. First, in the area of famine prevention, the Ministers recommended that:

(a) FAO should be encouraged, with the support of all Governments and private organizations, to accelerate well co-ordinated assistance to drought-prone countries for the establishment and improvement of national early warning systems;

(b) All disaster-prone countries should prepare contingency plans to strengthen their preparedness and capacity to deal with crises, because this area offers opportunities for technical co-operation among developing countries and could envisage such co-operation in the framework of the Non-Aligned Plan of Action for African Agriculture;

(c) Urgent efforts should be made to improve effectiveness of emergency food aid and relief, through reorientation, to the extent possible, towards programmes with the parallel objective of meeting immediate food and other needs, along with measures to strengthen the economic and ecological basis of poor, at-risk communities and households. In that context, an appeal was made to support the FAO rehabilitation plan for Africa. The Ministers request that a report be submitted to the Council's twelfth session on the progress made for more effective integration of emergency and general food aid programmes with recovery and development.

37. Second, the Ministers stated that they are encouraged by recent progress with nutrition and health interventions to reduce infant mortality and ensure the healthy development of the next generation. This momentum must be maintained. They particularly urge strong continuing support to such initiatives as "Revolution for Child Survival" of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Nutrition Support Programme financed by Italy, the Belgian "Survival Fund for the Third World" and related initiatives.

38. Third, as part of the efforts to halt growing hunger during the 1980s, the Ministers attach high priority to action to protect the already fragile food and nutrition levels of low-income families in the current economic environment. This requires a new co-operative effort by Governments, international financial institutions and development agencies. Specifically, the Ministers request that:

(a) Governments facing difficult economic adjustments and budgetary restrictions take all possible measures to prevent a deterioration in the food and nutrition levels of low-income people;

(b) International financial institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF), take food security and poverty issues into account in the design of adjustment programmes to assist developing countries restore their financial and economic health;

(c) Development agencies assist Governments to identify economic policy alternatives and implement effective programmes to protect and improve the food security of the poor.

39. Finally, the Ministers strongly emphasize that a significant reduction in the number of undernourished people in the 1990s requires some reorientation of current development priorities and policies to meet the multiple objectives of growth, equity, self-reliance, improved efficiency and productivity, with a view to bringing about more equitable participation of all people in development; changes in production patterns, including greater emphasis on labour-intensive technologies and on small farmers as a major source of food security and employment generation;

country-specific decisions on the respective roles of the private, co-operative and state sectors in hunger-focused food and development efforts; and, in many cases, judicious population policies.

40. The Ministers recognize that realization of these objectives may require fundamental changes, which are the prerogative of sovereign nations.

41. The Ministers consider the role of the Council to be that of an untiring advocate for the poor and hungry. They re-emphasize that the renewed commitment to the elimination of hunger and malnutrition must not become empty rhetoric, or hunger will be perpetuated for many decades to come. They therefore invite the World Bank, UNDP, FAO, IFAD, WFP, ILO and other development agencies to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the social, economic and administrative factors which foster hunger-reducing development patterns, particularly those which favour income generation, increased production by small farmers and herders, people's self-reliance and other actions that could substantially improve food security and reduce chronic undernutrition.

V. EXTERNAL ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS ON MEETING FOOD OBJECTIVES

42. The review of the Council of the international financial and trade situation, as it affects developing countries' capacities for resolving their food problems, highlighted several very serious issues. On the one hand, large external debts contracted at floating interest rates during the mid and late 1970s are imposing a severe burden on their economies. Even though monetary adjustments in most of these countries are generating important trade surpluses, this is at high political and social cost, including growing hunger and malnutrition and the risk of social unrest in many countries. Adjustment policies need to allow for both domestic expansion and debt servicing, including accommodation of essential production and food-import programmes. In the same manner, it was stressed that these adjustment policies should have as their medium- and long-term objective the economic and social development of these countries.

43. World trade has grown again over 1984, after two years of contraction. However, high unemployment and highly-protected farming in many industrialized countries continue to place pressure on Governments to restrict manufactured and commodity imports and subsidize exports. 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.

44. The Ministers have agreed that improved and respected trade rules, supported by compatible domestic policies, would benefit all countries and could provide a basis for the launching and expansion of world trade and investment. Developing countries should benefit especially from such progress through wider and more stable access to developed country markets and from the capital investment that would follow in their industrial and agricultural sectors.

45. Regarding agricultural trade in particular, uncertainty and a lack of respect for international disciplines have continued and may have worsened over the past year. A number of industrialized countries are spending vast resources in subsidies which distort trade patterns and some are planning to spend even more.

This situation benefits no country in the long run because even if importers may be paying low prices as a result, experience shows that adequate farm incentives are indispensable for stable and growing production, both at the international and national levels, and for sustained world food security.

46. In the case of cereals, we discussed the performance of present international arrangements. The International Wheat Agreement of 1971, several times renewed, provides useful forums for exporting and importing countries regularly to review market performance and exchange information on various related matters, including policy. Moreover, many delegations felt that it would be preferable to negotiate a new agreement embodying appropriate economic clauses and special measures which would allow for the participation of the developing countries.

47. The 1974 World Food Conference target of 10 million tons was met for the first time in 1984. This was considered to have been a positive achievement, and many of the Ministers believe that it should be consolidated in the Food Aid Convention framework. A further development in the right direction has been the recent four-year extension of the cereals facility by IMF, for which the Council extends its appreciation. It may be useful to review the possibility of some technical adjustments in the facility's operation.

48. Specifically, the Ministers recommend that:

(a) Adjustment programmes for resolution of debt problems be phased to take account of developing country food and social needs on a sustained and long-term basis;

(b) All countries give much more attention to adjusting their manufacture and/or agriculture sectors, with a view to providing stable and expanding access for developing-country exports;

(c) The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Committee on Trade in Agriculture be encouraged, within its mandate, to continue and, to the extent possible, accelerate progress towards more operationally effective rules and disciplines for trade and domestic farm policies, bearing in mind the concerns of developing countries;

(d) The International Wheat Council (IWC) continue to consider the possible elements of a new agreement, including provisions to facilitate essential developing-country imports, full account being taken of exporting and importing countries and producers and consumers;

(e) The IWC continue to explore the possibilities of raising the Food Aid Convention's minimum overall commitment towards 10 million tons;

(f) The Executive Director of the World Food Council, within the context of the terms of reference of World Food Conference resolution XXII, particularly paragraphs 1 and 8 thereof, actively review the origins of and possible solutions to present conflicts in international food trade, in consultation with the interested parties, taking into account the interests of developing countries, and report to the next session of the Council.

49. It was noted with concern that the recent trade embargo against Nicaragua is affecting its agricultural production and food security and reference was made to General Assembly resolution 39/210 of 18 December 1984 for due follow-up by the Secretary-General.

VI. FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

50. At a time when the peoples and the Governments of the world commemorate the end of the Second World War and celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, under the theme "United Nations for a better world", the Ministers give their full support to the common pursuit of peace and the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, reaffirming that access to adequate food is a fundamental human right which Governments exert every effort to guarantee their people. In that context, the Ministers express the belief that food should not be used as an instrument of political and economic pressure.

51. Food represents an essential element of the world's economic, social and political development process. It should therefore be treated with the highest priority by all Governments in their rededication to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and reinvigorated international co-operation.

PART TWO

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

1. The eleventh ministerial session of the World Food Council was held at the Kléber Conference Centre in Paris from 10 to 13 June 1985. The ministerial session was preceded by a preparatory meeting held in Rome from 29 April to 2 May 1985. The purpose of the meeting was to review food developments in Africa, as requested by the Ministers at last year's meeting at Addis Ababa, particularly as regards the progress of food strategy implementation in Africa, the effectiveness of aid and trade in meeting food objectives, improving access to food by the undernourished, and to consider the direction for future actions required to eradicate hunger.

2. The Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, welcomed delegates to the official opening session, which was convened at the headquarters of that organization.

3. The President of the Republic of France, Mr. François Mitterrand, welcomed participants to the meeting and acknowledged the seriousness of the issues before the Ministers at the session. He spoke of the importance of Council sessions which bring Ministers together to adopt appropriate measures and policies to combat hunger and malnutrition, a central goal and interest of the world community, yet one which is difficult to attain given many conflicting interests. The President spoke of the vital importance of external assistance, and noted that France has been increasing its share of aid, especially for the non-governmental organizations active in rural development work. While aid is essential, he noted, there is also an imperative need for better organization of world markets. He said that free trade is not the only way to satisfy all needs and that discussion in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is now necessary to ensure that the views of the developing countries are heard.

4. The President said that top priority must be assigned to food self-reliance in all countries. This objective can be achieved through appropriate and increased levels of sectoral investment, necessary adjustments to food price and market policies and a revamped international trading system. He noted that there is a concomitant need for training in agricultural production and in the management of national savings and rural credit programmes. He noted the vital priority and need for rural development policies and programmes in developing countries, making special reference to the progress in this area achieved by India and China. The President concluded his address by acknowledging the importance of the Council's work and the recommendations it produces. He said he will continue to watch the work of the Council and maintain a personal interest in, and be a spokesman for, efforts and measures to free mankind from hunger and malnutrition.

5. A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations was delivered by Mr. Maurice J. Williams, Executive Director, World Food Council. The Secretary-General extended his good wishes to delegates for a successful and productive meeting, noting that the issues to be considered are of great interest and importance to him. He observed that one of the responses by the international community to the 1972-1973 food crisis was the establishment of the World Food Council to develop policy proposals aimed at the eradication of hunger and

malnutrition and to co-ordinate efforts towards that end. While the world today is feeding 1 billion more people than a decade ago, the numbers of hungry and malnourished have increased. The continuing existence of this condition is seriously undermining the productivity and stability of a large portion of human resources in developing countries. The Secretary-General urged the Council to maintain its focus on African food problems and to lead the entire United Nations system in a determined assault designed to eliminate the causes of persistent hunger and malnutrition on that continent. He made reference to the establishment of the Office of Emergency Operations in Africa (OEOA) to mobilize the support of the international community for effective assistance to African countries. He acknowledged the generous response shown by Governments at the Conference on the Emergency Situation in Africa, which he had convened at Geneva in March 1985.

6. The Secretary-General emphasized the important link between crisis management and the development of strategic solutions which would result in food self-reliance and prevent future devastation. He noted that this link must be recognized by both developed and developing countries, together with concerned institutions and agencies, in efforts to achieve viable development patterns and the reconciliation of African food problems. He cautioned that emergency food aid, if not carefully integrated in national development planning and food sector strategies as advocated by the Council, could become a permanent feature of national economies in developing countries which could have the effect of retarding growth in the longer term. He observed that those developing countries which are pursuing responsible domestic policies require effective development assistance which reinforces necessary domestic reforms, provides quantitative and specific support to the food sector, but which does not overburden already fragile administrations. The Secretary-General concluded his message by saying that a central responsibility of the Council is to find the means of providing access to food for the undernourished. Such a highly-focused objective, he said, will require the concerted efforts and full support of the entire United Nations system.

7. The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Mr. Edouard Saouma, summarized the current world food situation and the food and development crisis in Africa. He said that agriculture is still the key-stone of development and that third world countries therefore need to assign a higher priority to the sector. He noted that attempts at industrialization have all too often failed because they were not based on a dynamic agricultural sector. He indicated that urbanization is not a mark of real progress, as it strips the rural areas of its human resources. He spoke of the need to assign high priority in national budgets to the development of the agricultural sector and said that these resources must be oriented toward the rural areas. Peasants should be offered the opportunity to increase their production, with more remunerative prices and easier access to production inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, tools and credit. He emphasized the need to more fully develop traditional food crops in order to rectify the present imbalance in favour of cash crops. He made reference to the need for food plans, programmes and strategies which contain structural reforms, recognize farmers' associations and include specific measures to ensure that food is available to the poor.

8. The Director-General said that progress in efforts to alleviate hunger will be impossible without an appreciable improvement in the general economic health of developing countries and in the climate of international relations. Given these factors, he said the third world must be able to count on enough external aid to rehabilitate agriculture, noting that official development assistance fell in 1983 and probably also in 1984. While food aid is useful in emergencies, he noted that

there were many unanswered questions with regard to the long-term consequences of continued expansion of structural food aid granted simply to maintain the balance of payments and cautioned as to the possible adverse effects of such aid on local production. The Director-General concluded his remarks by noting that the world community still has a long way to go before world food security becomes a reality everywhere and for everyone. He said that the FAO Biennial Conference in November 1985 will study a draft Food Security Compact, the ambition of which will be to proclaim forcefully that food security is the collective responsibility of humanity.

9. The President of the World Food Council, Mr. Eugene F. Whelan, welcomed delegates to the meeting and thanked President Mitterrand, together with the Minister of Agriculture of France, Mr. Henri Nallet, the Government and the people of France, for inviting the Council to convene its meeting this year in Paris. In his address, President Whelan reviewed the principal conclusions developed by the Ministers at the tenth session of the Council 1/ in 1984 at Addis Ababa and the outstanding tasks identified at that time to achieve the objectives of the World Food Conference. He reported on some progress that had been made pertaining to these tasks, but indicated that overall developments were not encouraging, noting especially that measures to improve the distribution of available global food supplies - other than through emergency food aid deliveries - at both the national level and for the benefit of the poor, continued to be elusive.

10. Mr. Whelan told delegates of a sense of failure that he had perceived during the past year; for, in spite of the efforts made, he personally found it appalling in 1985 to be living side-by-side with preventable death. He indicated that the Council had been aware of the deteriorating food situation in Africa for many years. At the Council's meeting in Arusha in 1980, he had expressed concern about the lack of progress and discouraging trends in Africa in regard to food production. The President asked what had become of the recommendations that had been advanced by the Council during the past five-year period, with respect to addressing the food problem in Africa.

11. Mr. Whelan spoke of the need to improve national and international support systems for the poor, noting that it is the poor, usually illiterate, rural poor, who are being forced to leave their land and who are the first victims of hunger. He deplored the fact that in 1985 the absolute number of people who have to manage with less than adequate food intake has increased, with the highest increase in calorie-deficient population - some 25 per cent - occurring in Africa. He deplored especially that 15 million children under the age of five die every year from malnutrition and disease. In fact, pervasive and persistent poverty still smothers the hopes of millions upon millions of our fellow men, not just in Africa but everywhere where people lack the opportunity to earn their daily calorie needs. He said, to understand the causes of poverty and hunger, one should not look simply at the poor and malnourished themselves, but at their relationship with the rest of society.

12. The President observed that new policies and programmes in support of the small producer are critically important in the struggle against hunger and malnutrition. He noted that development assistance has concentrated on urban areas and large rural infrastructure projects, usually to the neglect of the needs of the small subsistence farmers. Not only have such approaches displaced the small farmer, but they have also contributed to environmental degradation. He spoke about his profound sadness and disappointment that the second replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), an institution devoted to

providing assistance to the small farmer and alleviating rural poverty, has not yet been settled. He suggested that it was inappropriate for Ministers who champion the cause of the small farmer to be party to a process which may debilitate the only United Nations institution that deals directly with the small farmer. He observed that funds to replenish IFAD and to underwrite other strategically-positioned institutions active in the food and agricultural sector are modest relative to expenditures made on military hardware by some countries. In this respect, he advocated a doubling of external assistance to Africa for the development of its agriculture sector.

13. The President spoke of the many travels he had made during the course of the past two years to developing countries. He expressed particular concern about the movement of people in search of food and shelter in Africa. In fact, more people are migrating to urban areas to escape from poverty and the difficulties of rural life in Africa. The President cautioned that food aid, even when it is provided on an emergency basis, should not fuel and promote this movement. He said that there is an obvious need for policies and programmes to improve the rural environment, and in so doing to bring development activities and rural dwellers into harmony with the environment. He expressed an immediate concern, one that was reinforced and repeated several times during his recent visits to Africa, to ensure that emergency food aid is delivered and distributed expeditiously. He appealed to all donors and all assistance agencies to complete food aid commitments and to provide the special logistical support necessary to ensure the timing and efficient distribution of food aid. In concluding his introductory statement, Mr. Whelan, drawing on his experience as President over the past two years, indicated that he had asked himself, as well as other Ministers, questions about how the Council could be more effective in global efforts to eradicate hunger. He asked if members of the Bureau should not be more active in directing the affairs of the Council. These were matters and questions which he invited the Ministers to pursue during the course of the private ministerial sessions.

B. Members of the Council

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

Argentina**	France**	Nigeria*
Australia*	German Democratic Republic*	Pakistan**
Bangladesh*	Germany, Federal Republic of*	Sri Lanka***
Brazil***	Ghana*	Thailand***
Bulgaria***	Hungary**	Turkey***
Burundi**	Iraq**	Union of Soviet
Canada***	Italy**	Socialist Republics*
Central African Republic**	Ivory Coast***	United Arab Emirates*
Chile**	Japan**	United States of
China***	Kenya***	America***
Ecuador*	Mexico***	Venezuela*
Ethiopia*	Morocco**	Zambia***
Finland**	Nicaragua*	

* Term of office expires on 31 December 1985.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 1986.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 1987.

C. Attendance

15. All members of the Council were present except Iraq.

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

States non-members of the Council

Algeria	Holy See	Romania
Belgium	India	Spain
Cameroon	Indonesia	Sudan
Cape Verde	Israel	Sweden
Colombia	Libyan Arab Jamahariya	Switzerland
Congo	Madagascar	Trinidad and Tobago
Denmark	Malawi	Tunisia
Dominican Republic	Mali	Uganda
Egypt	Mauritius	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Gabon	Netherlands	United Republic of Tanzania
Gambia	Norway	Uruguay
Greece	Portugal	Yugoslavia
Guatemala	Republic of Korea	Zaire
Guinea	Republic of San Marino	

United Nations

United Nations
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
United Nations Development Programme
Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator
United Nations Children's Fund
World Food Programme
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organisation
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
World Bank
International Monetary Fund
International Fund for Agricultural Development

Intergovernmental organizations

Comité de Acción para la Seguridad Alimentaria
Commonwealth Secretariat
European Economic Community
Inter-American Development Bank
International Wheat Council
Organization of African Unity
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Non-governmental organizations

Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development
Associated Country Women of the World
Agri-Energy Round Table
Agriculteurs français et développement international
Bahá'i International Community
Centro Internazionale Crocevia
Centre national des jeunes agriculteurs
Church World Service/Lutheran World Relief
Comité catholique contre la faim
Comité de liaison des organisations non gouvernementales européens
Comité français contre la faim
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe
FNSEA (France)
German Foundation for International Development
International Catholic Rural Association
International Co-operation for Development and Solidarity
International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage
International Council of Voluntary Agencies
International Federation of Agricultural Producers
International Federation for Home Economics
Lutheran World Federation
Mani-Tese
Nations solidaires
ORSTOM
Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel
Réseau strategies alimentaires
RONGEAD
SOLIDER
Terre des hommes
United States Catholic Conference
World Council of Churches

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)
Mr. Pedro Antonio Blandón (Nicaragua)
Rapporteur: Mr. Reaz Rahman (Bangladesh)

E. Agenda

18. The Council adopted the following agenda (WFC/1985/1) for the session:

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of officers.

3. Food strategy implementation and aid effectiveness.
4. Improving access to food by the undernourished.
5. External economic constraints on meeting food objectives: the need for expanding world trade.
6. Future programme of the Council and other business.
7. Report of the Council to the General Assembly.

F. Documentation

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

CHAPTER II

FOOD STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, AID EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO FOOD BY THE UNDERNOURISHED

20. The Executive Director of the World Food Council, Mr. Maurice J. Williams, introduced the agenda items and themes pertaining to the progress of food strategy implementation in Africa, the factors and opportunities for improving the effectiveness of developmental assistance supportive of food plans and strategies and the measures by which improved access to food by the undernourished can be achieved.

21. He noted that, while the problems created by the drought are the most immediate, the underlying structural problem of steadily declining per capita food production relative to rising population has left African economies vulnerable to recurrent and even permanent food crisis. Efforts by African Governments to alleviate economic policy constraints and step up investment through food strategies are being crippled by current resource and administrative constraints and by the unfavourable international economic environment, a principal conclusion drawn in his report. The Executive Director said that these trends of growing external food dependency and client state status are not Africa's destiny: he suggested that these can and must be reversed and cited a series of actions for economic recovery in Africa. He said that partial solutions for dealing with Africa's food and economic problems will not be adequate and that, moreover, they risk prolonging the crisis. He proposed a programme for recovery and a policy agenda for Africa which would include the following elements:

(a) Continued stress on domestic policy reform, to raise the productivity of smallholder agriculture and to bring population and food production growth into better balance;

(b) Backing up reforms with increased net capital flows through an improved framework for dealing with both debt problems and net increases in aid. Declining net capital availability is not consistent with the requirements for recovery of output in sub-Saharan Africa. Properly directed, increased concessional official assistance of an additional \$1 billion could yield substantial results in the recovery of African agriculture;

(c) More attention to the basics of development, namely, stepped-up investment in upgrading human skills, including training in agricultural technology and its extension and on meeting the needs of women engaged in food production and family nutrition;

(d) Recognition of the need to strengthen African institutions and administration, including revamping the role of parastatals and strengthening the African managerial capacity to design and implement projects and programmes;

(e) Improvement of aid effectiveness by a better integration of emergency relief with development programmes, and by better co-ordination among assistance agencies in support of an agreed priority for resolving food problems. In particular, there is need for much more attention to integration of food aid in support of national development programmes. Currently, Africa is receiving too much food aid which is not well programmed.

22. The Executive Director spoke of the report on improving access to food by the undernourished, noting its proposal for a more sharply-focused approach for prevention of recurrent famine; for a drastic reduction in the number of infant deaths from malnutrition and disease; and for substantially reducing the numbers of chronically hungry and malnourished in the years ahead. In the area of famine prevention, the Council should give strong support to FAO in its assistance to drought-prone countries for the improvement of early warning systems and for the contingency planning which would strengthen the capacity for crisis management in the event of recurring emergencies. An important related task would be the assessment of successful approaches to making emergency aid relevant to long-term famine prevention, especially through a strengthening of the ecological and economic bases of poor, at-risk communities and households. He suggested that the Council might consider facilitating a review, with international financial and development agencies and Governments actively engaged in economic policy and structural adjustment programmes, of policy alternatives and measures to protect the hungry and malnourished.

23. The Executive Director concluded his statement by drawing the attention of the participants to his proposal for an analytical framework for monitoring progress in reducing hunger. Monitoring in the first instance should be based on direct reports by national food strategy co-ordinators and their collaborators, he said, and this information could be consolidated and reported to future Council sessions. The objective of the proposal is to monitor the progress and special problems in food strategy implementation, and the Council's contribution would be to encourage the adoption over time of a common approach for assessing progress in the implementation of food strategies and in the progressive eradication of hunger.

24. In considering the progress of implementation in Africa of the food sector strategy, many delegates observed that the appropriate design and implementation of such policies and plans were prerequisites to the alleviation of food problems. Some delegates observed that developments to date in implementing food strategy plans were encouraging, while others expressed disappointment at what they described as the slow pace of progress in the investment for and implementation of plans and strategies. Some delegates observed that the preoccupation with managing the current food emergency, combined with the current international economic environment, which has reduced capital inflows to developing countries, has limited investment for financing the various elements of food strategies. While there appeared to be unanimous agreement on the conceptual merit of the food sector strategy as a principal instrument for addressing food problems, there were wide-ranging views on the content and composition of such plans. Some delegates emphasized the requirement to include education, training and research as principal elements of food sector strategies. Others emphasized the need for more operational elements which would include credit availability and management, the establishment of reserve stocks, subsidy instruments to assure food supplies to subsistence farmers when and where crop failures occur, storage facilities, seed and fertilizer supply and related measures. This discussion served to confirm the complexity and diversity of food sector programmes. In this respect, one delegate indicated a need to breach an apparent conceptual and operational gap in plan design and implementation. There was, however, consensus on other aspects of food sector design. Most delegates observed that such plans and their objectives must be consistent with and relevant to overall national goals and aspirations, reflect the state of the international environment, and contain a built-in provision for adjustment as events and circumstances occur. In the search for resolutions to food problems, national sovereignty must be respected. Some delegates recommended that the World Food Council work more directly with those developing countries interested in designing individual food sector strategies.

25. Some delegates made reference to the conclusions which emerged from the workshop on accelerated food strategy implementation in Africa held at Abidjan in February 1985. Meetings of this type are perceived as useful and positive contributions in efforts to resolve food problems. In this respect, all delegates warmly welcomed the invitation extended by China to host a seminar in 1986 to share its experience with African food strategists on food and agricultural developments in that country. China's contribution in this respect is a concrete expression of South-South co-operation in food and agricultural matters.

26. Many delegates supported the Executive Director's proposal to establish a monitoring framework for food sector strategy implementation in Africa. Some delegates suggested that more work on the proposal is required. One delegate said that the methodology should be determined in a manner which will accommodate individual country situations and priorities, an observation endorsed by many other delegates, and that the views of African officials should be sought in furthering the design and implementation of the monitoring framework. Another delegate indicated that the proposal will be more relevant as more progress is made with food sector strategies but that, in any event, the work must be conducted in the context of national development plans.

27. Many delegates recognized that the resolution of food problems will require that difficult decisions concerning domestic reform in many African countries be taken. These decisions must be taken according to individual country situations and aspirations. One delegate observed that advice from the international community cannot replace national decisions and policies and, in this respect, the directions set by African countries must be fully respected.

28. Many African delegates expressed concern for the rural poor and advocated improvements to benefit them and to simultaneously increase agricultural production. There was consensus among these delegates that urban growth should be slowed by revitalizing rural areas through reform and through specific incentives for the small producer. Many delegates spoke of the need to decentralize decision-making to include farm labourers, to diversify rural activities generally and to utilize more fully natural and human resources in rural areas in particular. Delegates endorsed the view that more research and extension work is required in Africa which would increase producers' incomes, stimulate employment growth and help alleviate rural poverty. In this respect, most delegates urged that the second replenishment of IFAD be accomplished as soon as possible.

29. All delegates were agreed that sustained emergency assistance was indispensable to prevent further loss of life in famine-stricken Africa. There was consensus among delegates that emergency assistance, supplemented by additional aid, should be integrated with and linked to intermediate and longer-term development solutions. Several delegates also observed that, while man cannot control the weather, he can learn from it and they advocated the study of weather patterns in order to plan corrective action. Most delegates advocated further improvements in early warning systems. Another delegate said that more emphasis on ground water and less on rain was required in sub-Saharan countries.

30. Many delegates made reference to the paradox of the major food surpluses in some regions, while there is rampant famine and malnutrition in others. Some delegates observed that mankind itself is responsible for this condition given conflicting national and international economic and social interests. There was consensus among delegates on the imperative for more investment in agriculture. Some delegates observed that more investment in the private sector is a critical

need and, moreover, that Governments should limit their interventions in the food and agricultural sector. Other delegates urged more public involvement in the sector and a greater role for co-operative and State farms. Several delegates from developed countries described the efforts they had made and would continue to make to increase development assistance flows, especially to African countries. Many African delegates described the negative effects of high interest rate policies, debt service obligations, protectionism, export subsidy practices and other factors on their economies. Several delegates indicated that more flexibility in debt service arrangements and in aid commitments and allocations was required to counter the outflow of capital from developing countries which, in turn, is inhibiting the achievement of food objectives. One delegate observed that market prices for capital, manufactured goods and raw materials are not within the control of developing countries. The same delegate questioned how development assistance can be effective when, because of these factors, capital outflows from developing countries exceed capital inflow.

31. Some delegates observed that investment priorities, including those for development assistance, to stimulate food and agricultural production should centre on (a) the development of local agriculture and the production of indigenous foods, (b) the incentives, including price, for assisting small producers, (c) the development of a processing, storage and marketing chain to service the needs of both producers and consumers and (d) the application of known research results, especially in Africa, for improved production and crop yields. Some delegates emphasized that the technology to achieve food self-reliance in developing countries is available, but that access and use of proven technologies is restricted as a result of foreign exchange constraints and controls exercised by some transnational organizations.

32. While many delegates insisted that population policies, particularly family planning measures, were matters for individual countries to decide, all seemed to agree that the population factor, especially the rate of population increase vis-à-vis the rate of increase of food output, incomes and employment opportunities, should constitute a vital element of national development plans and strategies.

33. Some delegates made reference to the document pertaining to improved food access by the undernourished and were able to support the proposal to pursue a phased approach to reduce chronic hunger and malnutrition up to and during the 1990s. Delegates urged that particular attention be devoted to measures for protection of the already fragile nutrition levels of low-income groups as a means to reduce hunger. Some delegates observed that the current international finance and trade paralysis was restricting the ability of some national Governments to improve access to food by the poor. Many delegates agreed that rural poverty must be alleviated, otherwise the alternative of providing direct assistance to the poor will continue to increase and outpace the financial resources of Governments to protect vulnerable populations. Some delegates noted that subsidies to protect the undernourished are sometimes necessary but, once implemented, are difficult to phase out. One delegate suggested that individual countries should improve their own planning mechanisms to better protect the poor, making reference to the need for employment-led strategies in rural areas, and that national Governments are responsible for establishing the appropriate framework for doing so.

34. Many delegates reaffirmed that food should not be used as a measure or instrument of political pressure and there was broad agreement that peace and disarmament are prerequisites to the elimination of poverty and the eradication of

hunger. Some delegates pointed out that political pressure and interference which could negatively influence the achievement of food objectives in individual developing countries should be condemned and reference was also made to the racist régime in South Africa which aggravates the regional food situation.

35. The President of IFAD, Mr. Idriss Jazairy, said that a number of conclusions could be drawn from the current crisis. One of these was that a lasting solution to the hunger problem would not be attainable unless steps were taken to ensure that international aid flows actually reach the rural poor. The best method of achieving this was to channel more aid to the small producer as a prerequisite to increasing food and agricultural production. This is what IFAD had been mandated to do and this is what it was doing, yet the Fund is in the process of being pushed over into the abyss. The President urged immediate actions to complete the Fund's second replenishment and, following its conclusion, that a review be conducted of its future financial basis to ensure that the institution can pursue its activities without interruption and with greater predictability. He drew the attention of the members to his intention to mobilize voluntary contributions to finance a special programme for sub-Saharan African countries affected by drought and desertification.

36. Mr. Peter Onu, Secretary-General a.i. of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in a message read by Mr. Victor Djomatchoua, recalled the objectives established in 1974 by the World Food Conference. For African countries, efforts to achieve these objectives had suffered a serious setback which would make it extremely difficult to recapture the momentum that was generated by that Conference. He referred to the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, 2/ adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU in April 1980, which accords priority to food and agriculture. This top priority to food, also established in the national development plans of the member States of OAU, had been seriously dampened by the continuing economic crisis and devastating drought. As a practical collective response to the emergency situation created by drought and famine, the African Heads of State and Government decided to establish a Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa. Already, in spite of tremendous economic difficulties, seven OAU member States have pledged or made financial contributions to the Special Fund. Special reference was made to the importance of the forthcoming twenty-first OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government which will study the emergency situation in Africa, especially with respect to food production and distribution. The Secretary-General expressed his appreciation for the continuing participation of the World Food Council in preparation for this meeting.

37. Statements were made by the representatives of the World Food Programme, the International Labour Organisation and the World Bank. The last emphasized the importance of institution-building in the context of the implementation and management of food sector strategies and plans. The representative of WFP made reference to the activities of the Programme in responding to the food emergency in Africa and emphasized the efforts under way to integrate food aid into the mainstream of development assistance. The interdependence of employment, incomes and food production and consumption objectives was stressed by the representative of ILO, who also emphasized the need for close inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination in expanding labour-intensive programmes, especially in Africa.

CHAPTER III

EXTERNAL ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS ON MEETING FOOD OBJECTIVES - THE NEED FOR EXPANDING WORLD TRADE

38. The third substantive topic before the Council, external constraints to achieving food objectives, was introduced by the Executive Director. He said that the secretariat document briefly assessed the economic effects of the severe economic recession and the deterioration of the international trade and financial environment, including large debt repayment problems. The document then suggested some areas for future action in the international sphere with potential for reducing hunger and malnutrition.
39. Most delegates were in agreement with the general thrust and proposals contained in the document. The study was considered a good basis for further discussion on international trade, debt and finance issues. There was general agreement with the section on foreign debt and related economic adjustments which affected food strategies implementation and investment in development.
40. Some delegates felt that the situation was more serious than presented in the document. Council Ministers expressed their view that the global economic crisis of the early 1980s had left developing countries with their food and agricultural sectors lacking in investment and their overall development prospects entirely trimmed. They requested that further work be undertaken in the area of international trade, resource flows, and investment in food and agriculture, emphasizing the importance of the capacity of developing countries to confront their food problems.
41. Ministers agreed that world economic recovery has been encouraging but uneven, and its impact on developing countries even more so. There has been a considerable range of experience among countries of different developing regions, suggesting a diversity in national economic strength and in the adequacy of economic policies. Despite the progress that has been made, however, the present international economic environment is characterized by large debt repayments, adverse terms of trade, deteriorating trade policy discipline, protectionist pressures that could lead to more widespread restrictions on imports from developing countries and the need for structural adjustment measures.
42. Ministers felt that these constraints impose severe burdens on many developing countries' capacity to reorient economic policy and investment priorities for the food sector, especially those expenditures intended for local production and improved consumption among the poor.
43. Some delegates observed that the recession experience could none the less encourage the consolidation and strengthening of strategies that have been successful so far, facilitate a change of entrenched positions, and promote the will to address future trade policy objectives and adjustments. This experience underscored the increasing interdependence of development partners and the ever more pressing need to meet world food objectives.
44. Delegates generally agreed that a number of present trends are clearly unsustainable. As long as countries must limit imports and pay a large percentage of export earnings to service loans, it is unlikely that developing countries will be able to maintain vigorous economic growth and political stability over the long

run. It was observed that the absence of a meaningful settlement of certain international trade issues constitutes a serious constraint both to improved export earnings of developing countries and to solving world food problems.

45. Most Council Ministers emphasized that increased protectionist trade barriers not only reduce returns on past investment but also increase uncertainty concerning the reliability of market access in the long term.

46. All delegates underscored that for these imbalances to be corrected in an orderly manner, adequate flows of development finance, increased national investment in the food and agricultural sector, greater consistency of macro-economic policies reoriented to an export-import expanding adjustment, and improved international co-ordination are required.

47. All delegates emphasized the role of the GATT multilateral framework for trade adjustments and stressed the continued importance of its Committee on Trade in Agriculture. Council Ministers recommended that the GATT Committee on Trade in Agriculture be encouraged to accelerate progress towards more operationally-effective rules and disciplines for trade and domestic farm policies.

48. As regards negotiations on food and agriculture, all delegates supported examination of different policy instruments on how to incorporate subsidies in agriculture, including subsidized export credits - within the purview of strengthened and more operationally-effective GATT rules and disciplines. The Council Ministers underscored that reversing protectionist tendencies and actions, as economic recovery proceeds, will contribute to expanded international trade, and thus enhanced world food security.

49. Most Council Ministers recommended that full account be taken of the need for a balance between rights and obligations under GATT, and of the special characteristics and problems in food and agriculture of the developing countries in the light of specific provisions for differential and more favourable treatment. It was stressed that the World Food Council should exercise its good offices: on the one hand, to moderate some of the present conflict in international food trade and, on the other, to offer its guidance in adjustment programmes for resolution of debt problems to help developing countries meet their food and social needs on a sustained and long-term basis.

50. Most delegates emphasized that the International Wheat Council (IWC) should continue to consider actions to be taken to continue international co-operation after the present protocol expires on 30 June 1986. Council Ministers recommended that a new Convention should, however, take account of the profound market changes in recent years, in order to ensure a reduction in market instability.

51. Council Ministers recommended that IWC continue to consider the possible elements of a new and more forceful agreement including economic provisions. These could include efforts to promote financing increased grain purchases and technical assistance. Some delegates suggested that the Council initiate consultations to explore the possibilities of raising the Food Aid Convention's minimum overall commitment towards 10 million tons.

52. With regard to financial assistance, delegates agreed that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Cereal Financing Facility is an important financing instrument available to developing countries to help ensure their food security. In this respect, Council Ministers welcomed and extended their appreciation for the recent

four-year extension of the Cereal Financing Facility by IMF. The review, which will be conducted by May 1987, provides the possibility of some technical adjustments for broadening the Financing Facility's operations.

53. Some delegates noted with concern that the recent trade embargo against Nicaragua is affecting that country's agricultural production and food security and reference was made to General Assembly resolution 39/210, as adopted. Other delegates felt that the World Food Council was not the appropriate forum in which to raise issues of this nature.

54. Council Ministers strongly supported the proposal for an intensified exchange of experience and co-operation on food issues among developing countries. In this regard, delegates recommended that the World Food Council should continue monitoring, discussing and reporting on the question of trade, particularly in food and agriculture, among developing countries, since this was believed to be an important aspect of its capacity to deal with food security and hunger problems.

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A. Organization of work

55. The Council established a working group to draft the conclusions and recommendations which emerged from the eleventh ministerial session. The group was composed of Kenya and Morocco (Africa); Japan and Thailand (Asia); Argentina and Nicaragua (Latin America); the German Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Socialist States of Eastern Europe), assisted by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA); and France and the United States of America (Western European and other States), assisted by the European Economic Community (EEC). The President appointed Mr. G. I. Trant (Canada) as his representative to act as Chairman of the working group.

56. The conclusions and recommendations presented to plenary were adopted by consensus.

57. Following the adoption by consensus, the German Democratic Republic, speaking also on behalf of Bulgaria, Hungary and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, reaffirmed their position of principle, stated in the joint statements made, and drew the attention of Council members to documents WFC/1984/13 and WFC/1985/9 distributed at the respective meetings.

58. The delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, Turkey and the United States reserved their position as to paragraphs 7 and 49 of the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting. These delegates were of the view that discussion of General Assembly resolutions 38/188 J, 39/151 E and 39/210 was not appropriate for meetings of the World Food Council and that deliberation of such issues was the responsibility of other forums. Other delegates observed that the Council is a political forum and can therefore properly discuss political matters of the type described in the referenced paragraphs.

B. Election of officers

59. Mr. Henri Nallet, Minister of Agriculture of France, was elected by acclamation to serve as President for a two-year term. Other members of the Bureau elected to serve in the capacity of Vice-President include Mr. Gilles Laubhouet, Minister of Rural Development of the Ivory Coast; Mr. Qazi Abdul Majid, Minister for Food and Agriculture of Pakistan; Mr. Lucio Reca, Secretary of State of Agriculture and Livestock of Argentina; and Mr. Yovtcho Roussev, Vice-President of the National Agro-Industrial Union of Bulgaria.

C. Future programme of work

60. The Executive Director summarized the principal areas of future work for the Council proposed by the Ministers during the course of their discussions. These included further assessment of food strategy implementation in Africa; focus on regional prospectives for further food co-operation and the organization of workshops on Asian and Latin American experience in implementation of food policies and programmes; progress in the integration of food aid with development

imperatives, especially in Africa; review of agricultural research progress and potentials for application of improved technologies; continued review of trade and international market constraints affecting food objectives; the role of transnational corporations in food trade, investment and the transfer of technology; and further review of efforts made to mobilize resources, adequacy of training for food policy analysis, improvement of data and related factors.

61. Following wide-ranging discussion and debate, there was general agreement to focus on the following major areas:

(a) Further assessment of food sector strategy implementation and hunger reduction measures, particularly in Africa, and further development of the methodology for more effective monitoring. The assessment should make specific reference to the level of domestic investment and the national budgetary share allocated in support of the food and agricultural sector;

(b) Review of the progress and effectiveness of integrating emergency relief, including food aid, with broader development objectives for food self-reliance and the reduction of hunger;

(c) Special attention to the area of regional perspectives and co-operation on food issues, including the regional workshop proposed by China relating the Asian experience and by Argentina for Latin American food policies and programmes;

(d) Review of means for improving the effectiveness of the World Food Council as a co-ordinating mechanism of the United Nations system.

62. Delegates expressed differing views on the priority of the Council's future consideration of the role of transnational corporations as regards food objectives. Generally it was agreed that an investigation of the work of other bodies in this field should be made available to Council members.

D. Other points of discussion raised by the Ministers

63. The President of the Council reported on the discussion in the private meetings of Ministers and placed the following statement in the record of the meeting:

"We discussed several aspects of the future work and organization of the World Food Council, and considered what changes might be necessary to revitalize its work and facilitate the resolution of persistent world food problems:

"We believe that the Council should clearly return to its original mandate, as specified in the 1974 World Food Conference resolution XXII.

"In this regard, we believe it would be timely to conduct a review of the modus operandi of the Council, ideally by the Secretary-General's Office with a small committee of member States. The review, which could be considered by the twelfth session, would aim to ensure that the Council has adequate authority and independence to discharge its responsibilities."

64. Some delegates observed that it was not useful for Ministers only to discuss papers, however well prepared, and that more attention should be given to

implementation of Council recommendations. One delegate suggested that the Council should convene meetings between development partners twice yearly and before the annual ministerial meeting in order that Ministers could be advised as to the steps taken by donors, agencies and developing countries themselves to reconcile food problems. Other delegates were not convinced of the utility of the annual formal preparatory meetings among officials convened in Rome, and suggested that these be modified and more attention placed on more frequent and regular meetings and activities of the Council's officers. Some delegates suggested that the Council establish closer links with the Secretary-General's Office in its role as a co-ordinating mechanism on food and hunger issues within the United Nations system. Other delegates considered that the improved effectiveness of Council activities could best be attained within the Council's current mandate and terms of reference, with its accountability to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. They further advised that any attempts to change this mandate would harm the successful performance of its functions. In any event, any review of the activities of the World Food Council should not lead to the creation of new bodies and should respect existing mechanisms and available financial resources, and not result in useless duplication of effort.

65. There was consensus among delegates that a review should be conducted on the role, responsibilities and functions of the World Food Council. Some delegates were of the view that the review should not alter the Council's current mandate, location or terms of reference, while others wanted the study to also consider these broader aspects, ideally in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

66. In his acceptance speech, the newly elected President of the Council indicated that it would be his intention to pursue the call for a study on the ways in which the Council could be more effective in meeting its responsibilities.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 19 (A/39/19), part one, paras. 1-66.

2/ A/S-11/14, annex I.

ANNEX I

Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of France a/

The World Food Council,

Having convened its eleventh ministerial session in Paris, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of France,

Appreciative of the thoroughness of the arrangements made and the excellent facilities of the Centre des conférences internationales, which enabled the work of the Council to be organized with efficiency and smoothness,

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

1. Applauds the Government and people of France for the enormous efforts which they have devoted to the preparation and organization of the eleventh ministerial session of the World Food Council and for the outstanding success of those efforts;

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

3. Requests the President of the Council to express the Council's deep gratitude to the President of the Republic of France, Mr. François Mitterrand, and, through him, to the Government and people of France.

a/ Adopted by acclamation by the Council at the 8th meeting of its eleventh ministerial session, having been proposed by Mr. Bukar Shaib, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Rural Development of Nigeria.

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ANNEX II

List of documents before the Council at its eleventh ministerial session

<u>Document number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
WFC/1985/1	1	Provisional agenda with annotations
WFC/1985/2	3	Progress in implementation of food plans and strategies in Africa
WFC/1985/2/Add.1	3	Progress in implementation of food plans and strategies in Africa - Report and recommendations of the workshop on accelerated food strategies implementation in Africa - Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 25-27 February 1985
WFC/1985/3	3	Effectiveness of aid in support of food strategies
WFC/1985/4	4	Improving access to food by the undernourished
WFC/1985/5	5	External economic constraints on meeting food objectives - the need for expanding world trade
WFC/1985/6	6	Proposal for the Council's future programme - Brief on agri-business
WFC/1985/7		Current world food situation
WFC/1985/8		Report of the preparatory meeting for the eleventh session
WFC/1985/9		Letter dated 1 May 1985 from the delegation of the German Democratic Republic to the President of the World Food Council
WFC/1985/10		Report of the Committee on World Food Security on the work of its tenth session
WFC/1985/11	2	Letter dated 27 May 1985 from the Ambassador of France to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to the Executive Director of the World Food Council
WFC/1985/12		Tenth annual report of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes

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

1. The non-governmental organizations present at the eleventh session of the World Food Council are fully aware of the dramatic food situation in many countries, particularly in Africa. This situation is not only due to the drought or so-called "natural" causes, as some would have public opinion believe - with the effect of demobilizing public opinion. Several of the essential causes of the famine are also attributable to man. They include internal causes, environmental deterioration, agricultural policies contrary to farmers' interests, lack of storage, credit and marketing facilities, lack of means of communication, schools and sanitary installations, inadequacy of applied research, and external causes: wars, the particularly heavy indebtedness of the food-deficit countries, dislocation of the monetary system, deterioration of the terms of trade and protectionism by the countries of the North. These causes have been cited by many of the people involved: we are merely drawing attention to them again to show that action is possible and that drought and famine must not lead to fatalism. The non-governmental organizations know that it is not for them to set themselves up as saviours of the third world, because they can provide only modest assistance, as a supplement to official international co-operation - modest but significant assistance. By way of example, during the past six months, the non-governmental organizations of the European Community, through their own efforts and their appeals for special assistance to the African peoples, have collected a total of approximately \$200 million, which represents slightly more than half the food assistance of the Commission of the European Communities during the same period. But over and above this quantitative contribution, our experience at the village level has clearly revealed to us a number of requirements relating to agricultural development. We wish to draw attention to a few essential features of these requirements in this statement.

1. Regional trade areas must be promoted

2. The first requirement for agricultural development oriented towards food self-sufficiency is a policy of remunerative prices for food production. This policy can succeed only if the local and regional markets are protected against invasion by low-cost food imports. Since such protection is essential, it necessarily has an effect on the disposal of the agricultural surpluses of the industrial countries, and consequently must lead to reorganization of the agricultural policies pursued by these countries, within the context of the already existing regional markets.

3. Market protection involves the establishment of viable economic zones at the country level or at the level of groups of countries. Consumption, production and savings must advance together, through the broad development of national factors: manpower, land, skills, natural resources, which are often excluded as a result of unfair competition.

4. In this respect, the non-governmental organizations have for a long time been asking themselves and asking national Governments and intergovernmental organizations about the agro-industries' domination of the food systems of the third world. They request the Council to include this question in its work

programme and finally to engage in global debate on agro-food firms and their dominant role in the agricultural policies and development of the world as a whole.

2. Peasant-based strategies must be strengthened

5. The success of food strategies depends on the capacity of farmers to increase and diversify local production. In this area of decisive importance for the third world as a whole, States have an outstanding role to play in promoting the emergence of organized and independent farmers who will be the motor for development. It is essential to construct development models consistent with the social, economic and political conditions of each society, and which take full advantage of the work of each of its members. Within the context of a continuing dialogue with the State, farmers' organization must be a fully-fledged partner, having a voice in the definition of agricultural policies.

6. However, it is not sufficient merely to allow farmers to have their say; the development work undertaken by farmers' organizations must be supplemented by putting the necessary tools at their disposal:

(a) Legal tools: right of association, appropriate legislation for the protection of farming activity (land problems, organization of markets, etc.);

(b) Financial tools: investment policy, appropriate credit, price support, etc.;

(c) Technical tools: mobilization and protection of local means of production (seeds, soils, irrigation, appropriate technology), advisory services, vocational training, etc.

3. Food assistance must be closely linked to development assistance

7. A significant proportion of food assistance should be devoted to re-invigorating development (for example, through the supply of seeds, small agricultural implements, young cattle, etc.). Similarly, food assistance must give priority support to development programmes (road systems and maintenance, water resources) and be included within food strategies as defined by Governments.

8. Assistance must also go towards global rural development, so as to improve life in the villages and curb the rural exodus. Among other things, it is necessary to promote all forms of food production, education, vocational training, primary health care, rural handicrafts, cottage industry upstream and downstream from agriculture, and cheap renewable sources of energy.

9. Agricultural development is also linked to job creation in urban areas, and consequently to access to purchasing power by the mass of people unemployed today.

10. All food assistance and every development project must be linked to the participation of the population through its recognized leaders. In other words, social activity and associations must be promoted, together with the organizational capacity of the population, by giving it maximum responsibility.

11. With specific regard to emergency assistance, which must go first of all to refugees, displaced persons, women and children, it is essential that it should be

given a certain priority: in particular, rapid warning systems must be improved by associating the non-governmental organizations; free-passage zones must be established to guarantee the right of every people to food; closer co-ordination must be established between the various donors. Like any other form of assistance, emergency assistance must promote self-organization by the beneficiary population and the assumption by that population of responsibility for its means of livelihood (food, education, sanitary conditions, roads).

12. Lastly, development assistance also means that financial resources should be released in larger quantities. The non-governmental organizations request the Governments of the industrial countries to set, as some have already done, a time limit by which, not later than the end of the decade, official development assistance will reach at least 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP). They also request that a substantial proportion of this assistance should be allocated to multilateral co-operation; the adequate replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, precisely because of its mandate, is of particular importance.

4. Full advantage must be taken of the role of the non-governmental organizations both in the South and in the North

13. In the industrial countries, the non-governmental organizations represent a dynamic sector of the population which plays a considerable part in informing and educating public opinion, and hence in supporting policies conducive to international co-operation and solidarity. In order to perform this essential task, they wish to be assisted in their access to the various information media.

14. While maintaining their independence of action, they consider it necessary to be consulted during the formulation of decisions concerning development assistance policies and, to the extent of their competence, to be associated with execution of these policies.

15. Project co-financing, through official contributions by the various Governments or EEC, has enabled the non-governmental organizations to broaden their activity, to the satisfaction of the various partners. Through consultation with the partners, co-financing procedures can be further improved and extended, in appropriate forms, to other intergovernmental organizations.

16. In the countries of the South, the farmers' organizations, village communities, popular associations and non-governmental organizations are the recognized partners of the non-governmental organizations in the North. The latter earnestly hope that this "grass-roots" association will be encouraged since it constitutes one of the essential elements of a country's social fabric and the best guarantee of its vitality.