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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Governing Council
Thirty-first Session Report
Rome, 13-14 February 2008

Table of Contents

CHAPTER	PARAGRAPHS	PAGES
1. INAUGURATION AND PROCEEDINGS	1-16	1-3
Opening of the session	3	1
Agenda and documentation	4	1
Election of the Bureau of the Governing Council	5	1
Inaugural meeting of the session	6-13	2-3
Statement by the President of IFAD	14	3
General statements	15	3
Closure of the session	16	3
2. DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL	17-30	4-5
Application for non-original membership	17-18	4
Report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources	19	4
Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources	20-21	4
Audited financial statements of IFAD for 2006	22	4
Administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008	23	4
Special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters	24	4-5
Progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system	25	5
Report on lessons learned by the International Land Coalition	26	5
Progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	27	5
Emoluments of the President	28-29	5
Other business		
Process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD in February 2009	30	5
3. A. SUMMARY RECORDS	31-240	6-42
(including a summary of general statements delivered by Governors)		
(i) First meeting – 13 February 2008	31-74	6-11
(ii) Second meeting – 13 February 2008	75-139	12-23
(iii) Third meeting – 14 February 2008	140-162	24-28
(iv) Fourth meeting – 14 February 2008	163-240	29-41

CHAPTER	PARAGRAPHS	PAGES
B. ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS	241-270	42-49
C. OTHER GENERAL STATEMENTS		50-66
Angola		50-51
Ethiopia		52-53
Gabon		54-55
Lao People's Democratic Republic		56-57
Lesotho		58
Syrian Arab Republic		59-60
Thailand		61-62
United Kingdom		63
Zambia		64-66
4. STATEMENTS AND SPECIAL ADDRESSES		67-103
Keynote address from His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana		69-70
Keynote address by His Excellency Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic		71-72
Keynote address from His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Jean Nkueté, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon		73-75
Keynote address from King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Dr Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia		76-78
Message of His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations		79
Statement by the President of IFAD, Mr Lennart Båge, to the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council		80-85
Keynote address by Mr Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank		86-88
Keynote address by Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank		89-91

CHAPTER	PARAGRAPHS	PAGES
4. STATEMENTS AND SPECIAL ADDRESSES (continued)		
Statement by Ms Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme		92-94
Message of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Dr Jacques Diouf, delivered on his behalf by Mr James Butler, Deputy Director-General		95-96
Synthesis of the deliberations at the second Farmers' Forum held in conjunction with the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council of IFAD, 11-12 February 2008		97-100
Statement by the Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jörg Frieden, closing the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council		101-103
Annexes		
I. Delegations at the thirty-first session of the Governing Council		104-178
II. Agenda and programme of events		179-181
III. List of documents placed before the thirty-first session of the Governing Council		182-183
IV. Resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its thirty-first session		184-190

Chapter 1

Inauguration and proceedings

1. The thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council of IFAD was held in Rome on 13-14 February 2008. The list of delegations is attached as annex I.
2. The Council held a total of four meetings, the summary records of which are contained in chapter 3, part A.
- A. Opening of the session**
3. The session was opened by His Excellency James Harvey, Governor of IFAD for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and outgoing Chairperson of the Council.
- B. Agenda and documentation**
4. The Governing Council adopted the agenda, shown together with the programme of events for the session in annex II. The documents placed before the Council are listed in annex III. The resolutions adopted by the Governing Council appear in annex IV.
- C. Election of the Bureau of the Governing Council**
5. In accordance with rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council, an election was held by the Council from among its Governors for a new Bureau, for a term of office of two years, with results as follows:

Chairperson: The Honourable
Dr Sayyadi Abba Ruma
Minister for Agriculture and
Water Resources of the
Federal Republic of Nigeria

Vice-Chairpersons: Her Excellency
Geoconda Galán Castelo
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ecuador
to IFAD

Mr Jörg Frieden
Assistant Director and Head of the Development Policy
and Multilateral Cooperation Department
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss
Confederation

Bureau of the Governing Council



Outgoing Chairperson
H.E. James Harvey,
Governor for the United Kingdom



Newly elected Chairperson
Hon. Dr Sayyadi Abba Ruma,
Chairperson of the Council and Governor
for Nigeria



Vice-Chairperson,
H.E. Geoconda Galán Castelo,
Governor for Ecuador



Vice-Chairperson,
Mr Jörg Frieden,
Acting Governor for Switzerland

D. Inaugural meeting of the session

6. A message from His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana, was conveyed to the Governing Council by His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana. The full text of the President's inaugural address is reproduced in chapter 4.
7. His Excellency Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic delivered a keynote address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
8. A message from His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, was delivered by His Excellency Jean Nkueté, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon. This statement is reproduced in full in chapter 4.
9. His Excellency Dr Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, addressed the Governing Council on behalf of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. The full text of this statement is reproduced in chapter 4.
10. A message from Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was delivered on his behalf by the Chairperson of the Governing Council, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.

11. The Governing Council was addressed by Mr Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank. This statement is reproduced in full in chapter 4.
12. Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank, delivered a keynote address to the Governing Council, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
13. Ms Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of World Food Programme, also delivered a statement; and Mr James Butler, Deputy Director-General, delivered a message from Dr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. These statements are reproduced in full in chapter 4.

E. Statement by the President of IFAD

14. The full text of President Båge's statement to the Governing Council appears in chapter 4.

F. General statements

15. The general statements delivered by Governors in the plenary session are summarized in the summary records contained in chapter 3, part A; summaries of the three round-table discussions are given in chapter 3, part B; and general statements submitted in writing by Member State representatives who did not make oral presentations are reproduced in full in chapter 3, part C.

G. Closure of the session

16. The Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jörg Frieden, summarized the results of the Council's main deliberations and then closed the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council. The text of his statement is reproduced in full in chapter 4.

Chapter 2

Decisions of the Governing Council

A. Application for non-original membership

17. The Governing Council considered document GC 31/L.2 and, on 13 February 2008, adopted resolution 146/XXXI approving the membership of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.
18. The Council noted that The Bahamas would be admitted as a non-original Member in the Fund's List C (sub-List C3), as agreed upon with the Members of that List.

B. Report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources

19. The Governing Council reviewed the progress report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources contained in document GC 31/L.3. It noted that total pledges to the Seventh Replenishment amounted to US\$642 million, or 89 per cent of the target amount of US\$720 million. It further noted that the aggregate amount of the instruments of contribution deposited represented 88 per cent of total pledges.

C. Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources

20. The Governing Council considered document GC 31/L.4 and adopted, on 13 February 2008, resolution 147/XXXI establishing the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. In accordance with paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Consultation would consist of all Member States from Lists A and B, and 15 Member States from List C, as communicated to the President of IFAD by that List. In this respect, the Council took note of the following composition of List C Member States:

Sub-List C1: Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Mali and South Africa

Sub-List C2: China, India, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Turkey

Sub-List C3: Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Panama

21. Also in accordance with paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Council further noted that the List C membership wished to invite the following Member States as observers to the Consultation proceedings: Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh and the Niger.

D. Audited financial statements for 2006

22. The Governing Council considered and approved the financial statements showing the financial position of IFAD as at 31 December 2006 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date, as contained in appendices A to H, inclusive, of document GC 31/L.5 and the report of the external auditor thereon.

E. Administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008

23. After considering the proposed administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008, as presented in document GC 31/L.6, the Governing Council adopted resolution 148/XXXI, relating thereto on 13 February 2008. The United States of America registered its abstention on the Fund's administrative budget.

F. Special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters

24. The Governing Council considered document GC 31/L.7 and adopted resolution 149/XXXI, on 13 February 2008, approving the extension of the period for the use of the uncommitted amount of the special expenditure to finance the common areas and facilities of IFAD's new headquarters at Via Paolo di Dono, 44, Rome, to 31 December 2008. The Governing Council also requested the President of IFAD to

provide a report on the expenditures incurred in preparing the new headquarters to the Executive Board and to submit a final report thereon to the Governing Council in February 2009.

G. Progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system

25. The Governing Council took note of document GC 31/L.8 providing a report on the implementation of the performance-based allocation system together with the 2007 country scores and 2008 annual allocations, and the 2007 rural sector performance assessments.

H. Report on lessons learned by the International Land Coalition

26. The Governing Council took note of the report contained in document GC 31/L.9, summarizing the International Land Coalition's efforts to put a pro-poor land agenda into practice by helping to widen national and regional policy dialogue and involving citizen-based organizations in the development and implementation of agrarian reform policies and practices.

I. Progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

27. The Council took note of the report contained in document GC 31/L.10 on the Global Mechanism's operational activities in 2007, focusing particularly on the complementarities between its own mandate to scale up finance for sustainable land management and that of IFAD.

J. Emoluments of the President

28. The Governing Council considered document GC 31/L.11 on the emoluments of the President and adopted resolution 150/XXXI, on 14 February 2008, thus re-establishing a committee consisting of nine Governors or their representatives to review the overall emoluments and other conditions of employment of the President of IFAD. The Council took note of the following composition of the Emoluments Committee:

List A: Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States of America

List B: Indonesia and Iran (Islamic Republic of)

List C: Cameroon, Mexico and Pakistan

29. The Council requested the Committee to submit a report and draft resolution on the subject to the Governing Council, through the Executive Board, for adoption at the Governing Council's thirty-second session in February 2009.

K. Other business

Process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD in February 2009

30. At the request of List A, the Council held discussions on the process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD in February 2009. No consensus could be reached on a possible role for the Governing Council Bureau in this regard. The Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jörg Frieden, would consult with the Chairperson and the other Vice-Chairperson on this matter.

Chapter 3

A. Summary records

(including a summary of general statements delivered by Governors)

- (i) Summary record of the first meeting of the thirty-first session held on Wednesday, 13 February 2008, at 10 a.m.

OUTGOING CHAIRPERSON: **JAMES HARVEY (UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND)**

CHAIRPERSON: **SAYYADI ABBA RUMA (NIGERIA)**

	Paragraphs
Opening of the session (agenda item 1)	32-33
Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 2)	34-35
Election of the Bureau of the Governing Council (agenda item 3)	36-43
Application for non-original membership (agenda item 4)	44-45
Inaugural ceremony	46-60
Keynote address by the President of the Republic of Ghana, delivered on his behalf by the Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana	51-52
Keynote address by the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic	53-55
Keynote address by the President of the Republic of Cameroon, delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon	56-57
Keynote address by King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, delivered on his behalf by the Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	58-59
Message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations	60
Statement of the President of IFAD (agenda item 5)	61-62
Keynote address by the President of the African Development Bank	63-64
Keynote address by the Managing Director of the World Bank	65-67
General statements (agenda item 6)	68-73
– China	68-69
– Algeria	70-71
– Pakistan	72-73

31. **The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.**

OPENING OF THE SESSION (agenda item 1)

32. **The outgoing CHAIRPERSON** declared open the thirty-first session and welcomed participants. In the year of its thirtieth anniversary IFAD was taking stock of its achievements and looking to the challenges ahead. The *World Development Report 2008*, entitled "Agriculture for Development", highlighted the need to focus afresh on agriculture: although opportunities for farmers were now better than for decades past, many of them were facing increasing problems; and for poor consumers higher food prices spelled real hardship. A huge push to boost agricultural productivity, with much better use of natural resources, was urgently needed, together with a parallel push to tackle poverty, exclusion and vulnerability.
33. IFAD's focus on rural poverty and the steps it was taking to improve its effectiveness meant that it had a key role to play. The Governors of IFAD had a critical responsibility to ensure that their decisions would place the Fund in the best position to provide the rural poor with the opportunities which they awaited and, in particular, to address the great challenge of climate change. Above all, the session offered an opportunity to renew the common commitment to enabling the rural poor to overcome their poverty.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 2) (GC 31/L.1)

34. **The outgoing CHAIRPERSON** said that he had been informed that there had been a request for a discussion, under agenda item 16, "Other business", of the process leading up to the following year's election of the President. He took it that the proposal was acceptable.
35. **The agenda (GC 31/L.1/Rev.1) was adopted.**

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
(agenda item 3)

36. **The Outgoing CHAIRPERSON** said that, pursuant to rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure, the Governing Council should elect a Bureau consisting of a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons to serve for a period of two years. He had been informed of the nomination of Mr Sayyadi Abba Ruma, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for the office of Chairperson.
37. **Mr Sayyadi Abba Ruma (Nigeria) was elected Chairperson of the Governing Council by acclamation.**
38. **Mr HARVEY** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that he had also been informed of the nomination of Ms Geoconda Galán Castelo, Governor for Ecuador, and Mr Jörg Frieden, Acting Governor for Switzerland, for the offices of Vice-Chairperson.
39. **Ms Geoconda Galán Castelo (Ecuador) and Mr Jörg Frieden (Switzerland) were elected Vice-Chairpersons of the Governing Council by acclamation.**
40. **Mr Ruma (Nigeria) took the Chair.**
41. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that the President of Nigeria had asked him to convey to the Governing Council the gratitude of the Government and people of Nigeria for appointing him Chairperson and to reaffirm Nigeria's support for the goals of IFAD. Together with the two Vice-Chairpersons he looked forward to working with the Governing Council and the Secretariat.
42. The Fund's mandate appeared first among the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The developing countries were required to create an enabling environment for that purpose, including the introduction of reforms, pro-poor policies and good governance, and the elimination of corruption; the developed countries were expected to provide financial and

technical support. The achievement of the Fund's goals would entail changes in some of its operations: what was needed was increased funding for development and speedy execution of projects, as well as refinement of implementation tactics to cater for operational diversity. The issues addressed by the Council should include bridging the widening gap between the rural poor and the urban elite, effective use of increased resources, and integration of developing countries in the global free-market economy.

43. Where the round-table topics were concerned, all nations needed to be aware of the clean development mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, as well as of the impact on agriculture and rural development of other climate-change issues. That impact could be mitigated by policies and investment in support of trade, sustainable agricultural practices and technological progress. In that spirit he called on the Members of the Council to work together as one IFAD to make the session a successful one.

APPLICATION FOR NON-ORIGINAL MEMBERSHIP (agenda item 4) (GC 31/L.2)

44. **The CHAIRPERSON** invited the Governing Council to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC 31/L.2, approving the non-original membership of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

45. **Resolution 146/XXXI was adopted.**

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

46. **His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, His Excellency Jean Nkueté, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon, and His Excellency Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, were conducted to their seats.**
47. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that owing to unforeseen circumstances the President of Ghana and the President of Cameroon were unfortunately unable to attend the Governing Council session as planned. He was pleased to welcome their representatives, the Vice-President of Ghana and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Cameroon.
48. Both the President and the Vice-President of Ghana had long been champions of sustainable development throughout the African continent, and the Council joined them in acknowledging the need for a global effort to achieve the MDGs. The Council was grateful to the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy for accepting its invitation to be present as it commemorated not only IFAD's thirtieth anniversary but also 30 years of strong collaboration with Italy. As host country to the three United Nations organizations concerned with food and agriculture, Italy's commitment to agricultural and rural development and to poverty reduction was manifest. The Council was likewise appreciative of Cameroon's consistent demonstration of its commitment to IFAD's mandate. Cameroon was a breadbasket of central Africa and a major commodity exporter which had made great strides in poverty reduction. The presence of the Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who had brought with him a message from King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, highlighted the importance attached by Saudi Arabia to overcoming poverty and hunger, as further underscored by the establishment of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development. He also welcomed, on behalf of the Council, representatives of two of the Fund's international partners, the President of the African Development Bank, Mr Donald Kaberuka, and the Managing Director of the World Bank, Ms Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, as well as the first President of IFAD,

Mr Abdelmuhsin M. Al-Sudeary, and his successors, Mr Idriss Jazairy and Mr Fawzi H. Al-Sultan.

49. He invited the Governing Council to view a video documentary entitled "IFAD – a 30-year retrospective", telling the story of IFAD through the voices of its current and past presidents.

50. **A video documentary was screened.**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA, DELIVERED ON HIS BEHALF BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

51. **Mr MAHAMA** (Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana) delivered a keynote address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
52. **The CHAIRPERSON** expressed gratitude for the President's thoughtful address. He was sure that the Governing Council had taken due note of the issues raised.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

53. **Mr D'ALEMA** (Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic) delivered a keynote address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
54. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Mr D'Alema for his address, which had reaffirmed once again Italy's commitment to the common goals of promoting development and helping those in need.
55. **His Excellency Massimo D'Alema was conducted from the meeting room.**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON, DELIVERED ON HIS BEHALF BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

56. **Mr NKUETÉ** (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon) delivered a keynote address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
57. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Deputy Prime Minister Nkueté for delivering the address by the President of the Republic of Cameroon, which had underlined the importance of IFAD as a key player in the United Nations' efforts to achieve the MDGs.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ AL-SAUD, CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO HOLY MOSQUES, DELIVERED ON HIS BEHALF BY THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

58. **Mr BALGHUNAIM** (Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) delivered a keynote address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
59. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Mr Balghunaim for delivering the address. The Governing Council was indeed privileged to have been honoured by a message from King Abdullah, which had highlighted Saudi Arabia's strong commitment to addressing the pressing needs of the developing countries.

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

60. **The CHAIRPERSON** read out the Secretary-General's message, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD (agenda item 5)

61. **Mr BÂGE** (President of IFAD) made a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
62. **The CHAIRPERSON** expressed the Governing Council's profound appreciation to the President of IFAD, whose statement had provided an excellent account of the Fund's activities and identified the guiding principles for its future work. Mr Bâge was to be commended for his leadership and his staff commended for its dedication to the Fund's mission.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

63. **Mr KABERUKA** (President of the African Development Bank) delivered an address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
64. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Mr Kaberuka for his address. The African Development Bank was a strategic partner of IFAD in the efforts to help the rural poor, and its President had made several very important points, in particular concerning the vital need to work through partnerships for a better world.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD BANK

65. **Ms OKONJO-IWEALA** (Managing Director of the World Bank) delivered an address, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
66. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Ms Okonjo-Iweala for her inspiring words, which had certainly given the Governing Council food for thought. It looked forward to increased support from the World Bank in fighting poverty and strengthening food security.
67. **His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Jean Nkueté, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon, and His Excellency Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, were conducted from the meeting room.**

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6)

68. **Mr ZHENG** (China) said that the efforts made by IFAD over the past 30 years had made it an irreplaceable force in tackling global poverty. That period coincided with 30 years of reform in China which had seen a host of measures to promote agriculture and rural development, including initiatives targeted at the rural poor. China had taken its own development-oriented approach to poverty alleviation, as part of which a comprehensive strategy had been introduced to build a new socialist countryside. China was heartened by the wide recognition of its poverty-reduction achievements but the task remained an enormous one, for it had 135 million people living below the poverty line, and its poor regions had little capacity for self-development. His Government would further strengthen its cooperation with IFAD and other international organizations in the cause of poverty alleviation.
69. IFAD should act on four proposals: it should be more innovative in its poverty-reduction efforts, improve its operation mechanism to achieve a more effective management structure and more standardized project management; it should respect the right of countries to choose their own development path and integrate country ownership in its strategy, thereby improving the relevance and

effectiveness of the assistance; it should promote exchanges of experience and information and identify successful practices for replication; and it should strengthen its partnerships with other international and regional development agencies so as to use the limited resources available as efficiently as possible.

70. **Mr CHELGHOUM** (Algeria) said that IFAD could open up new possibilities for the disadvantaged by acting as a catalyzing force generating essential synergies and complementarities, but it must have sufficient financial capacity for that purpose. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the strategic direction of the 2008 programme of work, Programme Development Financing Facility and administrative and capital budgets reviewed by the Executive Board at its ninety-second session reflected IFAD's continued commitment to increasing the level of its assistance for rural poverty reduction while improving its development effectiveness. It also noted the improvement in the implementation of the performance-based allocation system (PBAS). It was pleasing that the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was reinforcing its operations at the country level, for desertification was one of the chief causes of poverty in the southern hemisphere; the Global Mechanism needed strong support from the international community. The programme of work of the Office of Evaluation, drawn up on the basis of the priorities selected, deserved endorsement.
71. The round-table themes of climate change, biofuels and commodity prices were highly topical, for the issues in question posed a real threat to the rural poor, in particular by reducing agricultural productivity and hence the availability of food. Furthermore, the rises in the prices of farm products in international markets were due in part to low crop yields in recent years as a consequence of climate change and the conversion of agricultural land to other uses such as biofuel production.
72. **Mr JAN BALOCH** (Pakistan) said that issues related to food security were once again foremost in people's minds and would have to be given careful consideration by the relevant international forums. IFAD should seek solutions to them during the Eighth Replenishment period. Before the Seventh Replenishment the independent external evaluation had tried to address the question of IFAD's response to the new challenges, and IFAD had since put in place its Action Plan. But governance remained a problem: the Fund's Members should make governance more transparent and inclusive. Pakistan had doubled its contribution to the Fund in the Seventh Replenishment and had pledged to contribute much more if governance was improved.
73. His Government was committed to making agriculture more productive and competitive and to increasing its profitability within a framework favouring the poor and small farmers, chiefly by narrowing the gap between progressive and average farm yields and by diversification into more remunerative high-value areas. IFAD's operations in Pakistan were far from perfect, and the issues in question needed to be addressed in a businesslike manner. But change demanded strong political will matched by commensurate human resources. IFAD must build on its human capital, especially with regard to geographical diversity, in order to become a dynamic institution. On the positive side, the international environment was propitious for investment in agriculture and poverty alleviation. The recent replenishment of the African Development Fund had been a great success; IFAD should try to follow suit.
74. **The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.**

- (ii) Summary record of the second meeting of the thirty-first session held on Wednesday, 13 February 2008, at 3 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON:

GEOCONDA GALÁN CASTELO (ECUADOR)

	Paragraphs
Statement by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme	76-77
Message of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Director-General	78-79
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	80-92
– Mexico (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries [GRULAC])	80-83
– Germany	84-85
– Sudan	86
– Mali	87-88
– Indonesia	89-90
– Iceland (on behalf of the Nordic countries)	91-92
Report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources (agenda item 7)	93-94
Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources (agenda item 8)	95-96
Audited financial statements of IFAD for 2006 (agenda item 9)	97-100
Administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008 (agenda item 10)	101-109
Special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters (agenda item 11)	110-111
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	112-138
– Mauritius	112-113
– Brazil	114-116
– Republic of Korea	117-118
– Kenya	119-120
– Japan	121-122
– Italy	123-125
– Netherlands	126-128
– Peru	129-131
– Ecuador	132
– Bangladesh	133-134
– Yemen	135-136
– Niger	137-138

75. **The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.**

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

76. **Ms SHEERAN** (Executive Director of the World Food Programme [WFP]) made a statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
77. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Ms Sheeran for her statement, which had highlighted the excellent relations between WFP and IFAD.

MESSAGE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DELIVERED ON HIS BEHALF BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

78. **Mr BUTLER** (Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]) delivered a message, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
79. **The CHAIRPERSON** thanked Mr Butler for delivering the message and said that the Governing Council very much appreciated the strong bond between FAO and IFAD.

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

80. **Mr CHEN CHARPENTIER** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), said that large groups of poor people living in both rural and non-rural areas in many countries of the GRULAC region depended on agriculture for their survival. It was therefore essential to strengthen IFAD's role in fighting poverty; indeed, the *World Development Report 2008* argued that investment in agriculture was the key to improving the quality of life in the developing world and it identified various models of agricultural development, each requiring differentiated approaches: for example, many of the potential beneficiaries of IFAD's work in the GRULAC region lived in urban and peri-urban areas. IFAD had many comparative advantages, and it could reinforce its presence in the region in particular by supporting projects tailored to the individual features of its rural poverty, as well as by stepping up the policy dialogue and exchanges of knowledge. The support of other countries and international institutions was essential to the efforts of the region's governments to eradicate poverty.
81. If IFAD was to be an effective partner for governments, its financing arrangements must be amended to ensure that all its projects had access to the necessary credits; the GRULAC countries therefore supported the performance-based allocation system (PBAS), which must be constantly reviewed in order to optimize its use. Much remained to be done in that regard, and GRULAC would cooperate actively to produce a functional system. GRULAC could in fact make a bigger general contribution to the Fund's work, and be more strongly represented in the Secretariat, including in senior posts, for its members had many specialists with the requisite knowledge and experience. In view of the importance of climate-change issues for agricultural development, IFAD should respond through its projects to what was the greatest challenge currently facing humankind.
82. Since the GRULAC countries had large indigenous populations, many of them important contributors to farm production, they greatly appreciated the projects financed from resources earmarked for the development of indigenous peoples, in particular the Grants Facility for Indigenous Peoples, but IFAD's efforts in that area needed to be coordinated more closely with the work of the relevant national institutions.
83. On behalf of the Governors of the GRULAC countries, he welcomed The Bahamas as a new Member of IFAD.

84. **Mr DRESCHER** (Germany) commended IFAD on its achievements and stressed the continuing relevance of its mandate. The *World Development Report 2008* had made a strong case for giving agriculture a higher priority on the development agenda as a fundamental instrument for sustainable development and poverty reduction; IFAD must adopt country-specific approaches and innovative policy initiatives to achieve those goals. Climate change had a disproportionate impact on the rural poor and was clearly putting development at risk; but there were ways out of the crisis, and IFAD must make it a priority to join in the global efforts to limit its negative effects and mainstream issues of climate change in all its operations: a comprehensive strategy spelling out its contribution would be welcome.
85. The *World Development Report* concluded that the international agricultural institutions were inadequately prepared to address today's multisectoral agenda and that institutional reforms were needed. IFAD must therefore clearly define its strategic focus, always bearing in mind its unique mandate, shored up by a proven track record of successful project implementation; on a recent visit to an IFAD programme in the Lao People's Democratic Republic he had himself seen that its work could make a difference. The Fund must prove that as a specialized agency it could achieve better results than other organizations, setting standards and identifying innovative approaches which could be replicated. The issues he had touched upon, in addition to the continued implementation of the reform process, were expected to be at the top of the agenda in the forthcoming replenishment negotiations.
86. **Mr JUBARA MOHAMED** (Sudan) said that, in his country, the drought and desertification caused by climatic changes had created fierce competition and growing conflict over natural resources, which had deteriorated through irrational use, leading to increased poverty, unemployment and rural exodus. Areas entirely dependent on rain-fed agriculture were also particularly affected by climate change, lacking as they were in infrastructure and adaptation systems. In order to combat the resulting challenges, a five-year strategic plan had been elaborated with a view to poverty alleviation, balanced development and the sustainable use of natural resources, with particular focus on rain-fed agriculture. In that context, a land use map was being developed in conjunction with the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands. Mechanisms were also being established in the context of implementing the 10-year strategic plan of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and were expected to play an effective role in determining the priorities for donor support. The Sudan had already benefited from such support for its agricultural sector, principally from IFAD, with which cooperation had been ongoing since 1979. He expressed his gratitude for those efforts by IFAD to promote agricultural development in his country, which remained committed to achieving the goals of that partnership in the interests of the rural poor.
87. **Mr SANGARÉ** (Mali) said that IFAD was to be commended for mobilizing over the 30 years of its existence more than 140 billion CFA francs in projects for the benefit of Mali, which had improved the lives of over 250,000 families. The central theme of the present session was well chosen, for both the *World Development Report* of the World Bank and the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stressed the need to combat climate change. Mali had undertaken an authentic green revolution in order to use its enormous water and land resources to become an exporter of farm products, but that undertaking and its efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were being jeopardized by climate change. All countries must join in a consensus on how to tackle climate change, but the poorer countries, which produced only small volumes of greenhouse gases, were entitled to assistance. In view of the gloomy prospects for fossil fuels, Mali was developing a policy for the production of biofuels from a number of plants, but care would have to be taken to avoid the perverse effects which such a policy might have on the rural poor and on grain production.

88. His delegation endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of its country programme; the progress made with the PBAS was welcome but the system could be improved by more rigorous collection of the data used in the calculations. It accepted the audited financial statements for 2006 and the report of the external auditor, as well as the administrative and capital budgets for IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008. IFAD should move to its new headquarters as soon as possible, but his delegation approved the extension for one year in order to utilize the budget for the expenditures intended. It was to be hoped that the Eighth Replenishment would reach the same level as the Seventh. Mali had had to make an enormous effort to increase its contribution from US\$10,000 to US\$126,000, which had been paid in full; it intended to maintain that trend. His delegation noted with appreciation the efforts of Member States to contribute to the strengthening of cooperation among the three Rome-based organizations.
89. **Mr SUTOYO** (Indonesia) said that in Indonesia agriculture employed about 43 per cent of the workforce and had achieved a higher growth rate of 4.3 per cent in 2007. The Government gave constant priority to the sector and had adopted a triple-track strategy to promote growth, employment, and agricultural and rural development and to reduce poverty. Food security received close attention: although food-production targets had been met, imports were still needed to stabilize national stocks; but problems persisted with distribution and accessibility. IFAD was an important partner in rural development, having provided US\$227 million in funding for projects since 1980, benefiting thousands of rural people through self-generating activities.
90. Following the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali in 2007, his Government had committed itself to addressing climate-change issues in its fiscal policies; IFAD was right to be focusing on the problem at the present session and must respond to what was an increasing threat to food security. The Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific, located in Bogor, Indonesia, needed assistance, particularly in its work of adapting farming systems to climate change; IFAD should provide support to such regional centres. Large-scale biofuel production might also pose a powerful threat to food security; that problem too warranted IFAD's attention.
91. **Mr BRAGASON** (Iceland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, wholeheartedly supported the objectives of the Strategic Framework, its targeting, and in particular IFAD's focus on sub-Saharan Africa. The Fund should specifically continue to give gender equality and women's empowerment a central role in its work, and take account of external factors such as climate change and increased demand for biofuels. IFAD had good policies and tools for addressing inequalities and strengthening the capacity of rural women but they needed to be applied more evenly; there should be accountability in order to ensure that the gender dimension did not disappear between project design and implementation. Effective implementation of IFAD's policies depended on its having the necessary resources at its disposal.
92. In the context of United Nations system reform, it was imperative that IFAD should now consolidate the progress it had made in increasing its effectiveness; the Organization should strengthen its performance and enhance the sustainability of its impact at country level. Increased cooperation with other institutions, such as the World Bank and the regional development banks, should enhance its effectiveness and improve its field presence. The Nordic countries supported IFAD's participation in the One United Nations pilot programmes and the initiatives to strengthen the cooperation of the Rome-based United Nations agencies, and welcomed their joint statement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007.

REPORT ON THE SEVENTH REPLENISHMENT OF IFAD'S RESOURCES (agenda item 7) (GC 31/L.3)

93. **Ms MABUTAS** (Assistant President, Finance and Administration Department of IFAD), introducing the report on the status of contributions for the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources (GC 31/L.3), said that the agreed target had been US\$720 million and, while many Member States had contributed to achieving that target, some had further increased their initial pledge. Pledges now amounted to the equivalent of US\$642 million, or 89 per cent of the target. She invited countries that had not yet announced their pledges, or had not yet deposited an instrument of contribution against their pledges, to take the necessary measures. Since the date of the report, further payments had been received, bringing the total amount of payments to US\$321 million, or 50 per cent of the pledged total.
94. **The Governing Council took note of the report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources.**

EIGHTH REPLENISHMENT OF IFAD'S RESOURCES (agenda item 8) (GC 31/L.4)

95. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that, with the Seventh Replenishment concluding on 31 December 2009, the Governing Council now had to focus on IFAD's resource requirements from 2010 onwards to ensure continuity. Document GC 31/L.4 contained a draft resolution on the establishment of the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. The President planned to hold an organizational meeting of the Consultation on 15 February 2008. The Consultation would consist of all Member States from Lists A and B and 15 Member States from List C to be appointed by the List C membership. The Secretariat had been informed that, after consideration within each List C Sub-List, the following Member States had been proposed as List C Members of the Consultation: from Sub-List C1, Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Mali and South Africa; from Sub-List C2, China, India, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Turkey; and from Sub-List C3, Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Panama. The draft resolution also provided for the Consultation to invite such other Member States to participate in the Consultation as might facilitate its deliberations, and in that respect the Secretariat had been informed that List C wished to invite Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh and the Niger as observers to the Consultation's proceedings.
96. **The Governing Council adopted resolution 147/XXXI and approved the List C composition of the Consultation.**

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF IFAD FOR 2006 (agenda item 9) (GC 31/L.5)

97. **Ms MABUTAS** (Assistant President, Finance and Administration Department of IFAD) said that the document before the Council contained the audited financial statements of IFAD as at 31 December 2006; in the opinion of the external auditors, the financial statements gave a "true and fair view of the consolidated financial position of the ... [Fund] ... and the results of its operations and its cash flows ... in accordance with international financial reporting standards". The statements had also been reviewed by the Audit Committee in March 2007 and endorsed by the Executive Board at its ninetieth session in April 2007. The formal approval of the Council was now being sought.
98. The consolidated financial statements for 2007 were currently being finalized and examined by the external auditors. An information paper had been provided to the Council, giving highlights of the 2007 figures for IFAD only. Cash and investments had had a market value of US\$2.7 billion as at 31 December 2007, compared with US\$2.4 billion at the end of the previous year. The loan portfolio had amounted to US\$4.6 billion at year end, compared with US\$4.0 billion in 2006. Loan and grant

disbursements had amounted to US\$436.7 million in 2007, compared with US\$411.6 million in 2006. The financial statements for 2007 would be reviewed by the Audit Committee before submission to the Executive Board for endorsement in April 2008.

99. **The CHAIRPERSON** invited the Council to approve the financial statements showing the financial position of IFAD as at 31 December 2006 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date, as contained in Appendices A to H inclusive of document GC 31/L.5 and the report of the external auditor thereon.

100. **It was so decided.**

ADMINISTRATIVE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS OF IFAD AND ITS OFFICE OF EVALUATION FOR 2008 (agenda item 10) (GC 31/L.6)

101. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that at its ninety-second session the Executive Board had reviewed the proposed budgets for the Fund and its Office of Evaluation and had recommended that they should be put before the Governing Council for its approval.
102. **Ms MABUTAS** (Assistant President, Finance and Administration Department of IFAD), introducing document GC 31/L.6, said that there was a 2 per cent increase in the proposed administrative budget for IFAD in relation to the restated budget for 2007, in line with anticipated Euro-zone inflation in the consumer price index (CPI). Because the goods and services procured by IFAD were very different from the ones included in the CPI, the Fund's real price increases were in fact substantially higher, so that the proposed administrative budget for 2008 represented negative growth in relation to the prices which IFAD must take. Notwithstanding that real reduction, IFAD would increase its programme of work by 10 per cent and virtually triple its expenditure on staff training and development, and the budget would also include the cost of the Eighth Replenishment negotiations. For the past two years IFAD had been carefully managing the combined costs of the administrative budget and the Programme Development Financing Facility (PDFF) relative to the volume of the programme of work. The 2008 proposals represented a further improvement in the overall efficiency indicator or ratio to 16.3 per cent in comparison with the 2006 baseline of 17.1 per cent.
103. The administrative budget proposal was closely linked to the Fund's strategic objectives as managed through the new results-based management system. For the first time it presented the organization of management for development results in IFAD, including the corporate management results underpinning the improvement in the Fund's development effectiveness, as well as indicators of progress in those results. The management performance in terms of impact and development effectiveness had been reported to the Executive Board separately in December 2007 in the Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness. It was hoped that the budget of the 2008 programme of work together with that report would demonstrate an organization whose resources were more effectively and efficiently managed and whose real world impact was also improving.
104. Included for the Governing Council's approval was a new capital budget proposal, designed to empower IFAD to invest in assets for further medium- and long-term improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. The cost of the goods and services procured under the budget would be amortized within future regular budgets, underlining the fact that the strategy was not to take capital costs off budget but to spread them out in the regular budgets during the depreciation period of the assets in question.
105. **Mr LAVIZZARI** (Director, Office of Evaluation of IFAD) said that the 2008 programme of work of the Office of Evaluation covered four main priority areas: conduct of selected corporate-level country programme and project evaluations; specific evaluation work required under the evaluation policy and the terms of

reference of the Evaluation Committee; evaluation outreach and partnerships; and development of evaluation methodology. The specific activities in each priority area were listed in annex XVIII of the document.

106. The Office would complete the joint evaluation being conducted with the Operations Evaluation Department of the African Development Bank on the two organizations' policies and operations in agriculture and rural development in Africa. That joint evaluation would be a major undertaking in 2008. The Office would also prepare the sixth Annual Report on the Results and Impact of IFAD's Operations (ARRI) on the basis of the 2007 evaluations. The Office would also be working in 2008 on a new evaluation manual, which would cover its enhanced processes and methodologies for project and country programme evaluations.
107. The previous year had been an exceptional one because of the initiation of the joint evaluation on Africa and the high level of resources which it required. The budget proposal represented a reduction over 2007, which had been achieved, inter alia, by efficiency gains in the management of the human resources of the division's team-building and renewal process. The proposed budget for the Office's programme of work totalled US\$5.47 million.
108. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that the United States of America wished to place on record its abstention on the administrative budget of the Fund.
109. **Resolution 148/XXXI on the administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008 was adopted.**

SPECIAL EXPENDITURE FOR IFAD'S NEW HEADQUARTERS (agenda item 11) (GC 31/L.7)

110. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that in accordance with Resolution 139/XXVIII, document GC 30/L.7 provided the third annual report on expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters. Owing to delays in renovation work and necessary administrative approvals the document included a request for an extension of the period for the use of the uncommitted amount of the special expenditure by one year.
111. **Resolution 149/XXXI on the special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters was adopted.**

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

112. **Mr BOOLELL** (Mauritius) said that, as the President of IFAD had pointed out at the previous meeting, the price of development was indeed high for poor countries. Mauritius itself was undergoing a very painful restructuring process and was particularly grateful to IFAD for its critical contribution to improving the lives of the rural poor. The Marine and Agricultural Resources Support Programme, which was to start in 2008, identified fishing and smallholder communities in Mauritius and Rodrigues as the most vulnerable groups; the challenge was to provide them with sustainable opportunities to overcome their poverty. The Government was introducing measures to empower the poor, with particular emphasis on women. The 10-year programme of economic reform, aiming at 6 per cent growth, provided inter alia for wider social inclusion. It included a restructuring strategy for the sugar sector with an alternative employment training programme for voluntary retirees.
113. The agricultural sector was being called on to play a more prominent part in employment generation, rural development and environmental protection. The Government was aware of people's vulnerability to economic vicissitudes and climate change and had prepared a strategic option document for the sector setting out measures to boost diversification for enhanced food security, with cross-border initiatives as a permanent option. The aim for the fisheries sector was to integrate fisherfolk into the economic mainstream by creating new opportunities, in aquaculture, for example. Mauritius was widely seen as a development success, but many daunting challenges remained and it still needed assistance from its external

partners, especially IFAD. It requested that the Fund's conditionalities should be revised to make its assistance affordable to Mauritius and other middle-income countries.

114. **Mr MEIRA DA ROSA** (Brazil) said that at a time of great challenges, requiring strategic choices, consideration was increasingly being given to the possibilities of biofuels, which represented a genuine opportunity to improve rural conditions. However, that opportunity had to be combined with a model that promoted rural development and helped to combat hunger in rural areas. Diversification of production was essential. In the context of the priority given by his Government to social inclusion and the reduction of inequality, work was continuing in areas such as agricultural reform and rural credit, and in initiatives like technical assistance and insurance for family agriculture. A biodiesel production programme launched in 2004 likewise placed emphasis on social inclusion. Brazil looked forward to further international debate on agrarian reform along the lines proposed at the 2006 conference in Porto Alegre. Brazil was itself implementing sustainable policies for its rural development, and that had enabled his country to be included among those listed in the UNDP Human Development Index ratings for 2007-2008 as enjoying high human development.
115. Brazil welcomed the outcome of its country programme evaluation in 2007, and acknowledgement that pockets of poverty persisted in middle-income countries; it suggested that IFAD should enjoy an enhanced country presence, and that more be done to promote knowledge transfer and innovative practices in assisting poor countries. As for projects to support the agricultural development of indigenous communities, Brazil encouraged the establishment of a dialogue between IFAD and the relevant authorities in individual countries. It was also important for IFAD to have staffing that reflected in a more balanced way the multilateral character of the institution, with Latin America and the Caribbean being represented at the highest levels.
116. Brazil welcomed the signing in November 2007 of the cooperation agreement between the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and IFAD on rural development, which was another opportunity to generate synergy and cooperation in that area, particularly with regard to bioenergy production.
117. **Mr KIM** (Republic of Korea) recalled that his country, in concert with IFAD, had held, in Seoul in March 2007, a regional workshop on Pro-poor Agricultural Technology Choices, Coalition of the Rural Poor, and Strategic Thrusts in Asia and the Pacific, and intended to implement its own international cooperation programme reflecting the results of that workshop. He announced that his Government had increased its contribution to the Fund by 20 per cent.
118. Grain prices were rising rapidly due to the high oil prices and the increasing demand for biofuels, and the concern for food security was greater than ever as the prices of agricultural raw materials, as well as grain prices, were increasing. The Republic of Korea was a net food importing country, and therefore faced a serious threat to its food security. As a general consequence, countries such as his had increasing expectations of international organizations with expertise, like IFAD. His country had been seeking to develop energy-saving agricultural technology and had been double-checking its irrigation facilities as a way of preparing itself to cope with natural disasters; the Government had also, in 2007, initiated a pilot project for the development of biodiesel from rape seed. It had been putting more effort into cooperation projects with developing countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and believed that the success in rural development of China and India would provide an invaluable lesson for other ASEAN member countries.
119. **Mr KIOME** (Kenya) expressed appreciation for the significant support and funding his country continued to receive from IFAD and its gratitude to IFAD for opening a regional office in Nairobi which would be responsible for programmes in eastern and southern Africa, as well as for establishing a new Fund country office. The

Government of Kenya would support that office as much as possible, as it would go a long way in enhancing collaboration and the supervision of projects, and the improvement of project administration.

120. Kenya was going through a difficult period as a result of post-election disturbances, which had greatly affected its agricultural sector because of the many deaths of farmers, the displacement of farming households, the destruction of crops and food stocks, and interference with infrastructure, transport and labour. The Government estimated that the resulting impact on the agricultural sector amounted to well over US\$100 million. Kenya appreciated the expressions of concern and sympathy it had received, and the continuing support of the international community. Fortunately, the situation was returning to normal, and the country was preparing a programme of mitigation, resettlement and rebuilding. The Kenyan people were indebted to and strongly supported the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, and his team, in the dialogues they had been holding between the Government and the opposition. He assured IFAD of his Government's continued support.
121. **Mr NAKAMURA** (Japan) said that agricultural development could contribute to poverty reduction through increased economic growth and was also closely linked to such important global issues as food, water and climate change. Japan therefore shared IFAD's basic principles of targeting extremely poor rural areas and setting strategic objectives to prioritize capacity-building and improved access to financial services and markets. In 2008, it would be significantly involved in promoting international cooperation through its hosting of the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) and a G-8 summit meeting. At TICAD IV, in which the President of IFAD would participate, policy debate would be centred around the three priorities of boosting economic growth, ensuring human security, and addressing environmental issues and climate change. Given the relevance of its activities to those priorities, IFAD's contribution to the process was eagerly anticipated.
122. Japan aimed to encourage a vibrant Africa and end the vicious cycle of poverty and famine; its African development policies were guided by the principle of fostering agriculture in order to support sustainable economic growth and assist human resources development and community-level capacity-building, based on the concept of human security so highly valued by his Government. In that context, it intended to implement a comprehensive rice production programme, an area in which it had a comparative advantage; provide support for agriculture and fisheries; and assist the improvement of human resources and planning capabilities with a view to enabling product development. In implementing those measures, IFAD would be an important partner and one with which Japan intended to strengthen its cooperation, while also continuing to monitor IFAD activities in its capacity as a major donor.
123. **Mr CENTO** (Italy) said that his country supported IFAD's role in combating rural poverty and outlined current challenges, as reflected in the World Bank's *World Development Report*. Governance reforms, which IFAD could help promote, were essential to an overall improvement in the situation.
124. As attention was shifting to the production of biofuels, it was vital to defend the role of agriculture as the catalyst for poverty reduction. The growing demand for clean energy should encourage debate and action on climate change, higher energy costs and the impact on poorer countries as a matter of priority. Developing countries were the most vulnerable to, but least responsible for, climate change. In that context, the opportunity provided by trade in agricultural goods should fully respect the agro-food sovereignty of developing countries and the need for consistency in order to avoid costly conflicts that were damaging for developing countries. Other opportunities included the clean development mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol.

Socio-economic impacts and adaptation costs of climate change called for new financial tools to complement those already in existence.

125. IFAD should increase resources for environmental protection and promote initiatives designed to increase awareness of the need for urgent action. He had personally witnessed in the Sudan the key role IFAD played in supporting cooperation with local governments, agricultural organizations and farmers in order to boost incomes and promote social transformation, including through microcredit. Enhanced cooperation with the other Rome-based United Nations agencies had additionally achieved excellent results, while results-based budgeting had improved IFAD's efficiency, as had the establishment of a target for the reduction of administrative costs relative to operational costs. The new consultations for the Eighth Replenishment similarly highlighted IFAD's important mission of combating poverty. His Government would maintain the size of its past contributions and had welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the work on the new IFAD headquarters. In conclusion, on behalf of the Italian Government, he was honoured to present the President of the Fund with a commemorative coin in recognition of the outstanding work carried out by IFAD during over 30 years of activity.
126. **Ms VAN ARDENNE-VAN DER HOEVEN** (Netherlands) said that the success of the renewed international attention being given to agriculture ultimately depended on governments making it a priority in their national policies. She noted the great progress IFAD had made in implementing the recommendations that had emerged from its Independent External Evaluation, by reforming its organization and business practice, and looked forward to its increasing involvement in the "Delivering as One" pilots.
127. The Netherlands was also looking forward to the negotiations with other Member States and the policy dialogue with IFAD in connection with the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources. It was important for as many Member States to take part as possible, not only in the replenishment rounds but in all aspects of the Organization's policy-making, and for the burden-sharing of contributing to the Fund to be fair. The present arrangements did not adequately reflect the original expectations at the establishment of the Fund and the ability to share the burden.
128. In terms of the Replenishment, the Netherlands attached priority to IFAD's role in fragile situations and its role as a niche player. As a result of its increased focus and other encouraging reforms IFAD deserved a broader and more balanced funding base as a signal of the widespread international commitment to IFAD as an important and innovative organization and to agricultural development in general.
129. **Mr ROCA CÁCERES** (Peru) said that his country shared IFAD's concerns regarding the need to increase the volume and effectiveness of investments in order to reduce poverty and hunger. Peru was pleased with the level of pledges in the Seventh Replenishment, which was a marked improvement on the amount achieved during the Sixth Replenishment, and his country would be playing an active part in deliberations concerning the Eighth Replenishment.
130. PBAS had enabled countries to receive the resources they needed to meet their needs, but it should be perfected and should address the new realities. Peru supported the work done by the relevant working group and believed that its analysis should be ongoing, so as to address any distortions that might arise in implementation. The inclusion of new indicators based on the rural population, while it was to a large extent consistent with the mandate of the Fund, should not be detrimental to other general indicators such as the internal migration of populations from rural to urban areas. Such displacement might reduce rural population indices and lead to errors; it was not that the percentage of such populations had fallen but that there were now areas around the big cities that had assumed a rural character.

131. IFAD's thematic round tables were particularly important at a time when important subjects like climate change, rising food commodity prices and the scarcity of fuels needed to be discussed. Two IFAD projects in Peru were currently in the implementation stage, and in both cases his country was regarded as an exemplary beneficiary in terms of their impact on the population, their effective management, their suitability and the way in which the available resources had been used. Another project that had recently been approved by the Executive Board would benefit 20,000 families living in poverty or extreme poverty in the north of the country.
132. **Ms MARTÍNEZ MENDUIÑO** (Ecuador), endorsing the statement made on behalf of GRULAC, said that her country joined forces with IFAD in building a world free from poverty in which rural populations had all their needs met and did not need to move from their places of origin. Her Government would be pledging resources to the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources.
133. **Mr KARIM** (Bangladesh) said that 2007 had been a difficult year for his country, which had experienced two major floods and a devastating cyclone that had killed over 3,000 people and destroyed homes, infrastructure and forest. The floods had displaced rural inhabitants and also damaged vast crop areas, thus hampering food production and food security. His Government deeply appreciated the valuable assistance it had received to boost its own efforts to help those affected and was now engaged in rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, with particular focus on farmers and the rural poor.
134. With its low-lying delta, Bangladesh was especially vulnerable to climate change, now globally recognized as a growing reality. International solidarity, including partnership with such agencies as IFAD, was vital to addressing the challenges thus posed to developing countries and assisting adaptation. Predominantly an agricultural economy, Bangladesh had made impressive progress in tackling rural poverty and women's empowerment through its microcredit programme. Greater market access for its products was, however, essential to its achievement of further progress, as was support for reversing the impact of climate change. IFAD's activities for rural and agricultural development were extremely valuable and its support to small farmers was particularly welcome. Efforts to strengthen its capacity were, however, essential to the continuation of its meaningful contribution to facing the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment and climate change.
135. **Mr AL-HAWSHABI** (Yemen) said that his Government attached particular importance to rural development; the quality of rural life in Yemen had improved considerably over the past 30 years, but further progress was still needed. As the cornerstone of the Yemeni economy, agriculture was the key to socio-economic development and an area in which IFAD continued to provide crucial support. IFAD's new country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) for Yemen would, for example, guide the efforts for empowerment of the rural poor by improving incomes and food security. Yemen had also recently signed its nineteenth loan agreement with IFAD for a project to develop rain-fed agriculture and animal resources, in addition to which other projects for various rural and coastal areas were in the pipeline.
136. Climate change represented a major challenge for the agricultural sector and the round tables organized during the current session would provide a good opportunity for shaping a common view on such matters as adaptation, particularly given IFAD's vital support role in that area. Other challenges to be addressed included rising food prices and the threat to food security posed by increased biofuel production. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Yemen's commitment to developing the Fund's resources and fulfilling its pledges to the Seventh and Eighth Replenishments. Indeed, Yemen looked forward to strengthening its relationship with the Fund and with the two other Rome-based United Nations organizations.

137. **Mr MOUSSA** (Niger) said that, over the past 30 years, his country had benefited from IFAD support to the tune of 58 million special drawing rights (SDRs) for projects in four main agriculture-related areas: drought and desertification; integrated projects in the context of its rural development strategy; support for rural financing; and rapid response to food crises. The performance results obtained were such that IFAD had recently increased its allocation to the Niger. Particularly important in that context were the programmes designed to harness water for irrigation purposes in the interests of achieving food security.
138. In 2002, the Niger had begun implementing a poverty reduction strategy focused on the rural sector, which had since been fine-tuned and comprised projects directly financed by IFAD in the sum of over US\$40 million. As the main rural activity, agriculture also played a key role in the country's rural development strategy, which was aimed at the promotion of economic opportunities; risk prevention, food security and sustainable management of natural resources; and institutional capacity-building. The various plans and programmes being implemented within that framework were fully in line with the MDGs, the achievement of which was a challenge that would demand considerable resource mobilization. He therefore appealed for attention to that issue and concluded by announcing his Government's contribution of US\$50,000 to the Seventh and Eighth Replenishments alike.
139. **The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.**

- (iii) Summary record of the third meeting of the thirty-first session held on Thursday, 14 February 2008, at 9.30 a.m.

CHAIRPERSON:

JÖRG FRIEDEN (SWITZERLAND)

	Paragraphs
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	141-161
– Morocco	141-142
– Congo	143-144
– Iran (Islamic Republic of)	145-146
– Guinea	147-148
– Egypt	149-151
– Spain	152-153
– Israel	154-155
– India	156-158
– France	159-161

140. The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

141. **Mr MARGHI** (Morocco) said that IFAD's relationship with its development partners and the common efforts for attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) demonstrated its awareness of the importance of such a partnership, based on dialogue and the exchange of views and expertise. His own country had an excellent relationship with IFAD, which had supported numerous projects and programmes resulting in higher incomes for Morocco's farmers and better management of its natural resources. IFAD had also elaborated a new strategy for Morocco with the aim of strengthening and improving the existing cooperation and support mechanisms for Morocco's development.
142. Ways must be found of mitigating climate change and adapting to it, such as introducing new farming techniques that encouraged sustainable agriculture. Morocco had recently adopted a new strategy that took into account the obstacles created by climate change. It had also created a national rural development fund and established programmes for revitalizing rural development centres. Biofuels, in addition to opening up new export markets, appeared to offer promising mitigation opportunities, and such measures as aid and price protection would help farmers in developing countries become effective biofuel producers. It was further important to adopt agricultural policies aimed at achieving food security and developing the agricultural sector through structural and institutional support, including programmes for the management of risks, pests and climate fluctuations, incentives for competition and innovation among farmers, and scientific research aimed at improving productivity. The recommendations of the ongoing round tables would undoubtedly assist project planning through constructive cooperation with IFAD and its development partners. He looked forward to IFAD's continuing assistance in the Moroccan efforts for development and achievement of the MDGs.
143. **Mr MABOUNDOU** (Congo) said that the thirtieth anniversary session provided an opportunity to take stock of IFAD's work and reflect on the challenges to come: it could mark a new departure and trigger a new dynamic which would enable the Fund to perform its functions better and speed up the attainment of the MDGs in the developing countries, most of whose peoples waged a daily struggle to survive. IFAD could help to break the vicious circle of poverty and the paradox of the coexistence of opulence and destitution. The Congo itself enjoyed excellent relations with IFAD: since 2003 two projects had been financed there and the Government was eagerly awaiting the conclusion of the loan agreement for a third, in the north of the country.
144. The working group on the performance-based allocation system (PBAS) should continue its work and seek to ensure that the PBAS did not work to the disadvantage of peoples plagued by food problems. The outcome of the Seventh Replenishment was indeed welcome, but the low rate of actual payment of pledged contributions was worrying; the countries which had not fulfilled their financial obligations should do so as quickly as possible, so as to enable the Fund to pursue its noble task of reducing rural poverty; the Congo urged it to continue that work with undiminished enthusiasm.
145. **Mr SHAKHS TAVAKOLIAN** (Iran [Islamic Republic of]) said that climate change was likely to exacerbate the daily reality of extreme poverty for more than 850 million people. Although the international community appeared to have adopted a welcome change of attitude towards MDG 1, the challenges posed by climate change, water scarcity, globalization and other factors remained acute, especially for developing and low-income countries. As a leading country of south-west Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran was continuing its support for and

cooperation with IFAD: it had also been involved in many regional activities to attain the objectives of mitigating poverty and hunger.

146. At the national level, great strides had been made in reforming the structure of the rural sector and promoting sustainable food production: farm output, for example, had increased from just 25.6 million tons in 1977 to over 100 million tons in 2007. New forestry policies had also been introduced, with the main goals of conserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems and boosting reforestation. With more than 12,000 plant varieties and animal species the Islamic Republic of Iran was a major source of crop origination and diversity and was seeking to give full effect to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, not least as a tool for poverty reduction. It also had programmes on reduction of the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. It was happy to share information about its achievements in agriculture with all the Member States of IFAD and looked forward to a continued international effort to mitigate poverty and hunger and achieve food security.
147. **Mr CAMARA** (Guinea) said that his Government reiterated its commitment to strengthen its cooperation with IFAD in order to meet the Guinean people's food needs and reduce poverty. IFAD had supported 10 projects in Guinea, in a total amount of US\$142 million, which had achieved significant results. In line with the national poverty reduction strategy, the Government was now focusing on an integrated rural development plan for attainment of the MDGs, including a new generation of structural programmes designed to make better use of the country's agricultural and ecological potential. It wished to tackle the threats posed to the environment by prevailing farming practices and would need a solid commitment from its partners to that end. The rural poor bore little responsibility for climate change but they were more exposed to its harmful effects. The assistance rendered to them must include the means of changing bad practices, especially in sub-Saharan Africa; assistance to small farmers with the introduction of good conservation practices would do much to combat global warming and environmental degradation.
148. His Government appreciated the Fund's periodic evaluation of its portfolio, for the resulting recommendations made it possible to harmonize its approach with the country's national agricultural development policy, which was based on a participatory approach and was designed inter alia to reduce the precariousness of life in rural communities by focusing on the potentially most productive sectors; IFAD had done much to help the Government to take up that challenge and was to be commended on the results obtained.
149. **Mr OTHMAN ABAZA** (Egypt) said that his country would actively participate in the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. The challenges of climate change, wider biofuel use and high food prices boded ill for attainment of the MDGs. Egypt therefore supported the initiative to hold an international conference in 2008 to examine climate change and the impact of biofuel use on food security, and commended the topics chosen for the round tables as conducive to permanent solutions that would help the rural poor adapt to climate change.
150. In a context of persistent widespread poverty, the Fund was now pursuing a welcome new strategy that gave added value by devoting explicit attention to innovation. On the subject of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, further efforts were needed in the areas of technical support, water resources management and well digging. Given its expertise in those areas, Egypt was fully prepared to lend support to the Fund in any future role it might play in that context. With reference to the PBAS, it should be linked to the Fund's basic objectives, without obstructing the ability of states to receive support or affecting the overall allocation of resources to Africa.
151. Egypt's agricultural development strategy was aimed at, inter alia, promoting agricultural exports, providing job opportunities and improving rural living

standards. Egypt's rural development had been improved by IFAD-supported projects, and it was currently seeking IFAD funding for an irrigation project with a view to the reclamation of desert land. Given its foreign policy focus on multilateral cooperation, the exchange of expertise and the establishment of joint projects in Africa and the Arab region, it contributed, inter alia, to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and would be hosting three African summit meetings in 2008, one of which would address the problem of water and sanitation in Africa. He affirmed Egypt's full cooperation in the joint efforts to achieve the MDGs.

152. **Mr CALVO MERINO** (Spain) said that only effective multilateralism could cope with the big challenges facing the international community. Spain was therefore increasing sharply its contributions to the organizations of the United Nations system: its current level of official development assistance (ODA) was 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), and the aim was to attain the symbolic 0.7 per cent by 2012; in accordance with the MDGs, its chief ODA priority was to eradicate poverty, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable groups. As an organization focused on helping the poorest of the poor – the rural poor – IFAD had Spain's full support, manifested in its contribution to the Seventh Replenishment and in additional contributions. Poverty must be fought with innovative measures, such as utilizing the development potential of migrants' remittances. And it must be fought wherever it existed: in the least developed countries to be sure, but also in middle-income countries, for example in Latin America and North Africa, where many of the poorest people lived and which should continue to receive support.
153. As IFAD celebrated its thirtieth anniversary his Government congratulated it on its achievements. The Fund had changed markedly over 30 years and must continue to change. It was in fact taking significant steps to improve its efficiency, as demonstrated by its commendable Action Plan, which must now be put into practice in projects on the ground. At the start of the Eighth Replenishment his delegation urged all Member States to make an additional effort to achieve the MDGs and make poverty a thing of the past.
154. **Ms LIVNAT ROSINER** (Israel) said that her country's agro-technology industry, based on applied and adaptable research and development, technology transfer and good farm management, not only provided technological solutions in Israel but also disseminated its products worldwide. Israel believed that those achievements could be replicated by many IFAD Member States. Israel had doubled its work in the field of financing for development, in the form of partnerships with the United Nations system, bilateral programmes and ODA. It was supporting NEPAD and believed that cooperation in partnership, such as South-South cooperation and partnerships with developing States, was an important strategy for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. In December 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations had adopted a resolution on "Agricultural technology for development" (A/RES/62/190), originally introduced by Israel, supporting the use of local know-how and technology and the promotion of research and technology to increase agricultural productivity and food security in poor rural areas.
155. Israel called for further, sustainable development of improved crop varieties appropriate for various regions, and for them to be made available and affordable to smallholder farmers. Continued support should be given to international agricultural research systems, and Member States and relevant organizations should allocate resources to support the development of efficient, productive and environmentally sound technologies for sustainable agriculture in developing countries. There should be an increased commitment to promoting the development and transfer of appropriate technologies and knowledge and creating new sources of income for the rural poor. There should be a vision and strategic focus in respect of sustainable development, and emphasis on training and development and on the need for all United Nations agencies to learn the language of the private sector.

156. **Mr DOGRA** (India) said IFAD should continue to expand its involvement in both the farm and the non-farm sectors of the rural economy, with the creation of sustainable livelihoods as its primary goal. Given the dependence of the rural poor on natural resources, IFAD projects should include components that strengthened and nurtured common land and irrigation resources, and might indeed look at the farmers' role as providers of environmental services, especially in the context of agriculture's central place in the debate on climate change. One reason for persistent rural poverty was the failure to ensure small farmers adequate remuneration for their produce. IFAD should promote strategies that enabled smallholder farmers to participate in value chains and acquire the ability to secure good prices. Following on from its catalytic role in the development of microcredit the Fund should now see how the availability of credit could be leveraged for improving market access.
157. In order to meet new challenges, innovative responses would have to be devised. But in seeking new directions, caution should be exercised. For example, the diversion of food crops to make way for biofuels would have a definite impact on other food prices; moreover, there was some doubt as to whether biofuels were as climate-friendly as was claimed. Some space in the debate should be set aside for the wisdom and views of the farmers regarding climate change, biofuels, food prices and their own needs.
158. India's excellent working relationship with IFAD had led to many good and innovative projects. India was determined that its now satisfactory economic growth pattern be fully reflected in its rural economy, and looked forward to a continuing association with IFAD in those new directions. It looked forward to the consultations on the Eighth Replenishment as an opportunity for a detailed dialogue between Member States and IFAD's management with a view to the further strengthening of IFAD's role in agricultural development and poverty alleviation.
159. **Mr CŒURÉ** (France) said that the past year had seen the culmination of an exemplary reform process within the organization, in terms of both its structure and its functioning. With reference to the latter, France welcomed the adoption of a debt sustainability framework and the incorporation of the concept of rural population in the PBAS, and the fact that it had meant that sub-Saharan Africa had been able to increase its share of IFAD funding in 2007. France strongly encouraged IFAD to continue supporting agricultural production in Africa.
160. IFAD reform also called for enhanced partnership arrangements. At a time when agriculture was increasingly being seen as central to poverty reduction, IFAD had a key role to play by virtue of its long experience with the rural poor and its ability to be innovative. The Fund should strengthen its partnerships with other donors, primarily the African Development Bank, and with emerging donors and the private sector in the context of South-South cooperation. France attached particular importance to the need for the three Rome-based United Nations agencies to join forces in pursuit of the One United Nations initiative; they could move towards a pooling of resources, especially human resources, in pursuit of greater efficiency. It was to be hoped that a joint document on the directions that future purpose-driven operational partnerships could take at the global, regional and country level might form the basis of a new international architecture for agricultural and rural development to address the challenge of global food security up to the year 2050.
161. France considered that the cooperation agreement signed with Agence Française de Développement and the one being drawn up with the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement were good examples of the synergy that existed between IFAD and France. The cooperation between the two went further than the cofinancing of projects; it was also intellectual and research-based. France welcomed the attention being given in IFAD to climate change and to the question of migrants' remittances.
162. **The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.**

- (iv) Summary record of the fourth meeting of the thirty-first session held on Thursday, 14 February 2008, at 3 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON:

JÖRG FRIEDEN (SWITZERLAND)

	Paragraphs
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	164-170
– The Gambia	164-165
– United Republic of Tanzania	166-168
– Mongolia	169-170
Synthesis of the deliberations at the second Farmers' Forum	171
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	172-180
– Haiti	172-173
– Austria	174-175
– Argentina	176-177
– United States	178-180
Progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system (agenda item 12)	181-185
Report on lessons learned by the International Land Coalition (agenda item 13)	186-187
Progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (agenda item 14)	188-191
Emoluments of the President (agenda item 15)	192-193
Other business (agenda item 16)	194-216
Process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD	194-216
General statements (agenda item 6, continued)	217-237
– Liberia	217-218
– Tunisia	219-221
– Kiribati	222-223
– Timor-Leste	224-225
– Maldives	226-227
– Uganda	228-229
– Burundi	230-231
– Cape Verde	232-233
– Benin	234-235
– Nepal	236-237
Closure of the session	238-239

163. The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

164. **Mr SOWE** (The Gambia) said that his Government had adopted in 1998 a long-term strategy for sustainable development entitled "The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020", while its medium-term plans were outlined in its second poverty reduction strategy paper, for the period 2008-2012. That strategic approach was consistent with IFAD's own poverty reduction strategy. IFAD had funded seven agricultural projects in The Gambia since 1982, and the Rural Finance Project was to be launched shortly. The IFAD-funded projects were becoming more demand-driven, with increasing participation by the rural poor and self-help groups, and providing for innovative pilot operations with a view to scaling-up. There had been a strong emphasis on microfinance projects to support agricultural development; one outcome had been the establishment of a microfinance department in the Central Bank of The Gambia to oversee policy and regulatory matters.
165. IFAD also provided leadership and attracted cofinancing, forming partnerships with key stakeholders. For the future, new projects featured innovative approaches which could be scaled up to support more effective activities. Diversification of farm and off-farm income-generating activities could reduce poverty caused by falling commodity prices, and by strengthening institutions and communities and developing services IFAD-funded projects could reinforce the efforts of the poor to overcome their poverty. The Government and people of The Gambia were deeply grateful to the Fund for its response to their priority needs.
166. **Mr NGIRWA** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Minister for Agriculture, said that his Government was grateful to IFAD for its efforts to reduce rural poverty, which supported the Government's own strategies in that area, guided by the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the national strategy for growth and poverty reduction, and helped it to attain its objectives in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). IFAD was also one of the chief sources of funding for the agriculture sector development programme, and its country programme management approach was particularly valuable.
167. A number of lessons had been learned from the 13 IFAD-funded projects in the United Republic of Tanzania, notably that participation by the beneficiaries and mainstreaming of project management in governmental structures had enhanced sustainability and that access to financial services had been a key to rural development. Despite encouraging economic progress, poverty persisted, and more emphasis was therefore being given to improving the economic and policy environment for sustainable growth and poverty reduction, introducing integrated strategies and a sector-wide approach.
168. His delegation found the proposed budgets for 2008 satisfactory and welcomed the decision to devote more resources to programme development and implementation. The resident Liaison Office had improved his Government's working relationship with IFAD through an enhanced dialogue on important issues and the current discussion of the joint assistance strategy. The Government looked forward to the signature of an agreement on a fully fledged IFAD presence in the United Republic of Tanzania.
169. **Mr NANTSAG** (Mongolia) said that Mongolia's food and agriculture sector required new management approaches based on scientific and technological advances. It was affected by three main negative factors which nevertheless offered opportunities: structural adjustment during the transition from a planned to a market economy; climate change; and globalization. The sector had been fully privatized during the transition period, and 70 to 80 per cent of farming was based on household-sized units, a factor which had forced total output down, and 80 per

cent was concentrated in livestock-raising, chiefly pastoral, creating pressures on land use. Global warming was increasing the rate of desertification, and globalization was causing sharp increases in fuel and grain prices.

170. Given that situation, there was an increasingly important role for IFAD, which was requested to step up its support for Mongolia. Over the past four years it had helped with many poverty reduction measures, with good results. For example, the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme implemented between 1996 and 2003 had reached 7,800 families: it had been welcomed by the rural population and had taught useful lessons for the future; the second stage of the programme had started in July 2003. As the executing agency of the IFAD programme, Mongolia's Ministry of Food and Agriculture expressed its full support for the performance-based allocation system (PBAS).

SYNTHESIS OF THE DELIBERATIONS AT THE SECOND FARMERS' FORUM

171. At the invitation of the Chairperson, **Ms Estrella PENUNIA BANZUELA**, Secretary General of the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development and member of the Farmers' Forum Steering Committee, summarized the deliberations at the Farmers' Forum, which was held in Rome on 11 and 12 February 2008 in conjunction with the thirty-first session of the Governing Council. The full text of her statement is reproduced in chapter 4.

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

172. **Mr GUÉ** (Haiti) said that enabling the rural poor to free themselves from poverty was part and parcel of his own Government's action programme, under its national strategy for growth and poverty reduction. In Haiti, 76 per cent of the population lived on less than US\$2 a day, and 53 per cent of their income went on meeting basic food needs. Rural dwellers were the most vulnerable. For the period 2008-2009, the Government had targeted a number of priority areas: modernizing agriculture through renovating the rural infrastructure and providing services in terms of training, research, technology, credit, inputs, and equipment; relaunching food production; modernizing transport; improving the supply of electricity and telecommunications; and promoting greater social equity through education and health.
173. IFAD investments would go into modernizing the State and into wealth creation through private investment and putting the emphasis on small farmers. Such investments would help in the development of a system of finance that was accessible to rural people and the development of rural services with the emphasis on youth training. Haiti was grateful for its continued cooperation with IFAD, which was aimed at improving the living conditions of the majority of its population.
174. **Mr OEHLER** (Austria) said that IFAD must strive to make the best use of its thirty years of expertise in rural poverty reduction by disseminating it to its clients and development partners, and prove its comparative advantage by developing and implementing innovative projects and programmes in cooperation with national partners. IFAD had to make optimal use of its limited funds, and that could best be achieved by making targeted interventions in poor rural areas where other financial resources were not available, with IFAD taking a more visible and constructive part in the national poverty reduction strategy processes of recipient countries. IFAD projects should be models that could be modified, adapted and replicated by local governments and stakeholders without outside support. IFAD aid should ideally lead to self-sustained locally driven development.
175. An increased country presence by the Fund should facilitate the assessment of its development and poverty reduction outputs and effectiveness. Austria encouraged the Fund to cooperate closely with other development financing institutions, notably the African Development Bank, and to consider closer cooperation with such

development instruments as the European Development Fund. With regard to the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources, there seemed to be broad consensus among Members that IFAD, with its exclusive focus on agricultural development, filled an important niche among development finance institutions which should be maintained and adequately funded, but the efficiency and effectiveness of its work regarding poverty alleviation and food security would have an impact on the Eighth Replenishment, with donors wishing to know whether and to what extent the objectives set by the last consultation had been met and what lessons had been learned. Climate change and rising food prices would also probably have an impact on the negotiations. With regard to allocation of IFAD's scarce resources, Austria supported in principle the PBAS as it rewarded performance and good governance and also gave due regard to the gender issue.

176. **Ms SQUEFF** (Argentina), recalled Argentina's fruitful cooperation with IFAD, referring in particular to the Commission on Family Farming of the South Common Market (MERCOSUR). Highlighting certain points made by the Governor for Mexico on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), she agreed that the Latin American and the Caribbean region, where rural poverty persisted, required more attention on the part of IFAD. IFAD and other similar organizations concerned with human and social development should also direct their attention to the urban poverty brought about by rural poverty, stemming from the continuing flows of migrants from rural to urban areas in search of a better life. Specific programmes to assist in their return home should be developed.
177. She stressed the continuing relevance of IFAD's role in poverty reduction, the improvement of living conditions and access to basic services. Technical and scientific experts from the Latin American and the Caribbean region must play an active part in the design of programmes and projects because they possessed the necessary know-how and also an understanding of the reality on the ground. Argentina held out high hopes for the outcome of the Farmers' Forum. With regard to the future of the Fund, there was a need to develop new working methods, approaches and tools, building on past achievements, in order to be able to deploy effective and efficient responses to the fresh challenges posed by a rapidly changing world.
178. **Ms MORRIS** (United States) said that, given IFAD's unique focus on the rural poor, it had an important role to play in achieving MDG 1 – halving the proportion of people suffering from extreme poverty and hunger. Through its participatory approach and the replication and scaling up of projects designed to boost agricultural productivity and raise incomes, IFAD had in fact improved the lives of over 300 million people. Other notable accomplishments included introduction of the PBAS and rural sector assessment, in addition to the new results-oriented culture, the Debt Sustainability Framework, transparency measures, stronger measures against fraud and corruption and other new policies and strategies for greater effectiveness.
179. IFAD's timely implementation of its Action Plan was commendable. It was necessary, however, to nurture reforms to maturity, strengthen the results-oriented culture, advance human resources reform, enhance project sustainability, and strengthen IFAD's role as an innovator with a view to the replication and scaling up of its projects by national and international partners. Given the risks posed to the rural poor by climate change, IFAD's role in helping farmers to adapt would also be an appropriate subject for discussion during the Eighth Replenishment consultations.
180. Looking ahead, bold reform in new areas beyond the Action Plan should be pursued. IFAD's approach and country focus should be aimed at supporting the world's poorest agriculture-based countries while also adapting to meet current challenges and diverse needs, such as those faced in middle-income countries, and its budget should be restructured in order to maximize resources channelled into

operations and include more transparently in the administrative budget, the cost of project identification, development and supervision. She looked forward to working towards the continued strengthening of IFAD during the Eighth Replenishment.

PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE-BASED ALLOCATION SYSTEM (agenda item 12) (GC 31/L.8)

181. **Mr CLEAVER** (Assistant President, Programme Management Department of IFAD) said that, during 2008, the PBAS continued to be applied to all loans and country-specific grants presented to the Executive Board for approval. In accordance with the guidelines, country scores had been updated with data on IFAD's portfolio and rural sector performance. Given IFAD's focus on rural poverty, the concept of rural population had been used instead of full population in calculating those scores, in line with the decision adopted by the Executive Board in April 2006. That concept was, however, but one element in determining the country scores for 2008 and the indicative country scores for 2009. The data series had been posted on the IFAD website, pursuant to the procedures agreed for disclosure of PBAS information.
182. **Mr CHEN CHARPENTIER** (Mexico), speaking in his capacity as the temporary President of GRULAC, said that the PBAS, which GRULAC supported, still needed further adjustments and improvements with a view to enabling access to credit by all countries. To that end, the results thus far obtained should be re-evaluated before any changes in addition to those already made were introduced. As reflected in the decision adopted by the Executive Board at its eighty-seventh session, the work of the PBAS working group was not yet conclusive. He therefore welcomed its continuation; inter alia, the concept of rural population had not been perfectly defined and did not yet reflect changes in agriculture and realities in the field. Nor had the concept of PBAS implementation been adequately developed. Participation in the PBAS working group should be open to all Executive Board members and input should be made with regard to operations, as well as by regional divisions, country programme managers and the Office of Evaluation. Keen as it was to see early results, GRULAC would participate actively and constructively in the PBAS working group.
183. **Mr MEIRA DA ROSA** (Brazil) expressed his Government's support for the GRULAC position. It was commonly understood that the PBAS system still needed more fine-tuning to ensure its transparency, reliability and comparability in assessing the new rural dynamics, particularly in Latin America. All interested parties should therefore be more deeply involved in the great deal of work that remained to be done in the interest of delivering an inclusive and effective tool. The Brazilian Government would join in any collective effort to enhance the PBAS, particularly within the framework of the Eighth Replenishment.
184. **Ms SQUEFF** (Argentina) similarly expressed her Government's support for the GRULAC position. She urged IFAD to supply all of the logistical tools needed to ensure full participation in the forthcoming meeting of the PBAS working group. She also stressed the importance of participation by members of field missions, whose knowledge and experience on the ground was of the utmost relevance.
185. **The Governing Council took note of the progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system, together with comments from the floor.**

REPORT ON LESSONS LEARNED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION (agenda item 13) (GC 31/L.9)

186. **The CHAIRPERSON** recalled that the International Land Coalition, hosted by IFAD, was an alliance of civil society and intergovernmental organizations. The report summarized the progress made by the Coalition in its work to improve the secure

access by rural poor households to natural resources, especially land, in the countries and regions where it was currently active.

187. **The Governing Council took note of the report on lessons learned by the International Land Coalition.**

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE GLOBAL MECHANISM OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (agenda item 14) (GC 31/L.10)

188. **Mr MERSMANN** (Managing Director of the Global Mechanism), introducing the progress report contained in document GC 31/L.10, said that it contained only a brief overview of achievements in 2007 and referred delegates to the comprehensive report submitted to the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held in September 2007, which had been made available to the Members of IFAD. The 10-year strategy endorsed at that session marked a fresh start after profound analysis of past problems. Where the Global Mechanism was concerned, the strategy addressed institutional effectiveness, and collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat international financial institutions, bilateral donor agencies and Global Environment Facility (GEF) and it formed the foundation for future collaboration with IFAD.
189. The Global Mechanism's clear mandate to scale up financing for sustainable land management had led to enhanced cooperation with IFAD. The excellent cooperation between the Fund's GEF unit, the Programme Management Department and the Global Mechanism was a centrepiece of joint efforts to support the developing countries. The support of the Fund's administrative units, in particular the Finance and Administration Department, was much appreciated in that connection. That cooperation went far beyond a hosting arrangement. The joint commitment to increase finance for sustainable land management was beneficial for both organizations; indeed, as a provider of advisory services on public finance and private-sector investment the Global Mechanism recognized that close and open collaboration was essential to their achievements, and it supported the Fund's endeavour to integrate its portfolio into national development programmes, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the efforts of the United Nations system to deliver as one.
190. The Global Mechanism's staff expressed its appreciation to IFAD colleagues, particularly senior managers, for their continued support and interaction. At the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties the Vice-President of IFAD had convincingly conveyed the Fund's commitment to strengthen still further its partnership with the Global Mechanism, whose staff looked forward to working with IFAD in 2008 and beyond.
191. **The Governing Council took note of the progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.**
- EMOLUMENTS OF THE PRESIDENT (agenda item 15) (GC 31/L.11)
192. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that the incumbent President's second term of office would end on 31 March 2009. The overall emoluments and conditions of employment of the President of IFAD needed to be set at the thirty-second session of the Governing Council in February 2009. In document GC 31/L.11 the Executive Board recommended to the Governing Council that it should re-establish an Emoluments Committee consisting of nine governors to review the matter and submit its findings to the thirty-second session. The following nominations had been received: for List A, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States; for List B,

Indonesia and the Islamic Republic of Iran; and for List C, Cameroon, Mexico and Pakistan.

193. **Resolution 150/XXXI on the re-establishment of a committee to review the emoluments of the President of IFAD was adopted.**

OTHER BUSINESS (agenda item 16)

Process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD

194. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that, as had been requested and agreed when the agenda had been adopted, the Council would discuss under the present item the process leading up to the election in 2009 of the President of IFAD. As that request had been made by the Convenors of List A, he would give them the floor to open the discussion.
195. **Ms NASSKAU** (United Kingdom) said that the previous item had drawn the Council's attention to the fact that in a year's time it would be called upon to appoint a new President of IFAD. The last time an election had produced a new President had been in 2001, and, according to Executive Board documents, the Bureau of the Governing Council had been proactive in the process leading up to it. It had been generally agreed during the current session that IFAD was an important institution with a key mandate. The eight years ahead would be crucial as they would lead up to the year 2015, the target date for reaching the MDGs. The importance of leadership and vision had been noted, including in relation to the Action Plan, as had the need for openness and transparency. Therefore, List A had decided to raise the subject under the present agenda item, as the current session of the Council was the last before the nomination and election process began.
196. It had seemed to List A that the deliberations that had taken place in 2000-2001 and the efforts that had been made to review procedures had been helpful. List A had also appreciated the role played at the time by the Bureau of the Governing Council. The Council was a supreme decision-making body open to the entire membership, chaired by the membership and elected by the membership. In order, therefore, to benefit from past experience, List A wished to ask the newly appointed Bureau to take into account past practice as the Council embarked upon a year in which an important decision-making process would take place.
197. **Mr MEIRA DA ROSA** (Brazil) said he understood that List A was suggesting that the Bureau should take on a very important task. He sought clarification from the previous speaker as to the scope of the work that was to be undertaken by the Bureau on so crucial a matter.
198. **Ms NASSKAU** (United Kingdom) said that at the present stage List A had no intention to stipulate anything in terms of a mandate, and was merely asking the Bureau of the Governing Council to consider whether there was any scope for drawing on past experience, and then to refer back to the Council if it so decided.
199. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that in the absence of both the incumbent Chairperson and his fellow Vice-Chairperson he was not in a position to take a decision, or even to say whether the Bureau was ready to assume the role in question. If it was acceptable to the Council, he would consult his two colleagues and refer back to the next consultation meeting in April 2008.
200. **Ms MARTÍNEZ MENDUIÑO** (Ecuador) said that the Bureau, as the supreme body of the Governing Council, with representation from all Lists, was well placed to assume the suggested role, which was an important one.
201. **Mr MEIRA DA ROSA** (Brazil) asked whether any indication could be given of how the proposed procedure would evolve in terms of consulting the membership and what kind of feedback would be expected from the membership. The question was how the Bureau, which had the trust and confidence of all, intended to work on such an important matter and to interrelate with the membership regarding it.

202. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that he was certainly not in a position to speak for the Bureau at the present moment, but he had understood that a wish had been expressed, in very general terms, that it play a constructive, consultative role in the process. He would report that very general wish to the Chairperson, who would have to take a decision. The Bureau would endeavour to respond in a constructive way, taking into account any viewpoints expressed by the Member States through their respective representatives on the Bureau.
203. **Mr CHEN CHARPENTIER** (Mexico), emphasizing the trust which his delegation placed in the consultations and input from the Bureau, said that the mechanism being proposed was not clear. It was of great importance that all Members had access to information and were able to provide input.
204. **Ms SQUEFF** (Argentina) agreed, and said that she shared the concerns expressed by the representative of Brazil. The Bureau enjoyed the complete goodwill of the membership, but it was now being asked to perform a task that was different from that for which it was elected. Her delegation was not sure where the proposal would lead.
205. **Ms MORRIS** (United States) said that the request was not for any expansion of the Bureau's role. It would have the same role as had been prescribed in the last selection process. What would be helpful would be for it to take the information compiled and developed by the previous Bureau into account as it did its work. That was all it was being asked to do.
206. **Mr VAN BANNING** (Netherlands) said that the Bureau had played an active role in the election process of 2000-2001, beginning with its involvement in August-September 2000; thereafter there had been active discussion, notably in the Executive Board, until the election in February 2001. It would be very useful for all Members if the Bureau or the Secretary of IFAD were to circulate all the documents pertaining to those discussions and were to derive from that process a precedent upon which the Bureau could rely in the preparations for the forthcoming election. The election would take place in the Governing Council, and the role of the Executive Board and the Bureau could only be one of facilitating the election process. The decision, a political one, would be taken by the Governing Council alone. The reason why the representative of the United Kingdom had raised the issue on behalf of List A stemmed from a wish to open up the process, and from a desire to have as many qualified candidates as possible for a very important post, especially in light of the fact that the Governing Council of 2009 would have only two days in which to make its final selection. The preparatory process should be open, transparent and credible, and the Bureau had shown eight years previously that it had been able to play a very useful role in that respect.
207. **Mr OLANIRAN** (Nigeria) said that the proposal should be given consideration, but the final decision as to what should be done with the information gathered rested with the Bureau.
208. **Mr AL-SHALHOOB** (Saudi Arabia) asked if he was correct in understanding that the Bureau's role would be that of a facilitator of the election, and that it would not be examining any new resolutions or decisions related to the election process.
209. **The CHAIRPERSON** said he was not in a position at the present stage to confirm the Bureau's facilitating role.
210. **Mr VAN BANNING** (Netherlands) agreed with the understanding expressed by the representative of Saudi Arabia. The Bureau's role would not be to take any decisions, but only to facilitate the process. That was why it was being proposed that the documents from the 2000-2001 election process be circulated among the membership so that all Members could take note of them. On the basis of that precedent, the Bureau could undertake its facilitating role without taking any decisions about the process.

211. **Mr CIOCCA** (Secretary of IFAD) explained that the documents concerned could certainly be circulated, with the exception of two which had been restricted by the then Executive Board. Permission to lift that restriction would have to be sought from the Board before those two documents could be circulated.
212. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that, in the absence of consensus about giving any indications or making any suggestions to the Board, he would take note of the comments that had been made and report to the Chairperson, who would then decide what to do, and whether to refer back to the membership.
213. **Mr PARASURAM** (India) sought clarification as to when and how the Chair might report back to the membership.
214. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that the only channels were the three members of the Bureau, the Convenors and the Executive Board.
215. **Mr PARASURAM** (India), while declaring that he had the fullest confidence in the Bureau and the Convenors, said he failed to understand what kind of resolution the Council was going to adopt at the present session to empower the Bureau in respect of the process leading up to the election of the President.
216. **The CHAIRPERSON** said that no consensus had been reached on a possible role for the Bureau of the Governing Council in that regard, and that he as Vice-Chairperson would consult the Chairperson and the other Vice-Chairperson on the matter.

GENERAL STATEMENTS (agenda item 6, continued)

217. **Mr TOE** (Liberia) said that the President of Liberia conveyed her congratulations to IFAD on its thirtieth anniversary, which fell at a time when its mission had never been more pressing. Her Government was committed to restoring normal relations with IFAD and settling Liberia's arrears of contributions, which had been caused by political instability and civil conflict: gross domestic product (GDP), for example, had fallen by 90 per cent between 1987 and 1995, and the current national budget was still smaller than it had been 50 years earlier. However, Liberia was on course to be relieved of its heavy burden of debt and had put in place a comprehensive reconstruction and development framework to underpin the three-year poverty reduction strategy due to begin implementation in April 2008. The country's many economic and social problems would make the implementation of that strategy difficult, but the Government was determined to face up to the challenges. The strategy designated agriculture as the leading sector and set a target of increasing farm output by six per cent by the end of 2010.
218. IFAD and other development partners could assist Liberia in its time of need by providing the necessary resources to enable it to achieve its strategic objectives: the revitalization of the agricultural sector was in fact vital to overall economic recovery and of particular importance for the 80 per cent of the population who lacked food security and the 50 per cent who languished in extreme poverty. IFAD had contributed to the recent comprehensive assessment of the sector and was now urged to identify immediate assistance for Liberia pending settlement of its financial obligations: the country would revert to conflict in a few years if conflict-sensitive growth and development were delayed. His Government would make a belated contribution to the Seventh Replenishment, and to the Eighth Replenishment in due course.
219. **Mr BEN REJEB** (Tunisia) said that his country had been able to implement important projects for integrated rural development and the preservation of natural resources as a result of its fruitful cooperation with IFAD. Huge challenges lay ahead for developing countries, in particular on account of today's global economic conditions and the impact of climate change, which had implications for the MDGs. IFAD was a vital partner in that regard. He therefore urged efforts to achieve the aims of the Eighth Replenishment and also called for a review of project

- mechanisms and preparation, as well as of loan conditions for the financing of development projects for vulnerable groups in middle-income countries.
220. Through its comprehensive development policy, Tunisia had achieved steady growth in terms of its GDP and per capita income levels, poverty had been reduced and the middle class had expanded. The agricultural sector had also benefited from pioneering measures and structural reforms under Tunisia's development plans. Output had more than doubled over the past 20 years and the country's self-sufficiency in staple items had increased. Energy consumption had been rationalized and the use of alternative and renewable sources of energy was encouraged.
221. He looked forward to the outcome of the round-table discussions in the hope that IFAD would translate them into practical strategies for building the capacities of small farmers, improving their conditions and enabling their adaptation to climate change and new market demands. With its knowledge and expertise, IFAD was certainly in a position to find new ways of championing the poor and helping them to overcome the challenges in their way.
222. **Mr NAKARA** (Kiribati) said that his country valued its membership of IFAD and was committed to making its own small contribution towards the implementation of IFAD's mandate and the delivery of its activities. Kiribati would consequently be making a voluntary contribution to the Seventh Replenishment. His Government was attempting to cope with the reality of poverty in Kiribati, which was further exacerbated by the adverse natural factors of remoteness, poor soil conditions and vulnerability to global warming and sea-level rise that affected its 33 islands. He was confident that IFAD had the capacity to address the plight of rural communities suffering the negative effects of global warming.
223. He expressed gratitude for IFAD's assistance to Kiribati in such areas as capacity-building in the certification of organic agriculture in the region, a programme of particular relevance to Kiribati, with its organic production of traditional nutritious fruit and vegetables suitable for commercialization; and the mainstreaming of rural development, which paved the way for a better future for rural farmers and for unemployed women and young people, respectively. A new agricultural centre of excellence was also due to open in 2008, which would further the efforts already under way to improve local farming productivity and create economic and health benefits. It would moreover enhance the positive impacts of projects already in progress in the areas of sustainable agricultural development and food security. He was optimistic that Kiribati's farmers would fully benefit from its assistance and services.
224. **Mr BORGES FONTES** (Timor-Leste) said that, as a small country with an economy based on subsistence agriculture and a high percentage of rural inhabitants, Timor-Leste had faced many challenges in its time, including the destruction of land and the disruption of rural lives during its struggle for the independence finally gained in 2002. In such circumstances, rebuilding the nation remained an onerous task, particularly given the further setbacks caused by the political and military crisis of 2006. The new Government had, however, introduced a five-year plan for the development of a thriving agricultural sector with a view to achieving food security and maximizing the potential for commercial development.
225. The policy was to encourage partnerships and agencies working in agricultural development, to provide effective, mutually supportive services, and to support farmers and enhance land utilization by providing the necessary input, equipment and machinery, and technical assistance. To enhance food security, the Government planned to re-use all fallow land and had introduced new technologies for rice development. Emphasis was also placed on helping farmers to adopt sound farming practices and on their responsibility for the maintenance of equipment and infrastructure. One of the world's poorest countries, Timor-Leste looked forward to

IFAD support in helping it to overcome the challenges it faces and to a long and fruitful relationship with IFAD.

226. **Mr HILMY** (Maldives) was hopeful that the round-table discussions on climate change would pave the way to tangible actions by IFAD and others to alleviate the plight of smallholder farmers and fisherfolk affected by climate change. His own country's very existence was in fact threatened by climate change, which continued to overshadow its successful efforts for transformation from a least developed country into a developing country. Indeed, the unusual ecological and environmental changes observed in the Maldives throughout 2007 could not be dismissed as mere coincidences. Collective action and an innovative approach to resource utilization were therefore needed to combat the imminent threat thus posed to small island nations such as the Maldives, dependent as they were on a very narrow resource base.
227. The Maldives had perfected the skills needed for sustainable coral reef resources management, and now boasted a tourism industry and a tuna fishery, both of them sustainable as the result of measures which it had pursued to that end. It was also seeking to develop and diversify its fisheries and agriculture through an IFAD-supported project. Continued assistance was needed, however, to consolidate its efforts to enhance food security and alleviate poverty. Special funds had been established to help smallholders and fisherfolk cope with hardships in the wake of natural disasters and infrastructure was being developed in key regional centres to enable farmers throughout the scattered archipelago to reach markets in a timely manner. IFAD was also assisting the development of fishery and agriculture markets at strategic locations, as well as providing support for the goal of creating rural employment and maximizing returns, a process that could be activated through innovative techniques. He was confident that the small island barrier to commercialization of the agricultural sector could be overcome through such initiatives.
228. **Mr RWABITA** (Uganda) said that, in the absence of appropriate remedies, the disadvantaged and largely rural populations of sub-Saharan Africa were destined to continue suffering the two major challenges of poverty and food insecurity, which should be urgently addressed. Uganda was proud to be associated with an international agency such as IFAD which focused exclusively on the plight of those populations. Since 1981, IFAD had funded 15 projects in Uganda, including six current projects with a total loan portfolio of over SDR 75 million. In that context, he was pleased to note IFAD's increasing field presence, which not only enhanced project supervision but also improved IFAD's visibility and its advocacy with governments and other development partners. Its Kampala office, however, required more staff in order to increase efficiency.
229. A Country Programme Management Team (CPMT) was now in place in Uganda for the purpose of fostering and streamlining formal and informal linkages among the IFAD projects. The CPMT also helped find solutions to policy and implementation problems, the effect of which was to nurture a better understanding and learning process across the IFAD portfolio. Uganda was furthermore engaged in efforts to increase access to financial services by the rural poor, in addition to which it was currently amending its land laws in order to improve security of tenure for farmers and other interest groups, with the ultimate aim of encouraging production. He called on IFAD to expand the resources available to borrowers such as Uganda for financing entire programme cycles with a view to increasing the number of people emerging from poverty. With the goal of making rural poverty history in mind, he looked forward to timely completion of the Eighth Replenishment and to the achievement of a substantially higher level of replenishment than in the past.
230. **Mr NDERAGAKURA** (Burundi), recalling the projects and programmes in his country that had benefited from IFAD financing, with two under way and a third upcoming, thanked the Fund on behalf of his Government and people for the

timeliness with which it had honoured its promises at the round table of donors held in Bujumbura in May 2007. Burundi was experiencing a difficult food situation in a very difficult overall socio-economic context. Following fourteen years of deadly conflict, the country was entering a period of stabilization of its institutions and social and economic reconstruction. Despite that gradual return to stability, the Government's efforts had yet to lead to an improvement in the situation regarding poverty, and the country was still one of the ten poorest in the world. A difficult situation in the agricultural and livestock sectors was made worse by the mass return of refugees and internally displaced persons; the low rate of urbanization and the very low level of industrialization meant that there were few jobs; and climatic uncertainties had led to uncertainties in agricultural production.

231. In facing those problems, the Government of Burundi was relying on its own, albeit limited, resources, but was also placing great hopes in international solidarity on the part of the developed countries, the Bretton Woods institutions and multilateral and bilateral donors. IFAD's assistance was exemplary in that regard. In spite of its precarious resources, Burundi had honoured its pledge to the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources, and would, in so far as it was able, respond positively to subsequent replenishments, so that it was in a position to contribute to increasing IFAD's capacities to intervene on behalf of very poor rural populations.
232. **Mr BARBOSA** (Cape Verde), commending the founding fathers of IFAD for their farsightedness in understanding the importance of promoting the unique international partnership on which the Fund was based, said that IFAD's strategy of targeting its interventions on the rural poor was one his country supported, since the most vulnerable people were the first victims of the negative trends witnessed in the world today, including climate change. While IFAD was not in essence a humanitarian relief agency, it targeted the same vulnerable people who were the concern of humanitarian organizations. The search for sustainable solutions for such people was the approach that increasingly had to be adopted by IFAD in its work and in its cooperation with the other Rome-based United Nations agencies. IFAD was to be commended for the Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme still ongoing in Cape Verde, considered a model that could be replicated elsewhere; its success was due in part to strong government commitment, but also to wide public participation and partnership among all stakeholders. Furthermore, as one of the pilot countries of the One United Nations programmes, Cape Verde could vouch for the successful outcome of that pilot process in terms of programme performance and in overall economic terms.
233. Cape Verde hoped that the fact that agriculture was now once again at the top of the international agenda would have a positive effect in terms of government agricultural policies and the decisions of international financial institutions. The cooperation agreement between the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and IFAD on rural development was another important step towards future ventures in international cooperation.
234. **Mr DOVONOU** (Benin) said that since 1997 IFAD had been one of the main partners in the development of his country's agricultural sector. IFAD-funded programmes and projects focusing on income-generating activities, rural financial services, market access, infrastructure development, small-scale fishing and nutritional and food security had significantly benefited the rural poor in Benin. Three projects were currently being implemented and a new programme, consistent with the national strategic plan for the agricultural sector, was being drawn up to support rural economic growth. IFAD's support for Benin had been further demonstrated by the visit to his country in October 2007 of the Vice-President of IFAD and the visit to Rome of the President of Benin in January 2008 during which he had received a positive response to his request for the Fund's help in dealing with poverty and food insecurity following disastrous weather conditions during the 2007-2008 season.

235. He trusted that the new commitments to be made by Benin and all the developing countries to help the rural poor cope with the numerous changes in the agricultural sector would elicit further support from IFAD: the challenges ahead were to raise productivity through technology, prepare the main actors and agricultural and rural enterprises for a more competitive environment, and improve the legislative, regulatory and administrative framework so as to promote and enhance private initiatives in the agricultural sector. The themes of the round-table discussions at the current session were very much in line with the ongoing debate in Benin.
236. **Mr PRASAD CHAUDHARY** (Nepal) said that Nepal was at a crossroads of political and socio-economic transformation into a more democratic and prosperous state. Much progress had in fact already been made in poverty alleviation, but a third of the population lived below the poverty line. Agriculture employed 65 per cent of the population and held the key to further progress. The Government's policies were designed to create an enabling environment for investment and build institutional capacity to empower the rural poor, with special emphasis on women and socially, politically and geographically marginalized groups.
237. Agriculture in Nepal was currently passing through a difficult phase, owing in part to the devastating effects of transboundary diseases, which warranted increased attention from the donor community. Climate change, which called for rapid action and adaptation measures, and higher commodity prices, in respect of which support should be given to producers, were also hurting vulnerable countries such as Nepal. Another particularly pertinent issue that deserved reflection was the rising demand for biofuels: it could either create opportunities for income generation if farmers were able to exploit the market or pose a serious problem for food security if it led to a decline in food availability. Nepal thanked IFAD and its other development partners for supporting its development activities and looked forward to receiving further assistance. It was to be hoped that the present session of the Governing Council would provide successful guidance for securing sustainable agricultural and rural development in the future.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

238. **The CHAIRPERSON** made a closing statement, the full text of which is reproduced in chapter 4.
239. He declared the thirty-first session of the Governing Council closed.
240. **The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.**

Chapter 3

B. Round-table discussions

241. Climate change, biofuels expansion and rising food prices are growing challenges for poor rural people. But these trends also present opportunities. Three round-table discussions on these new challenges and opportunities for smallholder agriculture were held on 14 February 2008.
242. Three quarters of the world's one billion extremely poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. These are the people who will be hardest hit by climate change. They are also major food producers as well as users and custodians of natural resources.
243. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, agricultural production and access to food in many regions may be severely compromised by climate variability and change. The area suitable for agriculture, the length of growing seasons and the yield potential of some mainly arid areas are expected to decrease. Episodes of heavy rainfall and drought are likely to become more frequent and severe. Under such circumstances, the prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals may be seriously compromised.
244. The women and men involved in agriculture have always adapted to ever-changing environments. They have developed farming systems in response to the different opportunities and constraints faced over time. Adaptation measures that help people and ecosystems reduce their vulnerability to the impact of climate change are important.
245. Poor rural people can, however, play a major role in mitigating climate change through the sustainable management of land, forests and other natural resources. And climate change mitigation policies can represent a historic opportunity to acknowledge and remunerate them for providing environmental services that benefit us all.
246. International agricultural commodity prices are rising because of a combination of factors: an increased demand for food due to rapid growth in emerging countries such as China and India; unprecedented and rapid migration from rural to urban areas; recent poor harvests in some countries that may be a result of climate change; and the conversion of land from food crop to biofuel crop production. This will have enormous consequences for poor rural people, particularly for women who often are responsible for providing food for the family. But rising commodity prices could improve the incomes of smallholder farmers if more remunerative prices were realized at the farm gate and if supporting policies and investments were put in place to ensure that farmers can respond to the demand.
247. There are also concerns about the potential impact of the expansion of biofuel production, particularly on the rural poor. These concerns include a possible diversion of agricultural land from food to biofuel, the impact on food prices and availability, and the impact on the environment.
248. However, soaring energy prices and the role that fossil fuels play in global warming provide a compelling rationale for looking more closely at biofuels. Multipurpose crops that can grow on marginal lands, and whose components can be used for biofuels, animal feed and human consumption, could become a new source of income for small farmers.



Hon. Pier Paolo Cento, Chairperson
Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and
Finance of the Italian Republic



Mr Francesco Nicola Tubiello, Moderator
Research Scientist, Columbia University



Mr Saleemul Huq, Panellist
Director, Climate Change Group,
International Institute
for Environment and Development (IIED)



Mr Alexander Müller, Panellist
Assistant Director-General,
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United
Nations (FAO)



Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Panellist
Chair, United Nations Permanent Forum on
Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)



Mr Ajaykumar Manubhai Vashee, Panellist
President, The Southern African Confederation
of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)

**Round table 1: Climate change and the future of smallholder agriculture:
How can the rural poor people be a part of the solution to climate change?**

249. The effects of climate change are already being felt, and unless measures are taken immediately, they will become more severe, putting millions of poor rural people at risk. Adaptation is part of the coping strategy for poor rural people. However, adaptation measures will vary enormously. Suitable responses will be determined by the nature of risks related to climate change, geographical locations and livelihoods.
250. Mitigation is another response to climate change. Poor rural people can play a major role in mitigating the effects of climate change by sustainably managing land, forests and other natural resources. They can, for example, rehabilitate degraded crop and pasture land, use minimum tillage, and improve forestry and livestock management.
251. However, in the global discourse on climate change, the voices of those who are most affected – poor rural people – are seldom heard. Mitigation and adaptation are closely linked, and for poor rural households, they are not mutually exclusive.
252. The global carbon market is expanding fast, with billions of dollars pouring into carbon trading schemes. Participation in the Clean Development Mechanism is expanding rapidly as more private-sector entities are entering the market with skills and knowledge. The international community must develop mechanisms to engage poor rural people in, and compensate them for, adopting practices that secure ecosystem conservation and restoration.
253. One way of effectively engaging smallholders in the mitigation process is to expand the concept of carbon trading to include compensating rural communities for soil conservation and reforestation. Payment for environmental services, where poor rural people are paid for protecting biodiversity and the environment, is another option.
254. The questions that guided the round-table discussions were:
 - (a) How can poor rural people be helped to adapt to a new magnitude of climate change?
 - (b) How can poor rural people benefit from mitigation mechanisms and be paid for the environmental services they provide?
255. The outcomes of the deliberations were:
 - (a) Climate change will have major negative impacts on smallholder agriculture in developing countries. Some of these impacts are already being felt by smallholder farmers and indigenous peoples around the developing world.
 - (b) Although they have traditional adaptation capacities, smallholder farmers are likely to be overwhelmed by future climate change impacts.
 - (c) Actions are required at the global, national and local levels, and solutions should be sought through a participatory process linking government agencies, smallholder farmers and their organizations, United Nations agencies, researchers and others to ensure effective knowledge-sharing and coordination.
 - (d) To facilitate their adaptation to climate change impacts, smallholder farmers must be involved in a process of “social learning”.
 - (e) The ongoing negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the post-2012 climate change regime (due to be concluded in December 2009) will be critical in addressing the short- and long-term impacts of climate change.
 - (f) The carbon market, both regulated and voluntary, has opened a new resource dimension for smallholder farmers to access.

256. It was recommended that IFAD:

- (a) Examine ways of promoting insurance for smallholders as a climate change adaptation measure;
- (b) Develop coordinated efforts with the United Nations and other organizations to promote and support the capacity of smallholder farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change;
- (c) Join with other organizations and producers' groups to influence the ongoing climate change negotiations in favour of agreements (and new funds) that benefit small-scale farming;
- (d) Include an examination and assessment of climate change (in terms of adaptation and mitigation possibilities) in all future projects; and
- (e) Undertake, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a rapid assessment of carbon market opportunities for smallholders.

Round table 2: Biofuel expansion: Challenges, risks and opportunities for rural poor people

257. The price of fossil fuels is rising and is expected to remain relatively high due to increasing demand. As a result, the market for biofuels is expanding as they are increasingly considered an economically viable and competitive substitute for fossil fuels. Many countries are formulating policies, or have already done so, for mandatory blending of fossil fuels with bioethanol and biodiesel.
258. However, there are questions about the impact of biofuel production on poor rural people. The international debate is lively, and all aspects of biofuels are being widely discussed, including their impact on food prices, the poor and the environment. Meanwhile, environmental pollution and climate change have become global concerns and provide a compelling rationale for looking more deeply into biofuels as a potential contributor to the climate change mitigation agenda.
259. Much of the debate about biofuels concerns the trade-offs between food security and fuel production. Biofuels are also seen as an important response to climate change, but risk increasing the competition for agricultural land. Research on multiple-use plants that can provide food, fibre and animal feed can address some of these issues. At the same time, second-generation biofuel crops that can grow on marginal lands could become a new source of income for small farmers.
260. There are divergent views on the impact of biofuels on the poor. On the optimistic side, it is pointed out that higher food prices can be beneficial to food producers, including smallholders. They can have a positive impact on rural areas through additional capital inflows, which can also create demand for goods and services, and related employment opportunities. This will occur only if institutional mechanisms are put in place to ensure that rural communities are partners in the process.
261. A more pessimistic view is that increases in food prices due to growing biofuel demand are likely to have repercussions on the poorest consumers. There are also concerns that poor rural people living in marginal areas may lose their lands as larger more influential interests seek additional lands for fuel production. The challenge is to ensure that the poor can benefit from this emerging opportunity.
262. The questions that guided the round-table discussions were:
- (a) What are the risks and possible opportunities for rural poor people?
 - (b) What policies and other conditions are needed to enable the rural poor to seize opportunities and yet be protected from the risks?



Prof M.S. Swaminathan, Chairperson
Chairman, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation



Mr Eric Kueneman, Moderator
Service Chief, Crop and Grassland Service,
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



Mr Peter Hazell, Panellist
Visiting Professor, Centre for Environment Policy,
Imperial College



Mr Jeff Tschirley, Panellist
Environment, Climate Change and Bioenergy Division,
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



Mr B.S. Chaware, Panellist
Managing Director, Happy India
(a small farmer organization producing biofuels)



Mr Rodney Cooke, Panellist
Director, Technical Advisory Division,
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

263. The outcomes of the deliberations were:

- (a) Biofuel touches on diverse issues at local, national and global levels, including food security, the effect of increasing food prices on the poor, international trade, and domestic agricultural policies to protect the poor, especially pertaining to land tenure security and land rights.
- (b) Development of biofuels can present opportunities for poor rural people, provided that development embraces the following conditions:
 - (i) Investment in research and appropriate technologies to develop competitive value chains;
 - (ii) Provision of services for transferring the technology;
 - (iii) Implementation of policies that ensure that smallholders receive appropriate prices for their products; and
 - (iv) Provision of credit and other financial services such as insurance to protect smallholders from natural disasters and other unforeseen events.

264. It was recommended that IFAD:

- (a) Adopt strategic priorities that are pro-poor, pro-nature, pro-livelihoods and pro-women in order to help poor rural people benefit from the opportunities created by biofuels; and
- (b) Take measures to ensure food security.

Round table 3: Growing demand on agriculture and rising prices of commodities: An opportunity for smallholders in low-income, agricultural-based countries?

265. International prices of cereals, oilseeds, meat and dairy products have increased sharply in recent years, with the prices of wheat, rice and maize hitting record highs in 2007. The hikes have been partly fuelled by temporary factors such as bad harvests in some countries, historically low levels of stocks, the high prices of oil, and fast-growing demand from the biofuels industry.

266. However, most experts believe that commodity prices will remain high in the coming decade due to the structural evolution of supply and demand, which includes rapid urban population growth; improvements in the living standards and changes in consumption patterns in large Asian countries where prospects for further expansion of agricultural land are limited; sustained growth in demand for biofuels due to the high price of fossil fuels; public support for the biofuel industry; and the growing risks of climate-related disasters and water scarcity.

267. In the short term, this new scenario may pose serious threats to food security in low-income countries that are net importers of food. But after decades of low prices and cheap imports, this structural evolution of agriculture markets could represent an opportunity for smallholder farmers and pastoralists in low-income, agriculture-based countries. How this opportunity unfolds will depend on whether appropriate public policies, rural investments and institutional support are put in place to enable poor rural communities to feed themselves and to increase production to satisfy the growing demand of urban populations.

268. The questions that guided the round-table discussions were:

- (a) How are recent trends in world prices of food and agricultural commodities transmitted to local rural markets and farm gates in low-income agriculture-based countries?
- (b) What are the policy conditions for a rapid and successful smallholder response to this evolution, particularly in food-deficit countries?



H.E. Suleiman J. al-Herbish, Chairperson
Director-General, OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)



Ms Gunilla Olsson, Moderator
Executive Director of the IFAD Action Plan for Improving its Development Effectiveness,
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



Dr Hafez Ghanem, Panellist
Assistant Director General,
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



Mr Bruno Losch, Panellist
Senior Economist, World Bank/Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)



Mr Olegario Carrillo Meza, Panellist
National Executive Director, National Union of Farmers' Regional Autonomous Organizations (UNORCA) of Mexico



Dr Ibrahim Assne Mayaki, Panellist
Director, West African Hub

269. The outcomes of the deliberations were:

- (a) Commodity prices will remain high for at least a decade owing to structural changes in supply and demand. Therefore responses must address the short-, medium- and long-term challenges and opportunities. Negative impacts will be felt strongly among the poor, the majority of whom are net buyers and not net sellers.
- (b) Historically, smallholder producers have shown resilience in commodity price increases, and their potential to increase production is significant. The key is to ensure that price increases are transmitted to the level of smallholder producers.
- (c) Policy options for increasing opportunities for smallholders include reducing transaction costs (e.g. through infrastructure), creating safety nets, and boosting productivity through public research, extensions services and credit schemes.
- (d) At the policy level, it is fundamental that organizations of poor rural people are active participants in the shaping of these public policies.
- (e) Organizations of poor rural people need to be strengthened so that they can have higher product volumes going to the markets and increased bargaining power in the value chain.

270. It was recommended that IFAD:

- (a) Provide institutional space for dialogue over public policies among government representatives and organizations of poor rural producers; and
- (b) Provide support to the organizations of poor rural producers to enable them to negotiate equitably with other stakeholders such as governments and representatives of urban elites.

Chapter 3

C. Other general statements

Statement of the Representative for Angola

It is an honour for me, on behalf of the delegation that accompanies me and on behalf of my staff, to express our appreciation for the invitation conveyed to Angola to participate in this session of the Governing Council of IFAD.

Since peace was achieved in 2002, the Government of Angola has undertaken a set of macroeconomic measures and policy adjustments to relaunch the national economy, reduce inflation, stabilize the monetary exchange market and, consequently, improve the social well-being of the population, in particular, in rural areas.

The Government is in the process of putting in place the technical conditions and infrastructure – with a view to rehabilitating and building roads and bridges, restarting and establishing small-, medium- and large-scale irrigation schemes, for the organization of trade and transport – to promote private investment throughout our national territory.

We view these conditions as indispensable for creating an environment conducive to expanding the cultivated area, encouraging the flow of products from rural areas towards large consumption centres, reviving processing industries and promoting the value added of agricultural products.

Over the past year (2007), Angola has devoted much attention to undertaking the activities envisaged in the Government's two-year programme 2007/2008, which incorporates the main actions planned for fighting hunger and poverty in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

The actions are set within the context of projects and programmes; those related to the agricultural sector are as follows:

- The agricultural campaign 2006/2007 to provide assistance to production and support to inputs to increase agricultural production;
- The Programme for the Rehabilitation and Construction of Infrastructure in Support of Production, especially the rehabilitation of irrigation systems;
- The Rural Extension and Development Programme;
- agricultural research projects;
- projects for the forestry sector; and
- community development projects.

Throughout these programmes and projects, we have achieved favourable results which we wish to see consolidated and expanded in 2008.

With regard to agro-sylvo-pastoral production, despite the growth in specific products – such as roots and tubers, cereals, and pulses – we are still far from reaching the objectives that have been set: to become self-sufficient and to give Angolans a better life.

Nevertheless, we note with pleasure the efforts undertaken gradually by both the Government and producers at the household as well as the business level to meet part of the country's food requirements, relying mainly on domestic production. These have had a positive impact on our trade balance.

We will continue, in 2008, to work towards increasing and improving technical capacity among farmers and livestock breeders, providing them with technical guidance, agricultural inputs and better conditions for the marketing of their products.

Despite the improvements registered in the past years, pockets of food insecurity persist in certain regions, mainly in the Central Plateau, and point to the urgent need to carry out integrated rural development programmes for vulnerable groups.

The Market-oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project for Bié, Malange and Huambo, which was recently approved by IFAD's Executive Board, certainly represents a contribution towards achieving these objectives.

We continue to experience a serious lack of specialists, mainly in the areas of veterinary science, forestry, water and agricultural mechanization to meet the needs of public entities and the private sector. In this respect, IFAD's support would be of great use, as has been noted in the country strategic opportunities programme approved by the Executive Board.

Angola has in the past benefited from two IFAD projects, which have just closed. Mr Chairman, we would like this figure to increase through new projects in support of both the agricultural and the fisheries sectors, in the light of the abundant fisheries resources found along the coast and in inland waters and the contribution that such resources could make to national food security.

With regard to the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources, our contribution is currently being dealt with by entities at the level of the Ministry of Finance, which will, at the appropriate time, inform IFAD Management and proceed with the relevant payment.

As regards the Eighth Replenishment, we hope that the negotiations that are about to begin will be successful in bringing about the increase in the Fund's resource base that is needed to improve the living conditions of the poorest rural populations.

We encourage IFAD to follow the policy of partnership-building and we hope that the work under way with the African Development Bank will lead to an increase in funds for a continent that faces many problems such as lack of rural infrastructure, mechanization and conservation structures for agricultural goods.

We find praiseworthy IFAD Management's initiative to take advantage of the presence of many ministers and other high-level officials at the Governing Council to analyse the main issues of global concern that could negatively affect the rural poor. Climate change, the use of biofuel and the significant increase in grain prices are the themes presently requiring reflection and precautionary measures at the global level.

We would also avail ourselves of this opportunity to inform this venerable gathering that Angola has become a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, which, as a consequence, we believe, provides the grounds for our status to be regularized with respect to the various IFAD Lists.

To close, Mr Chairman, we hold that the struggle against hunger and poverty will be achieved through the utilization, exploitation and dissemination of local knowledge, by means of partnership-building and institution-strengthening. I would also like to complement The Bahamas on becoming a Member of our organization, and congratulate IFAD on its thirtieth anniversary and for all the work that has been accomplished.

Statement of the Representative for Ethiopia

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate President Båge and his management staff on the occasion of IFAD's thirtieth anniversary.

IFAD was established in the 1970s to respond to droughts and famines that were the causes of many deaths in Asia and Africa in general and in my country, Ethiopia, in particular. We highly value the role IFAD has been playing to fight poverty and hunger in rural areas in many countries of the world, including my own.

My country has always considered agriculture as a critical sector because about 85 per cent of our people still live in rural areas and depend greatly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Agriculture further contributes over 40 per cent to GDP and over 80 per cent to exports.

In the light of this, my Government has, since 1995, been implementing a strategy of agriculture development-led industrialization, otherwise known as ADLI, which is rural- and smallholder-centred.

It is worthwhile noting that, when this strategy was introduced, the emphasis given by the Government to agriculture and rural development was received with scepticism both at home and abroad. Clearly, that was still the period when agriculture and rural development were not given the attention they deserved at international level.

Today, agriculture and rural development, and more importantly, smallholder farming have been put at centre stage of the global agenda. We are encouraged by this "change of heart", as it were. And with this may come the necessary global support in terms of increased resources – especially resources to raise investment in agriculture and rural development – and transfer of know-how and technology.

Based on the previous years' experience, a revised smallholder agriculture and rural development-centred strategy was launched in 2002. Since implementation of this strategy began, results have been impressive. Agriculture has been growing continuously during the last five years. The incomes of tens of thousands of smallholder farmers have been growing fast. For the first time, small farmers are earning hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian birr annually (one United States dollar equals nine birr). The number of "millionaire" small farmers is growing from year to year.

To motivate farmers further and to encourage others to emulate them, the Government has established annual awards for successful smallholder farmers. The second annual award was held in December 2007, when more than 500 successful farmers from all over the country were awarded, at federal level, a "medal of development heroine/hero" by Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Mr Meles Zenawi. Following this, thousands of the most successful farmers were awarded in the various states of the federation.

Some previous speakers have stated that agriculture is a driver of development. President Båge also said, in his address yesterday, that GDP generated by agriculture is four times more effective in raising the economy, hence in reducing poverty, than GDP generated by other sectors. This can be said to hold true in the case of Ethiopia.

Agriculture has been growing at a continuous and fast rate during the last five years. At the same time, the overall economy has been growing by an annual average rate of 11.8 per cent during the same period.

There are a number of reasons for the impressive results:

1. Before it was launched, the revised strategy was thoroughly debated at the policy, technical, development agent (extension agent) and beneficiary level.
2. Necessary capacity-building was carried out at both the development agent and the beneficiary level through technical and vocational educational training. Some 50,000 technician graduates from colleges have been assigned in all *Kebelles* (precincts) of the country, and their number is increasing every year.

3. Appropriate technology packages have been developed and distributed regularly as and when the need arises.
4. Primary health care and education services have been expanding in rural areas – thus improving the health of rural people and contributing to a growing literacy rate.

The strategy gives a special focus to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Women in rural areas are given priority in access to land and technological inputs. Female gross school enrolment has reached 84 per cent compared with the national average of 92 per cent.

Our smallholder agriculture and rural-centred development strategy has been supported by our development partners, including IFAD. Development partners, both bilateral and multilateral organizations, have regrouped themselves since 2004 in what is known as the Development Assistance Group, or DAG Ethiopia, to support our strategy.

So, Mr Chairperson, the change of heart relating to bringing agriculture to centre stage of the development agenda seems to have begun earlier – before the *World Development Report 2008*.

Allow me, Mr Chairperson, to take the opportunity, on behalf of the Government and people of Ethiopia, to express my delegation's appreciation to DAG Ethiopia members – and they are too many to mention each one here – and to partners outside the DAG Ethiopia grouping for providing us their support to eradicate poverty, hunger and malnutrition, and also to express the hope they will continue to do so for some time. From all indications, that some time may not be too long.

Mr Chairperson, climate change, or its effects, has been with us for a long time. Many countries have been suffering from recurring droughts, cyclic floods, cyclones, hurricanes, wildfires, etc. Ethiopia, like many other countries, has been suffering from periodic weather variability in the shape of droughts and floods.

With regard to climate change, allow me, Mr Chairperson, to share an experience that is currently taking place in my country. While much of the world celebrated the year 2000 eight years ago, Ethiopia welcomed the year 2000 on 12 September 2007. This is one of the diversities in its culture that Ethiopia has maintained for millenniums. The African Union in its summit of January 2007 also declared the new millennium as "an African occasion".

The new millennium is considered by its citizens to be a new chapter in the annals of the history of Ethiopia, and they have taken it upon themselves to use it as an opportunity to forge unity and renew their fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Several projects that involve the entire citizenry have been designed, among which is the "two trees for 2000" project. It is expected that, by the end of this millennium year, millions of trees will be planted and cared for. Such efforts could be one of the mitigation measures undertaken by rural people in the face of climate change.

Mr Chairperson, I would like to conclude by expressing the wish that IFAD will continue to support and, in its own words, "enable the rural poor to overcome poverty" with more vigour and determination. Furthermore, now that agriculture has been put at centre stage of the global agenda, it is to be hoped that those with the wherewithal and willingness will contribute more resources to increase investments in agriculture and rural development in the developing countries.

Statement of the Governor for Gabon

Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Mr Chairman, on your appointment together with your two Vice-Chairpersons.

I should like also to congratulate IFAD, and the Presidents who have led the organization over the years, on the occasion of this thirtieth anniversary as we look back and take stock of all its accomplishments.

We are delighted that the goal set for the Seventh Replenishment has been successfully achieved, and express our wishes for similar success in the Eighth Replenishment, for which the Consultation begins tomorrow.

My country had the honour of being one of the founding Member States as part of List B, and we have supported the Fund in combating rural poverty since that time.

I should like to take this opportunity to welcome The Bahamas into our midst.

I commend the Secretariat's initiative to hold the round-table discussions that took place this morning, which we found of interest in several respects given three features of the current global context:

1. Rural exodus and emigration by people from the countries of the South towards the "paradise" of the West, leading to an ageing rural population and uncontrolled urbanization.

As a result, those countries are seeing:

- Declining agricultural production
- Deteriorating living conditions
- Persistent and even worsening unemployment, vulnerability and poverty.

2. Climate change is having the following consequences:

- Disturbances in crop cycles and pasture renewal
- Falling productivity and yields
- The abandonment of traditional itinerant and slash-and-burn farming practices
- Interest in biofuels to the detriment of food crops.

3. The inexorable advance of globalization has the potential to bring enormous advantages but also involves formidable challenges, such as competition from subsidized and modernized agriculture sectors, importing superpowers that are not subject to controls, and a lack of rural finance in developing countries.

Faced with all these problems affecting the rural poor, IFAD, whose role in recent years we appreciate, needs to strengthen its action on strategies to help the countries address them. Financing should be provided to those countries undertaking to protect the environment through forest and soil conservation, reforestation and rational management of pollutants.

At the initiative of President Bongo Ondimba, my country has dedicated more than 11 per cent of its territory to this effort, in the form of national parks that benefit the entire global community.

Given the need for a return to organic foods, and with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, rural populations require greater assistance if they are to become nutritionally self-sufficient, in the form of programmes combining expertise, technology transfer and concessional financing.

Accordingly, we welcome IFAD's support for an agricultural development programme that is to be launched shortly in Gabon.

Before concluding, let me comment briefly on two of our agenda items:

- We reiterate our support for the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which is crucial for many African countries.
- We commend the results obtained under the performance-based allocation system, while calling for prudence in applying criteria that could penalize some developing countries.

Statement of the Acting Governor for the Lao People's Democratic Republic

First of all, I am very honoured to attend this thirty-first session of the Governing Council of IFAD. Please allow me to present, on behalf of the Lao Delegation, my sincere congratulations to the elected Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the thirty-first session of the Governing Council. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the IFAD organizing committee and the host country for the excellent arrangements made for this important conference and for the warm hospitality extended to my delegation in Rome.

On this auspicious occasion, may I brief you on the situation of agriculture and forestry sector development and some of the achievements IFAD has made so far in this particular sector in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

In general, in the past years, the socio-economic development of the country has been firmly stable. The economy has been growing continuously by 7.5 per cent per annum. In implementing the sixth Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2006-2010) of the Lao Government, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has made tremendous efforts in further developing the agriculture-forestry sector. In particular, it has defined four main objectives, namely: (i) food production and food security; (ii) production of commodities; (iii) eradication of slash-and-burn cultivation in conjunction with rural development and poverty alleviation in the 47 poorest districts; and (iv) sustainable forest management. In order to achieve these objectives, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has also launched 13 measures including developing improved animal and plant varieties, expanding the agricultural extension network to the grass-roots level and improving managerial skills.

This year, the rice production target for this dry season crop is expected to be at 100,000 ha which, compared with last year, is a substantial increase (about 20 per cent). Apart from rice, some other commercial crops are planted, such as: maize for animal feed, coffee, soybean, Job's tears and sesame. One of the main reasons for this increase in production is the Lao Government's policies and measures, which are aimed at promoting production in the dry season. Among those measures are the: (i) allocation of a new budget to renovate and maintain irrigation schemes damaged by natural disasters; (ii) import tax reduction on agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and equipment; (iii) reduced cost of electricity for irrigation facilities; (iv) reduced cost of electricity for livestock-raising; (v) provision of agricultural credit with low interest; and (vi) measures on cross-border illegal trafficking control.

Meat and fish production stands at about 250,000 tons, of which about 145,000 tons are meat and about 105,000 tons are fish from capture fisheries and aquaculture. In order to manage forests in a sustainable manner, three main types of forests have been identified, namely: natural preserved forests, protected forests and productive forests.

At present, we are also increasing our efforts in undertaking a land use and soil classification survey on a scale of 1/50,000 for each district, strengthening our extension system and networking in the village development clusters to promote investment and poverty eradication.

Unfortunately, during the rainy season of last year, some areas in the northern part of the country were affected by floods caused by typhoons. It was also observed that the central part of the country was affected by slight drought. In addition, the southern part, particularly Attapeu Province, was seriously affected by the storm. This natural disaster resulted in some loss of agricultural production. However, this problem has been addressed adequately and resolved progressively.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, together with some of its neighbouring countries, has been confronting H5N1 avian influenza. There have already been three outbreaks in our country: the first outbreak occurred in January 2004 in three provinces, namely: Vientiane Capital, Savannakhet and Champasack provinces. The second outbreak

occurred in July 2006 in Vientiane Capital. The third outbreak occurred recently, in early 2007. Faced with such a situation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, together with the National Committee on the Prevention and Control of Avian Flu and the assistance of international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, took very strict measures, and compensation schemes are under way.

The Government highly appreciates the invaluable support of our partners, particularly IFAD, which has contributed to the country's efforts to achieve our development goals. Since 1979, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has implemented 10 projects with the assistance of IFAD, of which 7 projects have been completed and three are ongoing. The three ongoing projects are the: (i) Rural Livelihoods Improvement Programme in Attapeu and Sayabouri; (ii) Oudomxai Community Initiatives Support Project; and (iii) Northern Region Sustainable Livelihoods through Livestock Development Project. The total portfolio of IFAD in the Lao People's Democratic Republic amounts to more than US\$138 million. All these projects involve an agriculture component, rural infrastructure development component, income diversification component, institutional and community development component and rural finance services component. The IFAD country portfolio review report stated clearly that the innovations and successful experiences gathered by both the Government and IFAD for replication were satisfactory and feasible for other poverty eradication programmes in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. All these projects are contributing significantly to the successful implementation and realization of the Lao People's Democratic Republic 5-Year Development Plan.

I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to express my support for the initiative taken by IFAD to confront new challenges and to play an increasingly effective role in addressing the challenges of the future, while at the same time responding to the emerging issues and problems the people of the world are facing today.

Please allow me, on behalf of my delegation to express once again my sincere thanks to all of you for your valuable contribution to our country's poverty eradication effort. We will remain strongly supportive to the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

May I take this opportunity to present once again my best wishes to distinguished delegates for a very fruitful and successful conference.

Statement of the Representative for Lesotho

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate IFAD on its thirtieth anniversary of unwavering dedication in supporting the poorer Member States in their fight to reduce and ultimately eradicate rural poverty. Lesotho is one of the early beneficiaries of the Fund, with IFAD interventions dating as far back as the mid-1980s. We wish the Fund the most fruitful next 30 years so that its efforts may greatly contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

We observe with concern the continuing state of food insecurity in most African States including Lesotho as per the statistical report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The statistics show that the numbers of the undernourished are on the increase in the Africa region, as compared with other regions of the world where these numbers are actually declining. I think that we must learn about and copy the relevant strategies used by the successful regions, with IFAD's facilitation.

Allow me to comment on the round tables arranged in this session. This administrative set-up will allow those involved to reflect on, and perhaps find solutions to, the challenges and opportunities for smallholder farmers in the context of climate change and the new demands facing agriculture such as increased food prices. In the case of Lesotho, these two stated scenarios are a reality confronting its peoples. We have faced incidences of extreme drought and heavy rainfall in successive years, which have prevented timely planting, thus resulting in poor harvests all around. It is this unfortunate inconsistency in the availability of rainfall that perhaps injects further uncertainty in production forecasts.

At the moment, Lesotho is having good rains and the crops in the fields look promising. The rains, although welcome, are often accompanied by severe wind or hail storms. In order to mitigate the effects of unfavourable weather conditions we, with FAO, are gradually introducing a conservation farming system. Although we are still at a learning stage, early results indicate that there is potential in this farming method for ensuring household food security. We have also expanded our block farming programme, which started in the 2006/07 farming season, from 574 to 61,871 hectares in order to improve the productivity of our land and increase grain output, thereby reducing dependency on emergency food aid and generating household incomes. Farmers under this programme access loans from a local commercial bank where the Government has deposited a guarantee fund to enable processing of the loans.

Other farming systems such as irrigation are being explored. It is true that we have not really exploited this very useful farming technique to its fullest potential given our abundant water resources, but we have plans in place. The challenge here lies in the availability of relevant resources such as land, money and expertise.

I will not comment on the ongoing IFAD-funded country programme, but would like instead to briefly mention the new IFAD-funded Rural Financial Intermediation Programme. Although the programme does not directly target rural agriculture communities, it will enable them to have access to low-cost credit. We look forward to its successful implementation. We would like to convey a special word of thanks to Mr Båge because he, like a true steward, responded to the call that our Prime Minister made during his visit to IFAD in 2005 by facilitating funding of this rural credit programme.

On behalf of the Government of Lesotho, we wish to express our heartfelt appreciation for IFAD's continued support of our efforts to improve the country's agricultural sector and reduce levels of poverty and food insecurity, particularly in the rural and poverty-stricken, mostly arid regions of Lesotho. Although IFAD has often faced criticism from other donors for maintaining the old-fashioned project-type assistance, we commend it for its contribution in enabling the Government to reach the poorer, most isolated communities. We invite IFAD and other development partners to study our Food Security Policy and the National Food Security Action Plan so that we can together develop long-term agriculture and rural development programmes.

Statement of the Governor for the Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. President of IFAD,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure on the occasion of the thirty-first session of the Governing Council of IFAD to take this opportunity to thank Mr Lennart Båge and IFAD staff for their remarkable and tireless efforts to advance the Fund's work to develop the agricultural sector in developing countries.

Since its establishment, IFAD has made major, energetic efforts to achieve economic and social development in many countries of the world, especially developing countries. It has focused on approaches to agricultural development in the targeted countries, working earnestly and responsibly to promote these approaches to combat the hunger, poverty and malnutrition from which millions in the world – particularly children – suffer.

The Fund has worked and continues to work on the implementation of strategies to boost the economic level of rural women in the development process. It has focused on women's role in raising crops and livestock and on involving women in the preparation and implementation of agricultural projects in rural areas and the use of advanced technology for this purpose.

The Fund has also sought to: increase the productivity of the agricultural sector, provide technical assistance, prepare economic feasibility studies, and implement agricultural projects through the Special Programme for Sub-Saharan African Countries Affected by Drought and Desertification. This generous institution has been able to achieve its planned objectives, particularly regarding the development of the poorest regions and their integration into the productive system.

The agriculture sector plays a fundamental role in achieving sustainable development. The Syrian Arab Republic has thus dedicated special attention to this sector in its economic plans. The rural development programmes that we have implemented have received particular emphasis because of their major role in serving rural areas and promoting integrated agricultural development, which in turn contributes to overall development.

The ongoing achievements of these projects, whether funded by the IFAD or the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, have most profoundly enhanced the lives of the rural poor, both men and women, in all areas.

The convening of this session of the Council coincides with extremely harsh and dangerous developments stemming from Israel's practices against the Palestinian people, which have brought hunger and deprivation. The oppressive blockade imposed on the people of Gaza is a blatant violation by Israel of international law and the most basic human rights and represents state terrorism in its most repulsive form.

Israel is imposing collective punishment on the entire Gaza Strip. As a result, children and sick people are being denied medicine and food and could risk death. We must all help this people cope with the hunger and poverty they are facing and confront the tyranny practised against them by deterring Israel from the acts in which it is engaging within the view and earshot of the entire world and in the clear absence of international justice.

In conclusion, I again thank the President of the Fund and express my appreciation to IFAD staff for their efforts to achieve the Fund's goals and for their successes. I hope that this session will re-examine the allocation of resources based on both performance

and fairness and review the loans provided by IFAD with a view towards easing the burden on developing countries by reducing the interest rates on loans provided to them.

We are also extremely grateful to the financing organizations and all regional and international organizations that cooperate with the Syrian Arab Republic and the developing countries to achieve agricultural progress in poor rural areas.

I would also like to salute the Italian Government, donor countries, and international and regional organizations for the support they have provided to IFAD. I hope that this session's meetings will enjoy great success.

Statement of the Alternate Governor for Thailand

It is my honour to represent the Royal Thai Government at the thirty-first session of the Governing Council on behalf of Thailand's Governor to IFAD, Mr Jaranthada Karnasuta, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Let me start by congratulating you, Mr Chairperson, and the Vice-Chairpersons for your election to this important task, and by wishing you every success. We wish also to welcome The Bahamas as a new Member of IFAD.

Thailand has always recognized the important role that IFAD has played in coping with new global challenges and in persisting in its efforts to alleviate poverty and hunger around the world. I would also like to applaud its achievements and its efforts in enhancing the sustainability of its development projects.

In line with IFAD's approach to development, Thailand has also attached great importance to the sustainability of its national development programmes. The current Tenth Economic and Social Development Board, which covers the period 2007-2011, has adopted the sufficiency economy philosophy of His Majesty the King as a policy principle to guide the country's overall development in a sustainable manner.

Sufficiency economy is a philosophy that guides the livelihood and behaviour of people at all levels, from the family to the community to the country, on matters concerning national development and administration. It calls for a middle way or middle path to be observed, especially in pursuing economic development in keeping with the world of globalization. Sufficiency means moderation and reasonableness, including the need to build a reasonable immune system against shocks from the outside or from the inside.

The Tenth National Plan aims at building a knowledgeable and virtuous Thai society and strengthening the resiliency of citizens to meet changes. It also focuses on building strong communities to serve as building blocks for the nation and on enhancing people's ability to coexist happily with the environment to ensure good quality of life and to preserve and protect nature for future generations.

In parallel with development in our country, Thailand is also contributing to development in the region. We collaborate with IFAD and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations under the South-South cooperation scheme to provide assistance in terms of technical expertise to neighbouring countries, such as Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar, through the project entitled Enhancing the Agricultural Competitiveness of Rural Households in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The objective of this project is to improve the livelihoods, income and agricultural competitiveness of rural households in the context of a regionally integrated Greater Mekong Subregion.

Regarding cooperation with IFAD, I would like to put on record our thanks to IFAD for granting the Monitoring and Evaluation Training Needs Assessment Project to Thailand's Office of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. The project, which covers one year from September 2007 until September 2008, aims to strengthen the capacity of government officials in monitoring and evaluation. This paves the way towards the Office's long-term target of being the centre of excellence for monitoring and evaluation in the country and in the region.

With regards to the issues for discussion at this session, we would like to point out the following:

First, we have learned that the total amount of payments received for the Seventh Replenishment is only 41 per cent of the target set of US\$720 million, and that it is still far below the pledged amount. We understand the concern that IFAD must have for its operations in spite of the fact that the Seventh Replenishment will end in December 2009 and that Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment will take place soon this year. Even though Thailand did not pledge for the Seventh Replenishment, we are pleased to

inform the Governing Council that a cheque for US\$150,000, representing Thailand's contribution to the Seventh Replenishment, was sent from Bangkok two weeks ago by registered mail and is expected to arrive very soon.

Second, on the performance-based allocation system (PBAS) methodology, we welcome the introduction of the rural population concept, which corresponds to IFAD's scope of work focusing on agricultural development and involving rural people. The use of the latest rural population figures available through the World Bank for the calculation of 2008 and 2009 country scores is a good choice. However, it is understood that further refinement will be needed, as was done in 2006 by using individual country policy and institutional assessment scores.

Third, the global issues of climate change, bioenergy production and increasing prices for agricultural commodities are of great interest and concern in every forum. They are interrelated and can have both positive and negative impacts on the food security of the rural poor. It can be expected that deliberations in each round table will be rich in ideas and will serve as valuable inputs for the formulation of rural development programmes by both IFAD and national governments.

In conclusion, I would like to confirm Thailand's strong determination to cooperate with IFAD and with all countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally, towards the achievement of our shared Millennium Development Goals.

Statement of the Governor for the United Kingdom

At the World Economic Forum in Davos last month, a statement was issued vowing to make 2008 a turning point in the fight against poverty, pledging “to work together to help the world get back on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals.”

On present trends, as we know, some of the Millennium Development Goals will not be met for 50 years – at least. But poor people should not be asked to wait 50 years for the action that we promised in 2000.

It is clear that, if the Millennium Development Goals are to be reached, it will require new energy and a more comprehensive and better “joined-up” approach, combining the efforts of all partners.

We join you in celebrating IFAD’s achievements on its thirtieth anniversary. But this thirty-year-old is working in a very different world to the one it was born into. How can we, the membership, ensure that this organization can take on the huge and evolving challenges the world is facing.

Many speakers have referred to the *World Development Report 2008* on agriculture for development. It calls for a renewed focus on the agricultural sector. This brings with it new issues, new roles, new actors and new opportunities.

Of course, rural poverty is not just about agriculture, as my colleague from India and others have noted. But the *World Development Report* does pose relevant questions about how institutions and mechanisms to implement and finance the global agenda for agriculture can respond to new political and economic realities.

IFAD clearly has an important role in this. Focusing exclusively on the rural poor, it is truly a specialized agency of the United Nations. We welcome IFAD’s ongoing commitment to the United Nations’ Delivering as One initiative and to strengthening partnerships, including through the One United Nations pilots, with governments, civil society and the other international financial institutions.

Yesterday the outgoing Chair of the Governing Council said that IFAD had some important events coming up, including a new replenishment – subject to this Council’s final decision – and the election of a new President. This is an especially important time for us, the membership, as we are called on to make decisions that will have an important impact on IFAD’s future.

IFAD is renowned for the sense of ownership by and collaboration between all Member States. The participation here is testimony to that. The Governing Council will be aware that dialogue was strengthened last year, for example during discussions that reached across the membership on the possibility of introducing an independent Chair for IFAD’s replenishment consultations. We need to ensure that our decisions foster ever-increasing advocacy, support and partnership.

This Governing Council mandated the organization to implement an action plan in response to the Independent External Evaluation of IFAD. IFAD’s Action Plan is helping improve IFAD’s effectiveness. We all welcome the progress made, including in innovation, highlighted as one of IFAD’s areas of comparative advantage.

I believe that we, the membership, also need to be innovative. We need to be prepared to look openly at the mechanisms and tools that we and IFAD have that equip this organization – thirty years on – to carry out its mandate. We need these processes to work in the best interests of the organization. Modern processes for a modern organization.

We look forward, as we embark on what promises to be an eventful year, to working together across the membership and with IFAD towards achieving our shared goal, the one that is written large behind me: enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty.

Statement of the Representative for Zambia

Let me start by congratulating the Chairperson and his bureau for their election.

We meet on a momentous occasion to celebrate, among other things, the launch of the thirtieth anniversary of IFAD's work in fighting rural poverty, which has been identified as the main cause of hunger and malnutrition.

Founded as a financial institution partnering with members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other developing countries, IFAD has today grown to include key financing partners such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank and individual private partners.

Such a growth is a testimony to the realization of the goals of the organization.

Statistics and information available to us show that in the 30 years since IFAD was founded, and, the first ten IFAD project proposals were approved by the Executive Board of IFAD, IFAD Member States have, and I quote:

"...invested almost US\$10 billion in loans and grants, helping more than 300 million poor rural women and men to grow more food, improve their land, learn new skills, start businesses, build strong organizations and communities, and gain a voice in the decisions that affect their lives."

As an African country, Zambia is happy to observe that, in 2007 alone, IFAD's programme workload increased by 10 per cent and that, out of this, resources allocated to Africa amounted to almost 50 per cent.

We take this opportunity to express our appreciation to our financing partners for this assistance.

We are, however, also aware that in order to increase the financing of our programmes, it is incumbent upon all those who have made pledges to the Seventh Replenishment to honour their pledges at least by the end of 2008.

Let me, in this regard, state from the outset that my Government has already made budgetary provisions to release its pledges before the end of this year. We would, therefore, like to appeal to other Member States to, likewise, make good on their commitments.

My country will play an equally significant role in the negotiations of the Eighth Replenishment, which will be launched this coming Friday, to ensure that even more resources are made available for IFAD programmes.

The statements made by the distinguished keynote speakers and President Bâge's own statement have not only been inspiring, they have also demonstrated the reason why IFAD's noble goals and role remain as valid and relevant today as they were 30 years ago, if not more so.

We have heard from their statements that the achievements of the organization have been met in almost equal measure with emerging trends such as climate change, increasing biofuel demand and rising agriculture commodity prices. These trends present both opportunities and challenges to smallholder farmers.

The continuing cycle of droughts, floods and other natural calamities that is threatening our countries, including my own Zambia, is indeed a sample of the climatic changes that we are talking about.

We need to recognize that the rural poor may not be among the contributors to the worsening climatic conditions, but they are likely to be the hardest hit by the changes.

As we have already heard, the demand for biofuels presents both opportunities and challenges. Biofuels offer economically viable solutions as a substitute for ever-increasing fossil fuel prices. Nevertheless, this attraction has to be weighed against the

potential threat to the environment, on the one hand, and the threat to food security, on the other, that a demand for biofuel crops would present against food crops.

In reflecting on these and many other vexing issues, let us together, as Member States, the IFAD Secretariat and partners, engage in meaningful and serious dialogue on the way forward in terms of preventative measures and the search for sustainable solutions.

We therefore wish to commend the IFAD Secretariat for making these topics the central themes for the side events of the Governing Council because they do need our special attention.

We endorse, and are encouraged by, the One United Nations concept that aims at establishing synchronicity in decision-making on the basis of the comparative advantages of the respective United Nations agencies at both country and headquarters levels. We note that the pilot projects so far established for the three Rome-based agencies are proving beneficial to the coordination of efforts.

Turning to my country, I wish to state that agriculture plays a significant role in the economy of Zambia and especially in rural Africa where this dependence is more pronounced.

It may be equally acknowledged that a considerable portion of non-farm urban employment is somehow linked to agriculture in the sense that the African urban poor spend about 60 to 70 per cent of their budget on food. This means that urban and rural livelihoods are interconnected through linkages between agriculture and the urban economy.

We wish, in this regard, to express Zambia's appreciation for IFAD's financial assistance in addressing endemic problems of food insecurity and strengthening delivery services for resource-poor households as well as improving their access to markets.

With IFAD's support, the food security of targeted vulnerable families in my country is improving while poverty levels are gradually coming down.

On behalf of my country, I would also like to express our appreciation to IFAD for venturing into new initiatives in areas of agriculture and rural development that are important to us. These include support to socially desirable and economically viable irrigation schemes, rural finance, livestock disease control and draught-power-oriented animal restocking.

Indeed, these areas are in line with our priorities in the agriculture sector. These programmes will significantly contribute to increased income and food security among smallholder farmers.

IFAD's support to bulk irrigation water supply schemes for large-scale farmers, in particular, is in line with my country's national irrigation plan, which aims at increasing land under irrigation to 70,000 hectares between now and 2011.

IFAD's support to rural finance will, on the other hand, go a long way in helping the rural population in general and small-scale farmers in particular access financing for income-generating activities.

Support to the control of livestock diseases, which have been prevalent among our small-scale farmers, will help save their animals. Restocking oriented towards draught animal power will help farmers build up their livestock herds and contribute to increased land under production. This will, in turn, contribute to food security and income-generation and, therefore, reduce poverty.

Before I conclude my remarks let me also underscore the need for IFAD to facilitate country presence as this is the most effective way of ensuring better support to programmes through regular dialogue with national partners.

Let me conclude by expressing my Government's gratitude to IFAD and the other financing partners of our programmes for the many years of support and to IFAD's

President for his able and dedicated leadership. And a happy thirtieth anniversary to the Management and staff of IFAD!

Our congratulations also go to them on the impending move to the new headquarters building.

Chapter 4

Statements and special addresses



H.E. Alhaji Aliu Mahama,
Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana



H.E. Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of
the Council of Ministers and Minister for
Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic



Mr Lennart Båge,
President of IFAD



H.E. Jean Nkueté,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for
Agriculture and Rural Development of the
Republic of Cameroon



H.E. Dr Fahad Bin Abdulrahman
Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Mr Donald Kaberuka,
President of the African Development Bank



Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala,
Managing Director of the World Bank

Keynote address from His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana

It is a great honour for me to be invited by the President of IFAD, Mr Lennart Båge, to be part of this important event. Let me take this opportunity on my own behalf and that of the President, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, and the people of Ghana to extend my gratitude to the Italian Government and IFAD Management for the warm hospitality accorded to me and my delegation.

Mr Chairman, our assembly this morning marks the opening of the thirty-first session of the Governing Council of IFAD and the beginning of the year-long commemoration of thirty years of its existence. Permit me to use this opportunity to congratulate all those who in diverse ways have made sacrifices over the years to make IFAD what it is today.

Mr Chairman, I am convinced that fighting rural poverty and hunger, which has been at the core of IFAD's mandate since its establishment, is more relevant than ever if we are to reduce poverty and hunger by half by the year 2015.

Since its establishment, IFAD has been pursuing its mandate by focusing its activities in developing countries by supporting rural communities to reduce the incidence of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. In pursuing this agenda, IFAD has sought and collaborated effectively with other development agencies, civil society organizations and host governments.

Mr Chairman, I must say that Ghana is one of the fortunate countries to have benefited from IFAD's support over the years and still continues to receive support from the organization. I recall with pride, Ghana's first project under IFAD over 28 years ago. It was named the "Volta Region Agricultural Development Project".

Currently, the areas of IFAD project intervention in Ghana embrace some 2.4 million people. The scope includes the development of rural infrastructure, provision of potable water, credit and financial services, building the capacity of farmer groups and extension agents and promoting the development of small-scale non-agricultural enterprises.

Indeed IFAD's interventions in Ghana have led to the discovery of new approaches that can be scaled up by the Government and other donors operating in the country for unearthing the entrepreneurial capacities of the rural dwellers to have alternative livelihoods.

Let me say, Mr Chairman, that tremendous success has been achieved in the areas of capacity-building and rural infrastructure provision, particularly in the provision of small-scale irrigation facilities in the northern sector of the country. For achieving these growth poles, IFAD has been able to attract 60 per cent of cofinancing from such collaborating partners as the World Bank, the African Development Bank and *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* (the German credit institution for reconstruction).

Thus, under the Rural Financial Services Project, Ghana and its partners have built an apex bank for rural banks, thereby supporting the expansion of Ghana's microfinance sector. Consequently, rural banks increased their outreach to clients in terms of savings and credit schemes from 1.3 million to 2.2 million in 2004 of which 45 per cent were women.

Mr Chairman, permit me to say that the challenge of reducing poverty and hunger by half and meeting the other Millennium Development Goals in the next seven years is enormous in view of the current slow pace of addressing the challenges.

Agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa continues to be rainfed. It also depends on the use of simple tools with minimal use of improved inputs and technologies resulting in low productivity. The market infrastructure and institutions required to aid the disposal of farm produce for reasonable revenue generation by producers are still fairly limited.

Also limited is the capacity to add value to farm produce and to access external markets. The plight of the smallholder farmer is further worsened by the lack of skills and opportunities for alternate sources of income during off-farm periods. These constraints contribute to the vicious cycle of poverty in which the average smallholder farmer in Africa is trapped.

It is my conviction however that rural poverty can be reduced if pragmatic and well-resourced policies are geared towards the development of the agricultural sector.

Once this is done, rural development could support rural populations with appropriate public infrastructure such as irrigation facilities, feeder and access roads, and marketing systems, in addition to the provision of research and extension services. Capacity-building of the rural population is also essential to empower them to adopt improved technologies and practices.

Honourable Governors, the issue of poverty can also be addressed through the promotion of subregional and regional trade. We need to focus on our competitive advantages in the production of agricultural commodities and strengthen regional trade through more effective integration.

Mr Chairman, let me state emphatically that, to achieve this, we need more effective collaboration and partnership between the developed and developing world. The essence of such a partnership becomes more pronounced in the face of emerging global challenges that affect all nations.

The issues of climate change, biofuel expansion and increasing food and agricultural commodity prices need to be addressed pragmatically. In particular, the role of biofuel in meeting the energy needs of the future could be quite significant.

Apart from being environmentally friendly, its production has the potential to boost rural incomes and lower costs in petroleum-dependent activities.

It is in this regard that I wish to urge more investment and cooperation in research facilities for the rapid commercialization of biofuel production. Ghana has some important ongoing initiatives based on the jatropha plant and further investment would be most welcome to allow this source of energy to materialize.

Mr Chairman, I also wish to use this singular opportunity to urge all our Members to remain committed to fulfilling their obligations to IFAD with respect to the payment of their subscriptions to the Fund.

May I also appeal to this august body that, as it embarks on the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of its resources, it should identify strategies to seek ways to increase the subscriptions of IFAD Member States and also explore new avenues for generating resources to the Fund.

Let me also take this opportunity to appeal to non-Member States, philanthropic organizations, civil society groups and individuals committed to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals to contribute generously to the Fund to enable IFAD to step up its mandate.

Finally, as we move into the round-table discussions on the topical issues of climate change, biofuel expansion and agricultural commodity prices, let us be objective in our deliberations so as to come out with solutions that will benefit all nations.

**Keynote address by His Excellency Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of the
Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Italian Republic**

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to convey the best wishes of the Government of the Italian Republic to this important gathering. This Governing Council session marks the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of IFAD, an institution whose existence and experience are closely linked with Italy and with Rome. The city of Rome hosts a highly prominent centre of international agriculture, the potential of which we wish to underscore in the context of the progress being made by the international community towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Italy's political decision to build a centre to combat hunger and poverty through agricultural development dates back to the 1950s. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters moved to Rome in 1951. Our country's support for multilateral agricultural development policy was consolidated with the creation of the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1962 and the International Fund for Agricultural Development in 1977.

The decision to set up the Fund was one of the major outcomes of the World Food Conference in the 1970s. Within the context of combating hunger and food insecurity, the conference focused on structural adjustments in developing countries, where most of the world's poorest people were living in rural areas. The new international fund was given a special mandate to provide highly concessional financing and grants for agricultural development projects in the rural areas of developing countries.

Since then, Italy has reaffirmed its support for IFAD's activities and objectives as one of the top donors in each replenishment of funds. In fact, in the case of the most recent replenishment exercise, covering the period 2007-2009, Italy pledged more than US\$51 million to the Fund, the second highest pledge among all the donor countries.

In addition, it is worth noting that Italy has made numerous voluntary contributions – amounting to US\$40 million – through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to finance and cofinance many specific programmes and projects.

This support is a testimony to our country's commitment to the Fund.

I would like to highlight some of the key issues before this session of the Governing Council:

1. First of all, on the occasion of IFAD's Eighth Replenishment, several countries indicated their interest in increasing their presence and repositioning themselves within the Fund through substantially larger contributions;

This is an important indication of the success and growth of the institution.

2. This session of the Governing Council and IFAD's thirtieth anniversary are taking place at a time of intense international debate. The World Bank's recent World Development Report stressed the importance of agriculture in development policy, maintaining that investments in agriculture will need to increase if the Millennium Development Goals are to be met by 2015.

International commitments leading up to the International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Doha are being steered in that direction as well.

The three round tables that are to take place here, with the participation of authoritative international experts, will be looking at highly topical issues that are of great significance to the agricultural sector and pose challenges to the international community, specifically, **the effects of climate change, rising food prices and future prospects for biofuel production**. It is my hope that these discussions will introduce elements on which to reflect and establish operating guidelines so that the Fund's strategy may be defined in full alignment with the emerging priorities and trends that are shaping other international organizations.

The selection of these pressing issues bears witness to IFAD's deservedly key role among the multilateral agencies tasked with meeting the greatest global challenges. Moreover, the primacy of the Fund's areas of work is illustrated by the fact that first among the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 was to reduce world poverty and hunger. The Fund's activities are also clearly linked to the remaining goals – such as those relating to gender equality, infant mortality and environmental sustainability – all of which are interrelated in the ways that characterize today's globalized society.

To indicate yet again the importance of these issues, I cannot fail to observe that the theme chosen by Milan and by Italy in its candidature to host the 2015 World's Fair is "Nourishing the Planet: Energy for Life". A meaningful and by no means random coincidence since this is a specific priority of my Government for our country: to strengthen Italy's commitment and role with regard to development aid, in keeping with its sense of responsibility as a developed country and the humanitarian outlook that informs its foreign policy.

I hardly need remind you that this priority has not been limited to abstract statements of principle but has translated into specific commitments, also in the form public spending. We have seen a significant increase in appropriations for development cooperation – following a phase that was extremely negative in this respect – (an increase made all the more significant by the current tight constraints in the field of public spending) and in terms of the payment of the much needed contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, totalling EUR 410 million.

Among the member countries supporting the Fund, Italy was the first to make its contribution for 2008 available, in the amount of EUR 130 million.

3. A final point that I would like to make is that IFAD today finds itself in the midst of a reform initiative that is also affecting corporate institutions, and, in particular, the activities and *modus operandi* of the other two Rome-based agencies.
 - (a) At FAO, a debate is under way on the reform proposals outlined in the recent independent external evaluation. I am sure you will all join me in expressing the warmest encouragement to those working on the reform to identify the most appropriate instruments to confront the new challenges to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals – most importantly the first goal, to reduce and possibly halve hunger and poverty by 2015.
 - (b) WFP is also restructuring in an effort to overcome its own operational and financial challenges. The inexorable rise in food and transportation costs, especially in recent months, together with the current trend in international exchange rates, mean that innovative choices are needed to lead to a new strategic vision and create greater consistency and synergy with other international organizations operating in the development field.
 - (c) Against this challenging backdrop, we would like to acknowledge IFAD's pioneering role in adapting to changing international circumstances. Its vigorous process of internal reorganization, following on the independent evaluation of three years ago, has been unanimously hailed as a model of reform, both for the United Nations and for international financial institutions.

It is our hope, therefore, that the difficult path undertaken by IFAD may serve as an example for the other agencies, and that this unique opportunity may be fully embraced to implement the reforms needed to enable the Rome-based international organizations committed to fighting poverty and hunger to work with optimum efficiency and effectiveness. The pledge of the Italian Government, in due recognition for IFAD's successes, is our commitment to work together against poverty and against hunger so that humanity can rise to this challenge through the noble values that unite us.

Keynote address from His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Jean Nkuet , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon

Cameroon is honoured to take part, at the invitation of the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in this thirty-first session of the Governing marking the thirtieth anniversary of IFAD's founding. Our head of State, President Paul Biya, wished to be present today to deliver this address personally. When this became impossible at the last moment, he designated me to represent him and deliver it on his behalf. Therefore I should like first of all to assure IFAD's President, Lennart B ge, of President Biya's appreciation for this honour, and to reaffirm Cameroon's support for IFAD's operations.

I should like also to thank the Italian authorities for the welcome they have extended, both to myself and to the delegation accompanying me, since our arrival here in Rome.

Thirty years ago, in 1977, IFAD was born in response to the appeal launched at the 1974 World Food Conference.

IFAD was created to address the structural problem of financing the agriculture sector. Already at that time there were signs of waning interest in agriculture within the international community as global prices for agricultural commodities fell, overproduction led to surpluses, and terms of trade deteriorated.

While a number of donors were gradually disengaging from agriculture, IFAD remained active, convinced that the sector could continue to promote sustainable development and meet the needs of the poorest populations. History has borne out that conviction, and today the entire development community is showing a renewed interest in agriculture.

Cameroon has always assigned priority to agriculture within the development process. Over the past thirty years we have maintained very close ties with IFAD, despite difficult times during the worst of the economic crisis in the 1990s. The importance placed by IFAD on Cameroon's agricultural development is reflected in the seven projects it has financed in our country. Those projects under way today are promising, and the positive results achieved by Cameroon in combating poverty – particularly rural poverty – may be attributed in part to them. Cameroon has reduced its poverty index by close to twenty percentage points since 1996. We are on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We intend to strengthen our collaboration with IFAD further in the form of an agricultural bank and microfinance arrangements, in addition to support for agricultural production generally.

Now that I have given you a brief description of Cameroon's poverty reduction partnership with IFAD, it seems appropriate, at a venue such as this, to say a few words about the major global issues of our times: the changing development paradigm, climate change, biotechnology and biofuel.

Following a protracted period of rising global agricultural production leading to major surpluses that were unequally distributed, projections for the coming years issued recently by agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) indicate that the world is moving gradually towards a chronic deficit situation that could jeopardize food security. Fortunately the world is taking notice and once again according agriculture a status it should never have lost, recognizing its leading role as an engine of development. The titles of the FAO report, *The State of Food and Agriculture 2007: Paying Farmers for Environmental Services*, and the World Bank's *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*, are quite eloquent in this regard.

There is no question that this changing paradigm sends a strong message about a new dynamic in approaches to development issues. For African countries generally, given that a high proportion of the population derive their livelihoods from agriculture and related

activities, economic growth calls for defining adapted agricultural policies and pursuing investments with a potential for leverage. The nature of farming is such that that we need to focus specifically on small-scale operations to provide the millions of rural poor people in our country with a solid footing to improve their living conditions, reduce poverty and combat food insecurity. Overcoming hunger among the poorest is IFAD's mandate – and yet, a balance is needed with promoting medium-term farms and agribusiness, both of which involve the private sector and thus generate employment.

If agriculture is to fulfil its vital role in combating poverty and driving growth and sustainable development, certain fundamental conditions will need to be met:

First of all, we need to promote regional trade in agricultural commodities that are already traded globally, and diversify international exports. Moreover, particularly in Africa, we need to invest in water supply for agriculture in order to maximize yields. Other issues, such as access to production factors and financial services, should also be taken into account.

Good governance, macroeconomic equilibria and social peace continue to be prerequisites for implementing agricultural development programmes.

Several African countries have made enormous progress in setting up democratic structures that are functional albeit perfectible. We believe that democracy is a learning process that unfolds over the long term.

We in Cameroon stand ready to work with the community of donors, and particularly with IFAD, to refine an action plan that places agriculture at the forefront of development, in harmony with our rural sector development strategy.

On the question of climate change – one that is today on everyone's mind and generating concern all over the world – poor people have been shown to be most exposed to harm, especially from degraded ecosystems. Global warming is a fact, and one that is attributable above all to human activity. We must all raise our awareness and act immediately before the world reaches the point of no return.

Greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere recognize no national or continental boundaries. Isolated actions to address them within a single nation or region would be inappropriate. Both the problem and the solution are global, and that is why we believe that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto accords provide an objective foundation for a shared world effort.

We note that the Bali conference on climate change held in December 2007 produced a roadmap charting the course for a new negotiating process to be completed in 2009, leading to conclusions in 2012 and enriching the Kyoto Protocol.

All States will need to show political determination if the talks are to be successful, particularly on the questions of mitigation and adaptation, which appear to be the main points of controversy, but also on matters relating to deforestation and transfer of technology.

All actions taken at the national level, including legislation, must contribute to the collective effort. For our part, President Biya announced two large-scale initiatives during his address to the high-level meeting on climate change held in conjunction with the sixty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly: Operation Green Sahel to be relaunched by the end of this year, and a climate change observatory to be set up in Cameroon. It is our hope that these initiatives, as contributions to the global effort, will inspire other countries to participate as well.

Today's debate on biofuel focuses not only on its importance as an alternative energy source to fossil fuels, but also its impact on food security generally and on increasing the incomes of the poorest agricultural producers. We recognize the important work being done at FAO and IFAD in this regard, gathering information to better understand the global implications of this issue and making it available to Member States.

Cameroon believes that biofuels have enormous advantages to offer, provided that the existing agricultural potential is used judiciously.

In developing biofuels, it is important to keep in mind that competition could arise between biofuel crops and food crops, in terms of land use and labour time. An unbridled rush for higher incomes should not obscure the need to combat food insecurity. In this context, research may be crucial to develop the byproducts of such crops.

On the question of biotechnology, the problem of ethics continues to fuel controversy, centring around genetic manipulation. The usefulness of modern biotechnology to food and agriculture, as applied in agroindustry, is an area that certainly warrants further exploration.

What role can genetic engineering play in solving the problems of poor farmers in developing countries? We need to look at this question from the perspectives of food security, productivity gains, agricultural commodity markets, and economic growth generally. The world is far from having considered all these aspects exhaustively. In the absence of more specific knowledge on the long-term role of biotechnology on food and agriculture, some countries continue to adopt the principle of caution, deferring action pending more scientifically verified information. While interested in this question, Cameroon hopes to participate actively in this quest for information, using the resources available to it under its agricultural research programmes.

In the final analysis, it is undeniable that – whether climate change, biofuel or biotechnology – the human race faces important challenges in this twenty-first century in the area of food and agriculture. All of these important issues, in combination with strong demographic growth globally, mean that addressing development problems is becoming even more complex. Official development assistance structures and flows should take all these elements into account if they are truly to be at the service of world development.

IFAD, with the other two Rome-based United Nations agencies, FAO and the World Food Programme, each within its mandate, are sufficiently well equipped to support international efforts to solve today's problems through a well-defined partnership. The Member States, for their part, must honour their commitments.

In IFAD's case, we know that this session will launch the consultation process for its Eighth Replenishment. We confirm that Cameroon, as a member of the Executive Board, will do everything in its power to ensure a successful conclusion to those negotiations. My country will work to make available to IFAD the level of resources it needs to carry out an increasingly important work programme in our countries in the coming years. We will ensure that our own contribution is at least equivalent to its level for the Seventh Replenishment.

I should like to conclude my remarks by wishing IFAD a happy anniversary and many more fruitful years at the service of the world's poorest rural people.

Keynote address from King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Dr Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

It gives me pleasure to address your honourable assembly. I congratulate the Fund on the thirtieth anniversary of its founding and I wish you all success, so that IFAD may continue to perform its important, noble role in combating hunger and poverty in the world. I would like to thank the Fund for inviting me to participate and to speak at this session. I commend the Fund for its effective activities and remarkable achievements over the past thirty years in helping developing countries enhance rural development, combat poverty and hunger, and achieve sustainable agricultural and rural development. We are highly appreciative of the efforts made by the Fund's President and staff in carrying out IFAD's mandate. We also acknowledge the efforts and ideas of IFAD's Governing Councils – past and present - and those of former IFAD presidents, aimed at the achievement of the goals for which the Fund was established, which have enabled such a high level of performance.

Relative success has been achieved thanks to the efforts made since the World Food Conference in 1974 and the establishment of the Fund in 1977. Nonetheless, parts of the world still suffer from poverty, food insecurity and growing hunger. Member States must therefore work together to help the Fund achieve its noble humanitarian goals. This is needed now more than ever because of the current economic and nutritional conditions in developing countries. Saudi Arabia emphasizes the importance of the Fund's effective and catalytic role in rural development as an effective means of fighting hunger and poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goal – supported by the Fund – of halving global poverty and hunger by 2015.

Saudi Arabia attaches the utmost importance to sustainable rural development, the development and rational use of natural resources, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As evident in the Government's successive development plans, the Saudi agricultural sector, like other sectors, has received much attention from the Government in recognition of the key contribution it can make towards increasing the rural population's income and prosperity; enhancing food security, and social and economic stability; diversifying national economic resources; combating desertification; and protecting the environment. The Kingdom has formulated strategies, plans, programmes, policies and mechanisms to achieve its declared agricultural goals, which include training personnel, modernizing and developing agricultural activities, transferring and adapting advanced technology suited to the Kingdom's natural conditions, boosting productivity, promoting technical and quality standards, and enhancing competitiveness to keep pace with global developments. Saudi Arabia has financed the necessary production inputs for agricultural operations, especially for small farmers who use water-control systems, providing them with incentives and free land.

Believing in IFAD's role in dealing with the tragedy of poverty and creating humane conditions for the world's poor, the Kingdom has continuously contributed to the Fund since its establishment. In addition to contributing to the Fund and other multilateral institutions, Saudi Arabia provides food assistance and soft, direct development loans to help the developing and least developed countries. Over the decades, Saudi Arabia has provided yearly development assistance amounting to 4 per cent of its total GDP, which greatly exceeds the minimum United Nations request of less than 1 percent of national income from donor countries. Eighty-three developing countries have benefited from Saudi development aid. The Kingdom also attaches the utmost importance to collective action, cooperation and international solidarity as effective means of assisting needy countries. It will continue to support international organizations, especially effective organizations such as IFAD, to buttress and strengthen solidarity, international cooperation and fraternity. The Kingdom contributed US\$389,923,000 to the Fund, between its establishment and the Seventh Replenishment.

The Fund was created on the basis of a strategic partnership among the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the governments of other concerned countries. The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and IFAD have maintained a long-standing, strong and effective partnership dating back to 1977, when both organizations were formed. This partnership has grown increasingly effective, as both partners have adopted the principle of complementarity in rural development and combating poverty. Thus, OFID has focused on rural infrastructure, while IFAD has concentrated on services and on agricultural and rural investment. IFAD has implemented many projects and programmes in these areas in various developing countries through joint financing with OPEC. Time has demonstrated the benefits of the effectiveness and success of such partnerships. Saudi Arabia thus underscores the strategic importance of the partnership approach and believes that efforts to develop this approach in working towards development goals should continue. Here, I must mention the effective coordination and fruitful cooperation between the Fund and the United Nations organizations located in Rome, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme, particularly regarding joint programmes to combat hunger and poverty and to achieve sustainable agricultural and rural development. I also attach importance to the participation of beneficiary countries, their local governments and — in particular — the direct beneficiaries of the Fund's development programmes.

Agricultural and rural development and the combating of poverty are all closely linked, necessitating the coordination of efforts and adoption of integrated planning and programmes. Agricultural and rural financing, while important, is ineffective without an integrated services system that addresses impediments to agricultural development and the fight against poverty. IFAD's adoption of this integrated approach is reflected clearly in its Strategic Framework 2007-2010 and Action Plan for Improving its Development Effectiveness, which deserve our praise and gratitude. It will be important to monitor the strategic framework in order to develop and enhance its effectiveness in view of the complexities arising from rapid global changes in technology, information, trade, the climate, etc.

The economic opening up and globalization now under way highlight the importance of dedicating appropriate attention in the Fund's programmes to agricultural marketing in target countries to ensure the competitiveness of local products and the ability to penetrate domestic and foreign markets. Needless to say, achieving competitiveness and access to export markets for products from developing countries will require a review by developed countries of their policies on prices, subsidies, and protection in the framework of the relevant World Trade Organization agreement. This will make it possible to reach a global agreement that entrenches free trade and competition and facilitates the opening of developed countries to the products of developing countries, especially the poorest countries.

The Saudi Government views with concern the climate changes in the world. It believes that it would be appropriate for the Fund to focus on programmes and projects that facilitate the effective management of natural and human resources; combat desertification; protect and develop the environment; and avoid or mitigate the effects of natural disasters, such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, etc. The Fund should make such programmes a component of integrated agricultural and rural development in the developing countries.

Based on its concern for the environment and global climate, Saudi Arabia recommended — in a meeting of the heads of state of the OPEC countries in Riyadh in November 2007 — the establishment of a Fund to finance research on factors affecting climate change and the environment, including oil, and has provided US\$300 million to this fund. The OPEC member countries broadly welcomed this recommendation and expect to help establish this Fund. The results of the research financed by this Fund will enrich our general understanding of global climate variables. They will also promote

policies and programmes that facilitate environmental balance in view of the growing requirements of global economic and social development.

To achieve the desired goals, it is important to ensure that IFAD assistance reaches the targeted beneficiaries efficiently and effectively. Activities and programmes addressing rural development and the elimination of poverty must be effective, leading to tangible results and ongoing improvements in the lives of the targeted rural population, especially the poorest. The Fund has made valuable efforts in this regard. It signed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 and also supported the Monterrey Consensus, which calls for the effective and efficient mobilization of financial resources. It has also adopted a results-based management system in its various operations and activities. This system provides an essential framework for evaluating and monitoring performance and making adjustments to ensure the continuous enhancement and improved effectiveness of Fund activities.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the Chairman of the Governing Council, and the President of the Fund and his colleagues for their accomplishments and the plans for the future that they have prepared. We would also like to thank all of you for listening. I would like to emphasize that the Kingdom wishes to continue strengthening relations with the Fund, which will lead to broader, more comprehensive cooperation in the future. This will allow us to improve the conditions of the poor and needy, so that they may live decent lives. It is our hope that the Fund will remain effective and on the cutting edge as it works towards the attainment of the immediate and future goals of Member States, particularly those of combating poverty and hunger in the world.

**Message of His Excellency Ban Ki-moon,
Secretary-General of the United Nations**

I send warm greetings to the Governing Council of IFAD on the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary session.

The work of IFAD has never been more important. We face a development emergency. The year 2008 must be the year of the "Bottom Billion": the poorest, most disadvantaged segment of humanity. This must be the year that the international community renews its commitment to the needs of the weak and the disadvantaged; those who have been excluded from the mainstream of global society. I believe this is best done by redoubling our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, especially the crucial targets of halving poverty and hunger by 2015.

The world is already past the midpoint of the race to achieve the goals. And while many countries have made strong progress towards the goals, others lag behind. At the same time, existing MDG plans face new and emerging challenges. Climate change in particular has emerged as a daunting obstacle that undermines existing advances while threatening future gains.

Climate change can prove especially detrimental to agricultural production. It disrupts weather patterns and upsets fragile ecosystems, threatening the crop-cycle and food production. Coupled with the dramatic increase in food prices over the past year, global warming could prompt a potentially severe food crisis.

Better support for agriculture is crucial to address these worrying developments. As the United Nations agency devoted to supporting smallholder farmers and other rural poor, IFAD has a major role to play. Your institution represents a unique partnership between the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and developing countries. Over its 30 years, IFAD has supported programmes to reduce poverty directly in rural areas, where three quarters of the world's poorest live. It has also generated many insights and models that can provide guidance to all concerned with the eradication of poverty. I especially appreciate the role that IFAD – through its representation on the High-level Committee on Programmes of the Chief Executives Board – is playing in enhancing the United Nations' system-wide response to climate change and other major challenges.

I expect that your meeting in Rome will provide renewed impetus to your vital work. In that spirit, I send all of you my best wishes for a most productive session.

**Statement by the President of IFAD, Mr Lennart Båge,
to the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council**

Mr Chairman,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Governors,
Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Welcome to Rome and to IFAD, and to our thirtieth anniversary. Let me join the Chairman of the Council in extending my own warm welcome to our distinguished guests. On this thirtieth anniversary, I am happy to see here today all three former Presidents of IFAD.

Mr Chairman,

Four weeks ago in Viet Nam I saw the impressive results of rapid development. In my first visit, 25 years ago, abject poverty and hunger defined the lives of most rural people.

Agricultural growth has underpinned Viet Nam's economic growth, cutting poverty from nearly 60 per cent in the early 1990s to less than 20 per cent today. And Viet Nam has enjoyed growth with equity: smallholder farmers are both key actors and beneficiaries.

But 22 million people in the Mekong and Red River Deltas today face the effects of climate change – more devastating typhoons, floods, salt water intrusion, rising temperatures and rising sea levels.

Similar problems to those that Viet Nam faces are faced across the developing world. Tackling poverty and hunger, climate change, rising food and energy prices. And achieving the Millennium Development Goals – these are today's imperatives.

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr Chairman,

This year IFAD is thirty years old. The mid-1970s were also a time of rapidly rising food and energy prices, with fears of food shortages combined with a concern that, in a world of plenty, millions were still going hungry. This concern turned to outrage, and outrage to action.

One concrete action was the foundation of IFAD, born of a unique partnership between developed nations, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, and other developing countries. Our founding Members wanted an organisation that could help poor farmers increase their productivity, incomes and food security.

TODAY

Thirty years later, those who predicted that food production could not keep pace with a growing population have been proved wrong. In 2008 the world is feeding almost twice as many people from virtually the same amount of land.

We have also seen tremendous progress towards reducing poverty and hunger in many parts of the world. In China, for example, the number of people living in extreme poverty in 1990 was 33 per cent, had reached 10 per cent by 2004 and is projected to be 2 per cent in 2015. China's progress is exceptional, but in much of Asia and Latin America too poverty has been falling. And in Africa, after a setback in the 1990s, the proportion of those living in extreme poverty has also, finally, begun to fall – although the actual numbers continue to increase. Indeed, some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, notably Ghana, will reach the Millennium Development Goals ahead of time.

Still we live in a world where almost one billion people live in conditions of extreme poverty, where hunger persists, inequality is rising, and where more than two billion people live on less than US\$2 per day.

AGRICULTURE IS KEY

If we are to make faster progress, especially in those regions where we are not on track to meet the MDGs, we must refocus on agriculture, and in particular smallholder agriculture. I base this belief on four facts:

Fact 1: Despite urbanisation, the majority of the world's poorest people live in rural areas and will continue to do so for decades to come.

Fact 2: the vast majority of poor rural people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Fact 3: Investment in agriculture has been shown again and again to have a powerful impact on poverty reduction. Growth in agriculture has driven wider economic growth throughout history – from 18th century England, to 19th century Japan to 20th century India. And growth in agriculture really delivers. According to the *World Development Report* last year, GDP growth generated by agriculture is up to four times more effective in reducing poverty than growth in other sectors.

Fact 4: Government spending on agriculture in most poor countries was in sharp decline until recent years. And development aid for agriculture has not so much fallen as plummeted. From 18 per cent of all aid in 1979 to 3.5 per cent in 2004, and a pitiful 2.9 per cent in 2006.

Given this, governments and donor agencies have promised more attention to agriculture. But promises do not put tortillas, ugali, matoke or – in this the International Year of the Potato – potatoes on the table.

Thanks to your support, IFAD has stood against this trend. IFAD-supported programmes have reached well over 300 million rural people across Africa, Asia and Latin America, helping them to obtain access to land, water, finance, markets and technology. We have increased our programme of work by on average 10 per cent a year for the last five years and this will continue this year and next. Nearly 50 per cent of IFAD funding goes to Africa, placing us among the top three multilateral institutions there. As a result of our Action Plan, we are enhancing the efficiency of our delivery, the effectiveness of our targeting and the sustainability of the benefits.

IFAD: RESULTS AND IMPACT

Mr Chairman,

Throughout our thirty years we have stayed true to our founding principles: to see the world from the perspective of those whom we seek to help and empower – poor farmers in Mozambique, nomadic herders in the Syrian Arab Republic, forest dwellers in Nepal, indigenous peoples in Peru, and fishers in Bangladesh. And to ensure that the programmes are driven by the poor people themselves.

Across all groups of rural poor people, women are often the most disadvantaged, with less access to land, income, technologies and knowledge. Yet they are at the centre of the rural economy, often producing the bulk of the food crops, especially in Africa. Empowering women has long been a priority for IFAD, embodied in virtually every IFAD project, and it is a strong legacy from my predecessors.

Indigenous people and ethnic minorities are among the poorest peoples in the world. Worldwide, they account for 5 per cent of the global population, and yet they represent 15 per cent of the world's poor. They often live in remote upland areas and are often the stewards of biodiversity. With our focus on poverty, IFAD has long recognised the importance of supporting these communities. Today, in response to the requests of member governments, we devote more than 30 per cent of our programmes in Latin America and Asia in support of these communities. A great step forward was taken last September with the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. And IFAD's partnership with the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is a key component of our engagement with representatives of indigenous peoples.

Mr Chairman,

Microfinance is an area where IFAD has played a pioneering role, starting with our support to the Grameen Bank in 1980. Currently about two thirds of IFAD-supported programmes have a rural finance component, focusing on credit, savings, insurance and remittances. A single project in Maharashtra in India with IFAD investment of US\$40 million has attracted co-financing of nearly US\$170 million, reaching over one million households, or more than six million people.

In more than 40 countries, remittances represent over 10 per cent of GDP and approximately a third goes to rural families, dwarfing any other inflow of resources. According to a recent IFAD study, remittances were worth US\$300 billion in 2006, directly reaching more than 10 per cent of the population of the developing world. That is why IFAD is working to build rural financial systems through which remittances can become a development resource.

More than half of IFAD projects are water-related, from smallholder irrigation and water management projects in Guatemala, to watering points for livestock in The Sudan, as well as access to water for domestic use in China and Mauritania.

IFAD has supported, often through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system, agricultural research into the specific crops of importance to poor rural farmers. Agricultural research, which so successfully drove the first Green Revolution in Asia, has been shown to deliver rates of return in excess of 40 per cent. A special focus in the coming years will be research into drought, pest and salinity resistant crop varieties.

IFAD-funded work on the two major African cassava pests, the Mealy Bug and the Green Mite, and on improved virus-resistant varieties, including the triploid cultivar, has dramatically increased productivity, promoting nutritional security for 200 million poor people in the entire cassava belt. Combined with IFAD support for post-harvest processing, this has underpinned the cassava revolution. Many African countries have become self-sufficient and Nigeria is now the largest cassava producer in the world.

IFAD has also supported the development of the New Rice for Africa (NERICA), new rice varieties that combines the hardiness of local African rice species with the high productivity of Asian rice. There are currently about 200,000 hectares of upland NERICA grown by over 100,000 farmers in 27 countries across sub-Saharan Africa. Our current focus on scaling up its use offers both opportunities and challenges. I hope these can be addressed at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in Japan later this year.

Through the Farmers' Forum, IFAD has brought together farmers' and rural producers' organisations to share ideas and experiences, and make the voice of the poor farmers heard. This year in Rome there are over 70 global, regional and national organisations representing hundreds of millions of farmers from all parts of the world. Thanks to this partnership, representatives of farmers' organisations now participate in the development of most of the country strategies, programmes and projects funded by IFAD, making them better and more sustainable.

Mr Chairman,

In Paraguay last May, I had the chance to meet smallholder farmers. A group of 641 farmers had been able, with IFAD support, to invest in cold storage and meet the necessary phyto-sanitary standards for domestic and export markets and they now supply the central market of Asuncion with fruit and horticultural produce, and export to Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Last year they sold on average over US\$2,000 per farmer.

Last April, I visited several districts in south-western Orissa, among the most deprived in India. Three quarters of the local population of 1.4 million live below the poverty line. Fifty per cent belong to tribal groups. Illiteracy rates among women are as high as 90 per cent. An IFAD-supported programme, cofinanced by DFID and WFP, has enabled

nearly 7,000 tribal women and men to take possession of land titles for the first time. As a result of this, they have been able to abandon slash and burn practices, working their newly-owned land in more productive and environmentally sound ways, and send their children to school.

IFAD REFORM – THE ACTION PLAN

Mr Chairman,

Two years ago the governing bodies of IFAD endorsed the Action Plan to Improve IFAD's Development Effectiveness. Over these two years, I am proud to report that we have delivered on our commitment on time and on budget.

In 2007 we started implementing the organisation's strategic priorities as outlined in our new Strategic Framework (2007-2010). We built tools and organisational processes to improve IFAD's country- and project-level operations. The quality of project design is being strengthened through new guidelines, a new quality enhancement system, and a new arms-length quality assurance system.

To deliver on IFAD's mandate we have a new policy on targeting, and strategies on innovation and on knowledge management. We are implementing our new policy on supervision and by the end of 2007 we had taken on over half of the IFAD project portfolio for direct supervision.

We have mainstreamed our country presence. And IFAD's human and financial resources are being aligned with the organization's objectives.

We developed a new Corporate Planning and Performance Management System to measure and report results. It provides the basis for planning and budgeting, through the annual Results-based Programme of Work and Budget.

The Report on IFAD's Development Effectiveness – presented for the first time last year – shows that our performance in key areas such as effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability is rising.

Although the challenge now is to sustain and deepen reform, we are beginning to see clear results.

The basis for all our efforts to reform and strengthen the Fund in recent years is the dedication and hard work of the IFAD staff, in Rome and all over the world. They played a key role in affirming IFAD's core values. I want to pay tribute to the way they have risen to the challenge of the Action Plan and their commitment to making IFAD even more effective in its mission.

I am delighted that in this 30th anniversary year IFAD will move into a new permanent headquarters. I invite you all to the inauguration, planned for July this year.

IFAD'S ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Mr Chairman,

Working in partnership is critical to the effectiveness of our activities. Our key partners are, of course, the developing countries themselves – our member governments, the rural poor people and their organizations.

We work closely with our sister agencies in Rome, FAO and WFP, as well as with the other UN agencies on policy issues, operations and business practices. We are also deeply engaged with them in the One UN pilot initiatives. I myself have witnessed in Viet Nam, where we share an office with FAO, the benefits of this initiative.

IFAD is also an international financial institution, and as such we have very close partnerships with other financial institutions. The presence here today of Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank and Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank, symbolises the strength of our partnership.

We have worked together with the World Bank in projects from Bolivia to Cameroon, Egypt and Indonesia, and our recent collaboration in the *World Development Report* brings us to a new stage in this long-standing partnership.

We are also deepening our long-standing partnership with the African Development Bank, starting with a joint evaluation that will help us collaborate more effectively to address the challenges facing agriculture in Africa.

In Africa, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) provide a framework for all our efforts. Let me also mention two other key partners in Africa, the OPEC Fund for International Development, with whom we work in 21 countries in Africa, as well as in other parts of the world, and the Belgian Survival Fund, a unique partnership between a multilateral institution and a bilateral agency.

But the international architecture is changing with the emergence of foundations and large developmental NGOs, some with resources comparable to international institutions. Particularly interesting is the initiative AGRA, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, chaired by the former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. This is a new partner for IFAD in our work to ensure that Africa can achieve its own Green Revolution. Our collaboration with these emerging actors will add a further dimension to IFAD's work.

All of us have an imperative to work under the leadership of our member governments in a harmonized way. This is the Paris Agenda. And IFAD will contribute actively in taking forward this agenda at the important meeting in Accra in September.

NEW CHALLENGES

Mr Chairman,

Climate change is at the centre of a web of new challenges. A disastrous combination of rising temperatures, climate variability, uncertain growing seasons, decreased water availability, new pests and diseases, and decreasing biodiversity has the potential to reverse recent progress in reducing poverty in many parts of the world. Africa is projected to fare worst, with at least 75 million people there at risk of increased water stress.

But it will not be just an African problem. All regions will be affected. Hundreds of millions of smallholder farmers, herders and other poor rural groups live in marginal areas, at serious risk from degradation and desertification. We can expect future climate change to put close to 50 million extra people at risk of hunger by 2020. Those least responsible for the problem will be those first and hardest hit.

Put simply, the price of development just went up. Substantial and additional money will be needed to help poor countries adapt to climate change and make our investments "climate-proof".

Closely linked with climate change are two other trends of growing importance – food prices and biofuels. Food prices have risen dramatically in recent years as a growing population is demanding more food and a more varied diet. Over the past three years, the price of wheat and rice has doubled while the price of corn is up by 50 per cent.

Higher food prices and the potential of biofuels represent a two-edged sword for rural poor people, creating opportunities as well as challenges. Rising food prices could make smallholder agriculture more productive and economically viable, even as they pose risks to those who are net buyers of food. Biofuels, especially second generation biofuels that can be grown on marginal lands, could offer smallholder farmers significant new income sources. These two trends are making "the rural space" more attractive for investments.

IFAD has 30 years of experience in supporting smallholder farmers to organize themselves, access financial and technological services, promote small-scale irrigation and engage on fair terms with commercial banks, traders and agro-processors. We also have a wealth of experience helping poor rural people manage their environmental

vulnerability. The agreement to house in IFAD the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, or UNCCD, was based on this experience and has further reinforced our efforts to combat land degradation.

The Fund is therefore well placed to help translate these new opportunities into higher productivity and incomes for millions of smallholder farmers. Two elements – improving the effectiveness of public service delivery and attracting greater private sector investment into the “rural space” – will be decisive in whether the rural poor are able to confront effectively the changes that are challenging their lives.

Poor rural people are often powerless but they are not irrelevant. How they manage their land matters to us all. Whether or not they store or release carbon will depend on the opportunities they have and the incentives they are offered. We can help them to become part of the solution – helping to feed the world and store the carbon.

CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman,

2007 was a landmark year. It was a year in which food prices rose to record highs, climate change dominated headlines and in which the world rediscovered the importance of agriculture.

On Friday we will launch the discussions on the eighth replenishment of IFAD’s resources, which will set the course for IFAD in the run-up to 2015. We will outline our programme for the years ahead to the replenishment consultation.

Thanks not least to our Action Plan, IFAD is the right institution at the right time and in the right condition to make a much bigger contribution. We will do this by working with our partners. And I congratulate both the African Development Bank and the World Bank for their recent significant increases in contributions of up to 50 per cent in their latest replenishment. I hope that we can secure a commitment for at least a comparable increase in our resources to finance our programmes in the eighth replenishment period.

The challenges are huge. The clock is ticking. As United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his New Year message: “Let 2008 be the year of the bottom billion”.

So today I call upon the international community to invest in smallholder farmers to help them to address the triple scourge of poverty, climate change and rising food prices. Their lives – and our common future – depend on it.

**Keynote address by Mr Donald Kaberuka,
President of the African Development Bank**

Thank you for inviting me here today, and for associating the African Development Bank with this event – a celebration of 30 years of IFAD's achievements in fighting hunger and poverty across the world. I join those who preceded me on this podium to commend Lennart Båge for his leadership.

Over the last 30 years, the African Development Bank and IFAD have forged a strong partnership, which is set to grow even further. Our two institutions together account for 50 per cent of multilateral development assistance to agriculture in Africa, and our support in rural development will remain critical. Both our organizations and sister institutions, especially the World Bank, continue to commit significant resources to agriculture and rural development. We have registered many successes, but we also know today that in many countries – especially in Africa – agricultural productivity is not very much different from what it was 30 years ago.

Let me share with you three daunting challenges, which will be familiar to you but which are considered critical for our work in the coming years. Permit me also to restrict my remarks to my own continent, Africa.

First, mounting evidence shows that, although many of our countries have, in the last decade, registered unprecedented economic growth – which is a precondition for increased per capita income and poverty reduction – in many cases, but not everywhere, inequalities are growing, and so are our perceptions that prosperity is not here yet. Growing disparities in early stages of rapid economic growth are not unique to Africa, and indeed this phenomenon is now being experienced by many other emerging economies. But it has posed two problems that are specific to the very low-income countries: the problem of sustainability and that of avoiding the reversals we have seen in the past. This is because if growing prosperity is not seen to be shared, it breeds social tensions and seeds of instability, and sustainability becomes tenuous.

There are no easy answers, but it is clear that, in the overall scheme of policy responses, a number of areas must assume even greater importance in the future: the role of smallholder agriculture; small and medium businesses; and the participation of young people and women – domains in which IFAD's unrivalled global experience is acknowledged.

My second point is this one: How do we respond to the masses of the rural poor who are increasingly gravitating to the cities, or shall I say to the slums in the cities, where hope is turned into despair and potentially constructive energies are sometimes turned into destructive ones. This phenomenon is not unique to Africa. This year, for the first time in history, half of the world population will be living in urban areas. Most of this rural-urban movement, not surprisingly, is occurring in developing countries. Indeed, part of the explanation for the rise in food prices is the shift in supply and demand patterns occasioned by rapid urbanization and the associated demographics.

Now, consider this massive rural-urban migration in the context of the uncertainties caused by the impending collapse of rural economic livelihoods occasioned by the impact of climate change and the limited means of poor communities to adapt. As their own incomes decline and food prices increase on the markets, the poor are being caught in a double trap with far-reaching consequences.

I know these issues – namely, the combined challenges of demographic shifts, urbanization and climate change – will be extensively discussed here and that they are issues for which we are all seeking answers.

As you deliberate on the way forward – in the light of market developments (especially the competition for resources among food, animal feed and biofuels), which have already translated into record-high prices and also, from what Lennart has told us, even potential shortages – it is evident to all of us that we are at a turning point.

We are all encouraged by the renewed attention to agriculture not only by the international financing institutions and the United Nations agencies, but also by foundations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Such initiatives not only bring in additional resources but also novel approaches. The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, which seeks to marshal talents and resources to enable Africa's own green revolution, is another example.

In June 2006 in Abuja, in Nigeria, the African Union Special Summit of the Heads of State and Government mandated the African Development Bank to establish an Africa-wide fertilizer financing mechanism, which we are proceeding to do.

As we resolve to commit more resources to agriculture, we must also do so drawing lessons from the past. Our renewed collective enthusiasm for the sector must be accompanied by interventions informed by the successes and disappointments of the past, as well as by the emerging international aid architecture. We all have evidence from external evaluations showing that, despite rising commitments, in the case of almost all international financing institutions, barely half of the evaluated projects, or thereabouts, are showing satisfactory results. The reasons are complex and are both internal and external, but we must draw lessons and within this new landscape, so to speak, we in the international financing institutions must reinvent the way we work together and leverage each other's strengths.

It is for this reason that I would like to commend the Boards of IFAD and the African Development Bank, which have approved a joint evaluation of our present experience in Africa in the domain of agriculture and rural development. This exceptional exercise was proposed by IFAD's President and myself, and will probably be the first time two international financing institutions pool resources and talent to launch this type of exercise.

Our two organizations are, of course, individually capable of doing their own evaluations, but the aim here goes beyond that. As our experts have crafted it, it is about joint efforts, pooled resources, common methodologies, single teams and one report. I, like President Bâge here, very much look forward to this joint evaluation. It will help us understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of each of our organizations and pave the way for leveraging our strengths and mitigating our weaknesses – an exercise that I consider critical in the new aid landscape.

The African Development Bank and IFAD have made achievements on the ground: in Ghana and the United Republic of Tanzania, we are working together to support agricultural marketing systems, with IFAD assisting farmers in increasing production and productivity, while the African Development Bank focuses on infrastructure-related interventions: feeder roads, irrigation, storage and markets. We are both keen to enhance this type of cooperation among ourselves and with sister institutions. In addition, as Africa's own bank, we are concerned about the continued deterioration of our centres of excellence in agricultural research and the dissipation of our pool of talented scientists and agronomists. As I saw on my recent visit to an excellent agricultural research centre in Cameroon, we can reverse this decline by building excellence at the regional level.

As I come to the end of my statement, let me recount a story to you. Some 14 years ago, when I was Finance Minister of my country, I had the pleasure of welcoming the then-IFAD President, who I hope is here. He was visiting us, at the invitation of my Head of State, to help the country cope with the challenges of almost half a million refugees who were returning and settling in north-eastern Rwanda. This is a cattle-keeping area with frequent droughts and a national park nearby. The carrying capacity of the fragile ecosystem was being tested to the limit by both men and animals. Each dry season, animals would die because of the lack of water and shortage of feed. The national park was being invaded and malnutrition was quite high. IFAD and the Government proceeded to draw up a programme to provide water for people and livestock, to improve animal health, to diversify production and to add value. Today, all the problems

have not been resolved and poverty remains, but thanks to IFAD's involvement, relative prosperity is returning to the region: the national park is protected; malnutrition has been reduced; and roads have improved accessibility, enabling farmers and cattle keepers to get better value for their produce. It is this type of contribution that deserves our support.

I would like to exhort President Båge to urge IFAD's donors to respond generously. We have new risks on the horizon – the competition from biofuels and, as many have said at the outset, climate change. Poor people facing old and new challenges do not wish to remain bonded to dependency. On the contrary, they want to be liberated from dependency so they can fend for themselves. It will not happen if markets are distorted by US\$1 billion a day subsidies because the Doha Round is not moving fast enough. It will not happen if those who can do not resolve to protect our planet from carbon emissions – and it will not be possible if poor countries suffering the effects of global warming are not enabled with means in an additional way to adapt their agriculture, their habitats and their livelihoods to the impact of carbon emissions.

In this task, I want to assure you of the strong partnership of the African Development Bank with IFAD and others, in particular the World Bank. We have today an active agricultural portfolio of US\$2.1 billion – that is, 35 per cent of overall interventions. Our intention is to do more in a framework of strategic partnerships with sister institutions in the light of our own comparative advantage. We have some excellence in domains as varied as agricultural infrastructure, irrigation and water, support for agricultural research centres and assistance to our countries in moving up the agricultural value chain.

I would like to commend the partnership we have had over the last 30 years, and I look forward to expanding its scope in the years to come for our common cause – fighting hunger and poverty in the continent of Africa.

**Keynote address by Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala,
Managing Director of the World Bank**

I am really delighted to be here today to mark IFAD's 30 years of fighting rural poverty and hunger. I cannot help but express my pleasure at the election of my Honourable Minister of Agriculture as Chair of the Governing Council. This is truly an honour for Nigeria.

I also feel a real personal pleasure and sense of commitment in being here today since, in my past career in the World Bank, I spent 10 years working on the agricultural sector, including managing an agricultural division in the Middle East. During that time, I personally oversaw many portfolio projects in which we cooperated very successfully with IFAD.

Today the attention of the world's policy-makers is focused on sub-prime woes and the financial crisis. But the real crisis is that of hunger and malnutrition for most of the two billion people in the world living on less than US\$2 a day, and the almost one billion living on US\$1 a day or less. Hunger and malnutrition are being worsened by rising world food and fuel prices. Global food prices have increased substantially (26 per cent year-on-year) in the past three years, due partly to stepped-up use of food crops for biofuels, as well as high fertilizer prices, low stocks, droughts and rapid income growth in some developing countries. Food importing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are facing a tough time. This is the real problem that should grab the world's attention.

We know that 75 per cent of the world's poor people are rural and most of them depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Agriculture is today, more than ever, a fundamental instrument for fighting hunger and malnutrition and for supporting sustainable development, poverty reduction and wealth creation. This means that improving agricultural productivity, ensuring market access, supporting market-based and other mechanisms to get food from where it is abundant to where it is needed, are all important approaches to help manage rising food prices and help poor people achieve food security, so that they can hope for a better future for themselves and for their children.

We applaud IFAD and its sister organizations, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization here in Rome, for the excellent work they are doing on this agenda. World Bank President Bob Zoellick has called hunger and malnutrition part of the forgotten Millennium Development Goals, along with maternal mortality, and is determined to put them at the centre of the Bank's work on the poorer countries. He strongly believes that on this aspect of the Millennium Development Goals the World Bank Group must work in close partnership with the Rome-based organizations, IFAD, WFP and FAO, along with other concerned international organizations such as the African Development Bank, and together with the private sector, foundations and civil society. All of these in turn must work in the closest of collaborative partnerships with the governments of concerned countries to ensure impact under this agenda on the ground.

Mr Zoellick has noted, in the landmark 2008 World Development Report, that agriculture will be a key pillar of the Bank's strategy for fighting hunger and malnutrition and is central to fighting poverty and improving a country's economic development and quality of life. Agriculture holds the strongest potential to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth, especially in the world's poorest countries. Today's world is characterized by rapidly expanding markets, institutional innovation and revolutions in biotechnology and information technology. Yet the world still has millions of truly poor people with little or no access to the same markets, expertise and credit. That is the challenge of our time. It is the challenge that must shape all our partnerships.

The IFAD/World Bank partnership is a good example of how we can successfully confront today's challenges when we work together, and I will now focus on that partnership.

IFAD and the World Bank have collaborated successfully for 30 years. At the global level, for example, we and the FAO co-sponsored the Consultative Group on International

Agricultural Research. This remarkable system of 15 research centres is one of the world's pioneering organizations, and IFAD's superb leadership role in its governance is one of the major reasons for its success.

Our collaboration also extends to a number of thematic areas. For example:

- We collaborate on poverty and social impact analysis work, with World Bank staff serving as reviewers of several IFAD country case studies on rural poverty in Africa.
- On rural finance, IFAD and the World Bank are both members of the donor working group Improving Capacity-Building in Rural Finance (CABFIN), and we have worked together to update IFAD's rural finance strategy and rural finance decision tools. The more we scale up access to rural finance programmes, the faster we will reduce poverty.
- Together with FAO, we are also working on the *Gender in Agricultural Livelihoods Sourcebook*, which covers 15 subsectors and presents a good practice document with respect to mainstreaming gender. IFAD is taking leadership in the implementation of the land module of this sourcebook.

At the country level, our collaboration is particularly strong. Since 1978 the World Bank and IFAD have cofinanced 148 projects, 17 in the last five years, including nine in Africa. One exciting example of recent collaboration for me is the India north-east rural livelihoods project where, due to successful IFAD intervention at the community level with an indigenous community in Assam, the World Bank is building and scaling up a successful intervention that looks at microfinance to help indigenous peoples be more productive. So the World Bank is going to scale up this intervention with a US\$250 million project, which will be the north-east rural livelihoods project in India.

We have also worked successfully in Cameroon. The National Agricultural Research and Extension Programmes Support Project strengthened producer organizations and improved credit, inputs, marketing services and access to agricultural research. It did this through a network of almost 59,000 contact groups, representing over 50 per cent of all farm families (up from 15 per cent). As a result, agricultural productivity increased for many of the major crops – for instance, maize yields doubled and cassava yields increased fourfold. An additional benefit is that about 93 per cent of women in the target areas also received assistance from the project.

Among current projects, the Ethiopia Pastoral Community Development project is also important, seeking to improve the livelihoods of pastoral groups in the arid and semi-arid Ethiopian lowlands, and the just-approved National Agricultural Technology Project in Bangladesh is designed to improve agricultural productivity and the performance of the national agricultural technology system. It is worthwhile referring to these specifics so that we remind ourselves whose lives we are touching as we work on the ground, and whether we are doing it successfully.

As underlined in the 2008 World Development Report: Agriculture for Development, we need to deepen and broaden our work, and in addition explore new instruments of assistance such as catastrophic insurance bonds. In this regard, IFAD's role as an innovator and incubator of new ideas will be of the greatest importance. We also now need to move forward with the same determination on other global issues including perhaps the most important global challenge facing all of us today – climate change.

Recent studies on climate change show that the poorest countries are the most affected by droughts and consequently suffer the most as a result of decreasing agricultural productivity. There is also the problem of floods, in many countries occurring with a frequency that has never before been encountered. It is absolutely crucial that we increase agricultural research and focus on high-impact mitigation and adaptation actions, such as water storage and irrigation and development of resilient crops, if we are to overcome this problem.

We also need to focus on other global issues such as avian flu, marine fisheries, the global forest partnership and trade. It is only by working together as one community in partnership that we will find new ways to address these global issues.

At the institutional level, we need to help countries raise the effectiveness and efficiency of their service delivery, and of access by the poor to rural markets, credit and technical expertise, among others.

The World Development Report stresses the importance of working at these three levels – global, national, and institutional – to ensure that the messages transmitted in the report, which have been endorsed by most of the development community, are translated into actions on the ground.

The World Bank is proud of our continuing collaboration with IFAD on this report, even after its dissemination, to operationalize the key messages: (a) reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth, especially in Africa; (b) reduce the growing income inequalities between rural and urban areas in more urbanized and middle-income countries; and (c) contribute to environmental sustainability.

We are proud that our strategy and that of IFAD based on this report are broadly congruent. Both institutions have been increasing their agriculture sector financing since 2002, after years of a deep dip in such financing. The World Bank's portfolio is now just over US\$3 billion in agriculture and IFAD's over half a billion. This encouraging trend is very welcome in light of the additional resources needed to operationalize the World Development Report.

Let me say, in this context, a special thank you to IFAD's staff and to IFAD's President, Lennart Båge, who has been such a strong supporter of the World Development Report and personally participated in many launch events. We are also grateful to him for his personal commitment to a strong collaborative partnership between the World Bank Group and IFAD. We wish IFAD the best in its upcoming replenishment exercise. We urge donors to give IFAD the same warm support the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank Group have experienced in their recently concluded replenishments.

Let me now end where I began. The challenge of assisting the world's poor in terms of hunger and malnutrition is now before us. The solution partly embodied in agricultural development is also before us. The partnerships necessary to confront these challenges are recognized. Let us all move forward together as one to meet these challenges on behalf of the world's poor people.

Statement by Ms Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme

It is my great pleasure to be here today to address the distinguished Members of the Governing Council of IFAD. And thank you, President Båge, for your partnership, leadership and commitment to cooperation. I appreciate this invitation to join you on this special anniversary. I am also pleased to join James Butler, FAO's Deputy Director-General, on this occasion.

I first met Lennart Båge when we were both invited by Kofi Annan to serve on the High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence in the United Nations. I learned there that IFAD is a highly respected institution that knows its mission and delivers results. I also learned that Lennart Båge is a leader and a pillar of United Nations effectiveness and innovation. I thank you again, Lennart, for the honour to be here today with you.

During the past three decades, WFP and IFAD have enjoyed extensive collaboration, dating back to our first project together in Burundi in 1979. There, through Food-for-Work, we supported IFAD projects that helped create roads and other infrastructure to allow local agriculture to thrive and people to get access to food. Our agencies have continued working together successfully throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. We have partnered to help communities rebuild their lives in the aftermath of civil strife and natural disasters in Mali and Rwanda, and our long cooperation in China has helped lift hundreds of thousands of people out of rural poverty, eventually leading to the successful conclusion of WFP's assistance programmes in China.

Even today, in virtually every one of our projects in India, we work together, and on many, many dozens of projects throughout the world. Over the years, the strategy has been to combine WFP food assistance together with financing from IFAD to address rural hunger and poverty. These Food-for-Work and Food-for-Training programmes have enabled our beneficiaries to participate in IFAD's microcredit programmes, income-generation and savings programmes. We have also collaborated in disaster recovery, providing communities with opportunities for sustainable development and helping them to resist future shocks.

As the world's hungry and poor face rapidly increasing challenges, our continued cooperation and collaboration is more important than ever. The good news is that through all of our combined efforts, the world today produces food for more people than ever before in human history.

The proportion of hungry in the developing world has been halved since 1969. But recent evidence indicates slow progress towards meeting the first Millennium Development Goal, which aims to cut the proportion of hungry in half again by 2015. Worldwide, the proportion of undernourished people is still declining, but not fast enough to keep up with population growth, which adds at least four million to the ranks of the hungry every year. Today the world still loses a child to hunger every six seconds. The World Health Organization declares hunger and undernutrition to be the number one threat to public health.

Since June, we have been raising the alarm that a "perfect storm" of challenges may be forming, and the world's hungry are being hit the hardest in the developing world by soaring global food prices, increasingly severe weather shocks due in part to climate change and declining global food stocks. We see that storm already hitting countries with less ability to rebound from such shocks. In fact, The Economist's December cover story, entitled "The End of Cheap Food", reported that its food price index was higher than at any time since it was created in 1845, and that the price of wheat alone had doubled from May to September. We know tension over food prices and food supply has surfaced on all continents, from Mexico to Senegal to Yemen to Pakistan, Indonesia, Afghanistan, and even here in Europe.

Among the major drivers of high food prices are the rise in oil and energy prices that affect the entire value chain of food production, the economic boom in many nations that

is increasing demand for meat and other food products, and increasingly erratic and severe weather, including hurricanes, floods and droughts. These have all come together to shift the supply of food and have pushed prices to historically high levels. This, added to competition over food versus biofuels, has created a shift in global agriculture markets that some say is the biggest since World War II. Because of this, we are seeing the profile of hunger changing as households that depend mostly on markets face deteriorating conditions. These households will spend more on food to the detriment of non-food expenditures such as education and health.

There is no doubt that rising food prices and increased demand will be a boon for many farmers. But we are not yet seeing the benefits reaching smallholder farmers, who often cannot even produce enough to meet their own family needs. For them, the price of inputs – from seed and fertilizer to water – is soaring, further taxing their limited resources. We also know that 80 per cent of food-insecure people live in rural areas and half of them are smallholder farmers. In our collective response, we must continue to strike a balance between helping the vulnerable meet today's needs while keeping a focused eye on creating sustainable agricultural solutions for tomorrow. And we must all raise our voices to enact strategies and policies to ensure that this boon for farmers does not bypass smallholders in Africa, Latin America and other continents.

This is why WFP has collaborated with IFAD and FAO to shift our purchasing patterns to local farmers whenever and wherever possible. Today, I am proud to report that WFP spends 80 per cent of its cash for food purchases in 79 developing nations. That equals just this past year a US\$612 million a year flow to developing-world agriculture. This creates a powerful win-win response to hunger, with local farmers helping meet the needs of the hungry. For example, in this past year, 100 per cent of the school feeding in Ghana was supplied by small village farmers. In Mozambique, more than 70 per cent of the food presented to the victims of the floods was from small, local farmers. Today in Senegal, 100 per cent of the salt for our emergency programmes in Senegal is purchased from 7,000 small village producers.

This is equalled by our local purchases for food transportation systems, where 80 per cent of our land transportation is purchased in the developing world and 80 per cent of our staff is from the developing world and hired within nations. In fact, this trend represents a revolution in food aid, where the way we intervene becomes part of the solution. In Mozambique today, WFP, IFAD and FAO are partnering to use that purchasing power to help drive better solutions to connect farmers with markets and get them the better seeds and inputs that can be part of the solution. We have worked with our Board on a strategic plan that will develop the strategies to ensure that in our work on food aid we build in sustainable solutions as we meet emergency needs, such as the 3.1 million people in Darfur during the lean season who relied on the help that all of us came together and supported.

This transformation – and the partnership between WFP, IFAD and FAO – is even more vital in an era of climate change. I have just returned from speaking to the United Nations General Assembly about the dire projections of climate change and its potential impact on food production. We must act now with innovative solutions – and practical, village-level adaptation and mitigation measures. WFP and IFAD collaboration provides an important link between meeting urgent needs and creating long-term solutions. In 2007, WFP and IFAD cooperated in over 13 countries, mainly in agricultural development and environmental protection, while assessments, project design, capacity-building and education were also important features of our global cooperation.

Since our joint participation in the 2002 Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, WFP, IFAD and FAO now deliver joint statements to United Nations intergovernmental meetings. These messages are based on the "twin track" strategy to reduce hunger and reduce rural poverty, which recognizes that fighting hunger requires direct action to alleviate hunger immediately for the most vulnerable, on the one hand, and longer-term agricultural, food security, nutrition and rural development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger, on the other hand.

The Rome-based agencies are also collaborating in the joint food security theme groups at the country level, currently in 55 countries. One of the most active is Mozambique, which is also a United Nations "Delivering as One" pilot country. Within the framework of United Nations reform, WFP is engaged in six joint programmes and leads the Building Commodity Value Chains and Market Linkages for Farmers' Associations joint programmes, together with IFAD and FAO.

The Rome-based agencies also work together when there are opportunities for cost-efficiency in administrative services. Currently WFP is hosting IFAD's field presence in India, and in China WFP and IFAD are based in the same premises. We are looking into expanding areas of shared administration and management services with FAO and IFAD where they are practical and make financial sense.

Last year was a prominent year for Rome-based agencies' cooperation, helping shape our way forward. In 2007, and in line with the request of our membership, WFP, IFAD and FAO initiated a joint mapping exercise to identify and report on collaboration at three levels – headquarters, regional and country level – around four pillars: agricultural investment; policy formulation, capacity-building, knowledge management and advocacy; emergency aid and rehabilitation; and administration. WFP submitted the paper on this collaboration to our Board this past October, and in its decision, our Board has urged us to undertake a joint document on directions for the future.

Our continued strong collaboration gives me hope that we can meet these global challenges together, working with the Member States.

IFAD and WFP were just in Milan together launching a global initiative for IFAD to make productive investments in agriculture with remittances, sending money home. I think this innovative leadership that IFAD has shown globally, to capture over one billion United States dollars in remittances to provide a pathway for small farmers to invest in better equipment and better seed, could lead to a revolution in many countries where those remittances are not part of the formal system and cannot now be captured for such purposes.

At the same time, we jointly launched our effort in what we are calling the "Red Cup campaign", with a vision that every school child in the world will have at least one cup of food in school so that they can learn and be part of the future. We launched this in Milan as a global initiative, and I think it shows the kind of energy and direction we need to get the job done and meet these challenges.

Message of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Dr Jacques Diouf, delivered on his behalf by Mr James Butler, Deputy Director-General

It is an honour for me to be with you this afternoon, and I wish to convey to you the warmest greetings from our Director-General, Jacques Diouf.

This year IFAD marks 30 years of fighting rural poverty and hunger, and it is a pleasure for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to be here to honour this anniversary. I would like to congratulate IFAD on its impressive achievements throughout these years and the work undertaken to benefit poor people. IFAD's operations have enabled more than 300 million small farmers, artisans and indigenous peoples to take steps to achieve a better life for themselves and for their families.

IFAD, the World Food Programme (WFP) and FAO share a strong commitment to achieving the first Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of hungry and poor people by 2015. In spite of all the collective efforts made and the resources invested, including by IFAD, hunger and poverty remain widespread in many countries. FAO's 2007 Report on the State of Food and Agriculture highlights that there are still over 850 million undernourished people, of whom 820 million are in developing countries.

New factors are aggravating the state of food insecurity in the world: unprecedented price hikes for basic foods; the repercussions of climate change in terms of increased droughts and floods; and growing demand for bioenergy. These are new challenges for our organizations. We have to be ready to adopt appropriate strategies to intervene and prevent shocks, as well as to restore rural livelihoods in countries where they are most vulnerable and particularly hit by the consequences of unpredictable events.

Given the growing recognition among governments and donors of the prominent role that agriculture should play in a development agenda, IFAD and FAO can jointly provide long-term support and commitment by further improving their efficiency and cross-agency coordination.

Let me now talk more in depth about the three main challenges: high food prices, climate change and bioenergy. Agricultural commodity prices rose 10 per cent in 2006 and in some cases even more in 2007. The FAO food index in December 2007 was nearly 40 per cent above that of a year earlier. The surge in prices has been led primarily by dairy, grains and oils, but prices of other commodities, with the exception of sugar, have also increased significantly. Some examples include export prices of maize, rice and wheat, which have been increasing since June 2007 and now remain at even higher levels. These unprecedented price hikes for basic food are driven by historically low food stocks, droughts and floods linked to climate change, high oil prices and a growing demand for bioenergy. They are also the consequence of under-investment in agriculture for too many years in the past.

Climate change is another major challenge that will exacerbate food insecurity in many countries. Dramatic evidence lies in the current floods in Africa, Bolivia and South Asia, and the recent hurricanes in Central America and the Caribbean. Changes in temperatures have long-term consequences on the viability and productivity of agricultural systems. Natural resources, fisheries and forests will also be impacted by climate change. The most vulnerable sector will be rainfed agriculture, the mainstay of food production in many developing countries.

Bioenergy is another crucial issue that will impact efforts to combat hunger. The bioenergy sector is in full development in many countries. Growing more crops for biofuels will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions but it can also raise agricultural prices and adversely affect the most vulnerable populations. This issue is very complex and requires further study and analysis. For this reason, FAO has set up a multidisciplinary research group. At the same time, it is crucial to highlight that policies

on biofuels need to be coordinated internationally to help overcome the challenges of hunger. This issue will be discussed at the High-Level Conference on World Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, to be convened by FAO in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008. The overall purpose of the conference is to address food security and poverty reduction in the face of climate change and energy security.

Allow me to illustrate briefly the important and evolving cooperation among the Rome-based United Nations agencies.

I am delighted to report that cooperation among IFAD, FAO and WFP has continuously and significantly increased over the last years and that this trend is expected to persist both in Rome and in the field. IFAD and FAO are cooperating in line with the "Delivering as One" pilot initiative of the United Nations. This initiative builds on the existing reform agenda set by United Nations Member States, which asks the United Nations development system to accelerate its efforts to increase the coherence and effectiveness of its operations in the field through the establishment of joint offices. Following this path, IFAD and FAO are working together to ensure that agriculture and rural development are adequately addressed under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. FAO is currently hosting IFAD country presence staff in the United Republic of Tanzania, and it sustains IFAD's implementation support activities in Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda and Zambia – yet other examples of cooperation. I am pleased to note that good progress has been made in developing long-term framework agreements between our two organizations for joint field presence.

A comprehensive mapping exercise on various aspects of collaboration among IFAD, WFP and FAO, covering 2006 and 2007, has just been completed and will provide a good basis for examining strategically further joint policies and activities between the Rome-based agencies.

Furthermore, I would like to recall that, since 1977, through the FAO Investment Centre, there has been a strong programme of work with IFAD in the formulation and implementation of IFAD-financed operations. Over the last two years this cooperation has doubled, with FAO fielding over 50 missions on behalf of, or jointly with IFAD during 2007 alone. The prospect of strengthening cooperation is even greater, as FAO has also begun providing supervision support to IFAD's operations.

A detailed independent external evaluation has been carried out at FAO, similar to the one at IFAD two years ago. One important recommendation is "to ensure synergies with IFAD in a broad range of technical interfaces from rural finance to agribusiness and gender, including project development, supervision and national policy dialogue". Early actions arising from this review include close cooperation between the two agencies. An immediate manifestation of this is expected in connection with the organization of the High-Level Conference on World Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy in June this year.

Another important initiative arising from the independent external evaluation is the formulation of a strategy for FAO investment. This strategy will strengthen FAO's support for investment at the country level, providing capacity-building in support of developing countries to determine their own investment priorities, approaches and planning, including within the framework of poverty reduction strategy papers. This work will draw upon discussions with IFAD and is expected to open up opportunities for further collaboration.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that our role in this changing world remains to help the poorer countries and populations to deal with old and new challenges, and that our organizations must continue to adapt themselves to these changes by developing innovative and more efficient mechanisms for tackling problems and finding appropriate solutions. This is our individual and shared challenge.

I wish you a very successful Council meeting and congratulations on your very successful anniversary.

**Synthesis of the deliberations at the second Farmers' Forum held in conjunction
with the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council of IFAD,
11-12 February 2008**

Hunger is increasing and poverty persists in the rural world. Inequality is rising together with risk and vulnerability. Extraordinarily complex challenges are emerging, from global warming to erosion of biodiversity to the depletion of natural resources and growing demand on agriculture for food and energy. A radically different approach is needed towards agricultural development – an approach that restores the regenerative capacity of nature and agriculture itself.

International prices of food and feed are rising sharply, at least partly due to expansion of biofuels production on an industrial scale, the impact of climate change and the exclusion of farming communities from access to land, water, the seas and seeds. At the same time, hundreds of millions of smallholder farmers, landless workers, pastoralists, fishers and indigenous people, the majority among them women, are struggling to feed their families and better their lives. Young people are given no other viable alternative than to abandon the land and agriculture.

In this context, IFAD's mandate and goal to enable poor rural women and men to overcome poverty, through their economic, social and political empowerment, are more important and relevant than ever.

We, the participants in the Farmers' Forum, in conjunction with the Governing Council of IFAD, call upon the governments of the Fund's Member States to urgently direct their policy attention and their investments towards smallholder agriculture and rural livelihoods. We also urge the Member States to increase their contributions to the Fund so that it can increase its impact in favour of poor rural people on the ground.

In addition, we want to stress that the Fund's empowerment agenda and commitment to poor rural people can be best pursued in partnership with farmers' and rural peoples' organizations and with governments.

Looking back at the last two years, since the first global meeting of the Farmers' Forum, we recognize that IFAD has made tangible efforts and achieved significant progress in responding to the recommendations that we, the participants in the Farmers' Forum at IFAD, presented to you in February 2006.

We see that IFAD is actually changing the way it works at the country level in order to allow for a stronger engagement of our farmers' and rural producers' organizations in the development of its country strategies and projects with its member governments. Indeed, there is a growing trend that we want to see continue and accelerate.

We also acknowledge the efforts IFAD is making to help us strengthen the capacity of our producers' organizations through direct and demand-driven financial support to our members and through IFAD support to policy dialogue platforms at regional levels, such as the Commission on Family Farming of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) in Latin America and the review of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

We furthermore acknowledge IFAD's response to our call to increase its engagement with the land issues facing poor rural producers. In this regard, we appreciate the draft policy on "Promoting Equitable Access to Land and Tenure Security for Rural Poverty Reduction" and we urge its approval and implementation by the Management of IFAD and the Executive Board.

Additionally, we appreciate the report IFAD presented to us on its partnerships with us, rural producers' organizations, and its spirit of transparency and accountability, which

has strengthened further the trust among us and has broadened opportunities for collaboration.

As we know each other better, we are also becoming more demanding.

Indeed we, the participants in the Farmers' Forum, believe that much more can be done in a more systematic way and that the progress achieved so far is partial and uneven among countries. Our collaboration needs to be institutionalized so that we can more effectively achieve our common agenda to fight rural poverty and promote family agriculture and other rural livelihoods, most importantly livestock and fishing.

The Farmers' Forum process will always be guided by the principles agreed upon three years ago: mutual respect, pluralism, openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and promotion of mutual recognition of the autonomy and independence of farmers' organizations. These principles should also guide the producers' organizations in their relation with their members, assuring their accountability to them.

Principles of engagement. On the basis of the ongoing collaboration, we believe that the time is ripe for the development of shared and agreed principles of engagement to guide our interaction. These principles should be developed in 2008 to guide both IFAD and farmers' organizations in this interaction.

We the Farmers' Forum participants recommend that these principles of engagement be discussed and approved by the Executive Board of IFAD and be followed by the preparation of clear operational guidelines focused on compliance with these principles at the country and regional levels.

Engagement with IFAD country programmes. The Farmers' Forum recommends that IFAD staff receive clear direction for systematic involvement of farmers' and rural producers' organizations for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of country strategies and programmes. The way of promoting this is by providing time for interaction, relevant information, and specific resources to enable the organizations to participate effectively in IFAD country programmes and to know what IFAD does in any given country. IFAD should increase its own knowledge of farmers' and rural producers' organizations in each country to further promote an inclusive policy dialogue among people's organizations, the governments and itself. In relation to IFAD programmes and projects, the participants at the Farmers' Forum are convinced that farmers' and rural producers' organizations have the capacity to directly manage and assume the responsibility of projects.

The point is not only partnership between IFAD and farmers' organizations but also the promotion of an environment conducive to strengthening the dialogue between farmers' organizations and governments on an equal footing.

Focus on results and building a shared monitoring and evaluation system. One important principle to guide our collaboration will be the attention given to results in the field and to strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems which will involve farmers' and rural producers' organizations. Such systems will also enhance mutual accountability between IFAD and farmers' organizations for the shared goal of fighting poverty and hunger in rural areas.

Direct financing. The participants in the Farmers' Forum are asking IFAD to provide over the long term, and in a sustained way, direct financial support to farmers' organizations, in particular through our apex organizations at national and regional levels. These resources should enable farmers' organizations to be strengthened and structured on higher levels, as well as increase their knowledge and information and their capacity to engage with policy-making and implementation processes effectively and in a flexible manner.

On their side the producers' organizations, participants in the Forum, commit themselves to a sound management of these resources and to reporting back to IFAD, in a rigorous and timely manner, on the use of the funds and on the impact on the ground.

Support for the involvement of the young in agriculture and rural development.

In its partnership with farmers' organizations, IFAD needs to pay greater attention to young people. In this regard, partnerships must focus on their access to and control of land and other productive resources, capacity building and the provision of targeted support and the necessary incentives for them to engage in agriculture and rural livelihoods.

Support for the involvement of women in agriculture and rural development.

We, the participants of the Farmers' Forum want to stress the importance of the presence and role of women both in terms of numbers and contributions. Women farmers are rarely recognized as producers in their own distinct economic and social right. They often face difficulties in gaining access to training, credit and natural resources, especially land and water. Moreover, women farmers are under-represented at all levels of farmers' organizations and thus cannot voice their own specific needs. As a result, women farmers are even more impoverished than their male counterparts.

Therefore, we ask IFAD to support farmers' organizations to engage their women members in the management and decision-making processes of their organizations, with a minimum quota in leadership positions of 30 per cent. We also ask IFAD to apply a significant quota of women farmers (at least 30 per cent) in all IFAD programmes, events and initiatives.

We also recommend that, in the context of the next global meeting of the Farmers' Forum, a preparatory meeting be organized with a specially set up group to focus on the specific issues of women, which will then be brought to the Forum.

Fishers. We, participants in the Farmers' Forum, call on IFAD to support the organizations of fishers and their efforts to improve the livelihoods of their members. More specifically, we call on IFAD to:

- strengthen the capacity of fishing communities and their organizations to engage in sustainable exploitation and use of fishery resources and to engage in policy dialogue with governments and inter-governmental organizations at national, regional and international levels;
- invest more resources in maintaining the biodiversity of coastal zones;
- promote artisanal aquaculture; and
- promote post-harvest practices and access to national and international markets.

Pastoralists. IFAD policies, programmes and projects should take into account the specific issues of pastoralists and other mobile indigenous peoples, such as their seasonal mobility, their use of multiple territories and their community-based tenure systems. It should also take into consideration their special and unique capacities for sustainable natural resource management and their ability to cope with climate change through seasonal spatial and temporal mobility.

We, the participants of the Farmers' Forum 2008, urge IFAD to continue and increase its collaboration with FAO, particularly in the following three areas: support to farmers' and rural producers' organizations; follow-up of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development; and the organization of the Conference on Climate Change, Food Security and Agriculture and of the Conference on Fisheries. We also urge IFAD to support the mobilization of civil society around these two international events.

The Farmers' Forum included three thematic working groups on three specific challenges confronting poor rural producers:

- Access to Land: Trends, challenges and opportunities. Role and perspectives of farmers' and rural producers' organizations;
- Climate Change and Smallholder Agriculture: Perspective of farmers' and rural producers' organizations; and
- Access to Policy-Making Processes: Opportunities for farmers' and rural producers' organizations to exert power in favour of family agriculture

Given the wealth of the discussions and the diversified positions and recommendations of these groups, the reports on them are annexed to the present document.

**Statement by the Vice-Chairperson,
Mr Jörg Frieden,
closing the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council**

Mr President,
Distinguished Governors and Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We now come to the end of this thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council of IFAD. This session, which was attended also by the Fund's three former Presidents, marked the completion of the third decade of IFAD's existence but, more importantly, underscored the need for IFAD to continue and indeed redouble its efforts in pursuing its mandate of enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty.

We have been privileged by the presence of distinguished guests, who inspired this Council by presenting their own particular perspectives on the challenges facing agricultural and rural development, and yet they spoke as one. The message was clear: with three quarters of the world's poor living in rural areas and with IFAD's specific focus on poor rural people and the agricultural sector, each and every one of us has a duty to enable our institution to improve and to better carry out its work.

The Council was honoured by the presence of His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, who delivered an inaugural message on behalf of His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana. The challenges the world faces today know no boundaries and affect the developed and developing world alike. As such, and notwithstanding the devastating effects of climate change, among other emerging issues, these challenges provide an opportunity for us to come together for a common good that concerns us all.

Listening to the words of His Excellency Massimo D'Alema, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, the Governing Council was once again reassured of the trust that Italy – as host country to IFAD and one of the staunchest advocates of international aid for sustainable development – places in our organization, and of its continued generosity and support. We took pride also in the appreciation of the central role that IFAD plays in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and its pioneering reform to render it more effective in carrying out its mandate.

An inaugural statement to the Council from His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, was delivered on his behalf by His Excellency Jean Nkueté, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon. Recognizing that a new century had brought new challenges to the plight of the rural poor, IFAD was called upon to forge strengthened partnerships and to reinforce its engagement in the global effort to reduce poverty.

His Excellency Dr Fahad Bin Abdulrahman Balghunaim, Minister for Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, brought to the Council an inaugural address from King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, which reiterated the close and special partnership that exists between Saudi Arabia and our Fund. This partnership is built not only on financial support, but above all on the common goal of enabling those in need to lead decent and dignified lives.

This goal is common to the United Nations family as a whole and was reiterated in the message from His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations. In his message, the Secretary-General emphasized the need for better support for agriculture to address emerging challenges that could jeopardize the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

President Båge's statement to the Council was compelling. IFAD's role and mandate are more relevant than ever before to the realities we face today. The President urged us to translate new challenges into opportunities for the rural poor in order to harness their potential for a better future. I am sure I speak on behalf of all those present when I join with President Båge in urging the international community to provide IFAD with the financial support it needs to help smallholder farmers and rural poor people to rise out of poverty.

Such a mammoth task cannot be undertaken alone, and the Council was pleased to hear the voices of two of IFAD's most important international partners, Mr Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, and Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director of the World Bank. Strong in their convictions and backed by thorough research and study, they too underlined the importance and effectiveness of agriculture in promoting economic growth and bettering the lives of the world's poor.

The Council also welcomed the messages from Ms Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, and Dr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, IFAD's sister agencies in Rome. Their messages served to highlight the benefits of working in harmony towards a common aim.

In the statements delivered by the Fund's Governors, the course that IFAD has charted, not least through the implementation of the Action Plan, was strongly supported. The common thread running through these statements was a call to action and an acknowledgement that the Fund's Member States have a moral obligation to invest in IFAD. This thread was also picked up by the participants of the Farmers' Forum, which presented a synthesis of its deliberations to the Council. Underscoring the Fund's efforts and the resulting progress made in engaging farmers' organizations at the country and regional levels, the call for increased investment in IFAD was echoed.

Turning to the business of the session, the Council unanimously approved the application for non-original membership of the Republic of the Bahamas. I am sure I speak on behalf of all Governors in welcoming the Bahamas into our midst.

The Council then considered the report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. At our last session, the Council received the good news of the replenishment's effectiveness. At this session, we were pleased to note that, thanks to a further increase in initial pledges by some Member States, these now total US\$642 million, or 89 per cent of the target of US\$720 million, and instruments of contribution received represent 88 per cent of the total pledges. While this is encouraging, I join with management in calling upon fellow Member States who have yet to deposit their instruments of contribution to take prompt action. Our total and collective commitment is required.

Perhaps the single most important decision taken by the Council was to establish the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. We have entrusted part of the membership with reviewing the adequacy of our Fund's resources, with a view to strengthening its capacity to respond to the needs of rural poor people. It is an onerous task and I wish the Consultation members every success.

At the recommendation of the Executive Board, the Council approved IFAD's audited financial statements for 2006 and the administrative and capital budgets of IFAD for 2008 in the amounts of US\$72.3 million and US\$2 million, respectively. The records of this session will note the abstention of the United States of America on the Fund's administrative budget. The Council also approved an administrative budget for the Office of Evaluation of US\$5.47 million.

In accordance with the resolution adopted in 2005, a report on the special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters was submitted to the Council. Governors noted the progress made and, bearing in mind the unforeseen delays which had hindered the completion of work on the new headquarters, adopted a resolution to extend the

authorization for usage of the funds remaining until 31 December 2008. We look forward to the final report to be presented to next year's Governing Council session, and also to seeing IFAD's staff housed securely in a single building.

The Council was presented with a comprehensive report on the implementation of the performance-based allocation system (PBAS), together with the 2007 country scores and allocations for 2008 and the 2007 rural sector performance assessments. A number of Member State representatives expressed the need for continued analysis of the system. In this respect, it was noted that the informal panel of the Executive Board would continue its task with the aim of developing a broader understanding of the evolving issues in PBAS implementation.

The International Land Coalition provided a progress report on its efforts to put a pro-poor land agenda into practice by helping to broaden national and regional policy dialogue and by involving citizen-based organizations in the development and implementation of agrarian reform policies and practices. The Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification also reported to the Council on its operational activities in 2007, focusing particularly on the complementarities between its own mandate to upscale finance for sustainable land management and that of IFAD. Governors welcomed the increased collaboration, which worked to the benefit of rural poor people the world over.

In light of the appointment of the President of IFAD, to be considered at the Council's next session in February 2009, the Council adopted the resolution establishing the Emoluments Committee, which was entrusted with reviewing the overall emoluments and conditions of employment of IFAD's President. Under other business, the Council deliberated on the process leading up to the election of the President. No consensus could be reached on a possible role for the Governing Council Bureau in this regard. The vice-chairperson will consult with the chairperson and the other vice-chairperson on this matter.

Distinguished delegates,

My thanks go to all of you, and to my colleagues on the Bureau. I am sure I speak also on their behalf when I express deep appreciation for the collaboration you have afforded us in presiding over this session. Our gratitude also goes to the staff of IFAD who, each year, organize and run a truly professional conference. Special mention must go to the interpreters, who facilitate our communication, and to the technical staff, conference personnel and messengers who make it all seem so effortless. And of course, our thanks to President Båge, whose leadership inspires commitment to IFAD's vision.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have made important decisions during this session that will have long-lasting effects on our Fund. We have come together, not least in the round-table discussions where we focused on the challenges and opportunities for smallholder farmers in the context of climate change and new demands on agriculture. At the heart of each deliberation and each decision was the plight of poor rural people and the hope that we can make a difference.

President Båge called upon the international community to invest in smallholder farmers: "Their lives – and our common future – depend on it." Let us take these words with us on our return trips and let them be our mantra for the year to come.

On this note, I hereby close the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council.

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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Delegations at the thirty-first session of the Governing Council

Délégations à la trente et unième session du Conseil des gouverneurs

Delegaciones en el 31º período de sesiones del Consejo de Gobernadores

:

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Observateur permanent auprès du FIDA
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السلطة الفلسطينية

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L'AUTORITÉ PALESTINIENNE

LA AUTORIDAD PALESTINA

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الممثلون عن الأمم المتحدة والوكالات المتخصصة

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المراقبون من المنظمات الحكومية الدولية

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المراقبون من المنظمات غير الحكومية

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OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS NON GOUVERNEMENTALES

OBSERVADORES DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES NO GUBERNAMENTALES

31st December Women's Movement (31st DWM)

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Sherry AYITTEY
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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Agenda and programme of events

IFAD's Thirtieth Anniversary

Governing Council — Thirty-first Session
Rome, 13-14 February 2008

Agenda

1. Opening of the session
 2. Adoption of the agenda
 3. Election of the Bureau of the Governing Council
 4. Application for non-original membership
 5. Statement of the President of IFAD
 6. General statements
 7. Report on the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources
 8. Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources
 9. Audited financial statements of IFAD for 2006
 10. Administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008
 11. Special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters
 12. Progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system
 13. Report on lessons learned by the International Land Coalition
 14. Progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
 15. Emoluments of the President
 16. Other business
- Process leading up to the election of the President of IFAD in February 2009

Programme of events

Wednesday, 13 February 2008

Morning meeting **10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Inaugural ceremony
Commencement of consideration of agenda items

Afternoon meeting **3 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Continuation of consideration of agenda items

Thursday, 14 February 2008

Morning meeting **9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

9.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. Continuation of consideration of agenda items

10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Round-table discussions

Three round tables will be held simultaneously on the following topics:

- Climate change and the future of smallholder agriculture: How can the rural poor people be a part of the solution to climate change?
- Biofuel expansion: Challenges, risks and opportunities for rural poor people
- Growing demand on agriculture and rising prices of commodities: An opportunity for smallholders in low-income, agricultural-based countries?

Afternoon meeting **3 p.m. to 6 p.m.**

3 p.m. to 5.50 p.m. Continuation of consideration of agenda items

5.50 p.m. to 6 p.m. Closure of the session

List of documents placed before the thirty-first session of the Governing Council

Document No.	Agenda Item	Title
GC 31/L.1	2	Provisional agenda and programme of events
GC 31/L.1/Add.1	2	Schedule of work for the session
GC 31/L.2	4	Application for non-original membership
GC 31/L.3	7	Report on the status of contributions to the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources
GC 31/L.4	8	The Establishment of the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources
GC 31/L.5	9	Audited financial statements of IFAD as at 31 December 2006
GC 31/L.6	10	Programme of work, programme development financing facility and administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and of its Office of Evaluation for 2008
GC 31/L.7	11	Report on the special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters
GC 31/L.8	12	Progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system
GC 31/L.9	13	2007 Progress report on International Land Coalition
GC 31/L.10	14	Progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa
GC 31/L.11	15	Emoluments of the President
GC 31/INF.1		Arrangements for the thirty-first session of the Governing Council
GC 31/INF.2		IFAD's participation in the Debt Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
GC 31/INF.3		Governing Council roundtables focus on: Challenges and opportunities for smallholder farmers in the context of climate change and new demands on agriculture

GC 31/INF.4/Rev.1	Provisional list of delegations at the thirty-first session of the Governing Council
GC 31/INF.5	Order of speakers: Statements to be delivered during plenary meeting
GC 31/INF.6	Financial highlights of the year ended 31 December 2007
GC 31/Resolutions	Resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its thirty-first session
Closing Statement*	Statement by the Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jörg Frieden, closing the thirtieth anniversary session of the Governing Council

* Distributed only in English.

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Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its thirty-first session

Governing Council — Thirty-first Session
Rome, 13-14 February 2008

For: Information

Resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its thirty-first session

1. The Governing Council, at its thirty-first session, adopted resolutions 146/XXXI, 147/XXXI, 148/XXXI and 149/XXXI on 13 February 2008 and resolution 150/XXXI on 14 February 2008.
2. These resolutions are transmitted for the information of all Members of IFAD.

Resolution 146 /XXXI

Approval of non-original Members of the Fund

The Governing Council of IFAD,

Taking into account articles 3.1(a), 3.2(b) and 13.1(c) of the Agreement Establishing IFAD and section 10 of the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD,

Having considered the application for non-original membership by the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, transmitted to the Council in document GC 31/L.2, and the recommendation of the Executive Board thereon;

Approves the membership of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Resolution 147/XXXI

The establishment of the Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources

The Governing Council of IFAD,

Recalling article 4, section 3, of the Agreement Establishing IFAD, which provides that, in order to assure continuity in the operations of the Fund, the Governing Council shall periodically review the adequacy of the resources available to the Fund;

Further recalling that the period established by Governing Council resolution 141/XXIX/Rev.1 for the Seventh Replenishment of IFAD's resources will conclude on 31 December 2009;

Having considered the statement of the President of IFAD on the need for a review of the adequacy of the resources available to IFAD and document GC 31/L.4 thereon;

Having further considered the need for the establishment of a Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources;

Decides that:

1. A Consultation on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources ("the Consultation") shall be established under the chairmanship of the President of IFAD to discuss all aspects of the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources and to negotiate the conclusion of that replenishment. The first session of the Consultation shall be held, as soon as possible during 2008, on such date as the chairperson shall decide, after appropriate consultation with the members of the Consultation, and with such further sessions as the Consultation may deem appropriate.
2. The Consultation shall consist of all Member States from Lists A and B and fifteen Member States from List C, the latter to be appointed by the members of List C and communicated to the President of IFAD no later than 14 February 2008. The Consultation may subsequently invite such other Member States to participate in the Consultation as may facilitate its deliberations.
3. The Consultation shall submit a report on the results of its deliberations and any recommendations thereon to the thirty-second session and, if required, subsequent sessions of the Governing Council with a view to adopting such resolutions as may be appropriate.
4. The President of IFAD is requested to keep the Executive Board informed of the progress of the deliberations of the Consultation.
5. The President of IFAD is requested to provide such assistance to the Consultation as may be necessary for the effective and efficient discharge of its functions.

Resolution 148/XXXI

Administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008

The Governing Council of IFAD,

Bearing in mind article 6.10 of the Agreement Establishing IFAD and regulation VI of the Financial Regulations of IFAD;

Noting that, at its ninety-second session, the Executive Board reviewed and agreed upon a programme of work of IFAD for 2008 in the amount of SDR 417.0 million and a total Programme Development Financing Facility of US\$38.80 million; and

Having considered the review of the ninety-second session of the Executive Board concerning the proposed administrative and capital budgets of IFAD and its Office of Evaluation for 2008;

Approves firstly the administrative budget of IFAD for 2008, in the amount of US\$72.3 million, secondly, the capital budget of IFAD for 2008 in the amount of US\$2.0 million and thirdly, the administrative budget of IFAD's Office of Evaluation for 2008 in the amount of US\$5.47 million, as all three are set forth in document GC 31/L.6, determined on the basis of a rate of exchange of EUR 0.737/US\$1.00; and

Decides that in the event the average value of the United States dollar in 2008 should change against the euro rate of exchange used to calculate the budget, the total United States dollar equivalent of the euro expenditures in the budget shall be adjusted in the proportion that the actual exchange rate in 2008 bears to the budget exchange rate.

Resolution 149/XXXI

Special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters

The Governing Council of IFAD,

Bearing in mind article 6, section 10, of the Agreement Establishing IFAD and regulation VI of the Financial Regulations of IFAD;

Recalling its resolution 139/XXVIII, adopted on 17 February 2005, on a special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters, approving a special expenditure in the amount of EUR 3,400,000 to finance the common areas and facilities of IFAD's new headquarters at Via Paolo di Dono, 44, Rome, for a three-year period during financial years 2005 to 2007 inclusive;

Further recalling said resolution 139/XXVIII, requesting the President of IFAD to submit a final report on the expenditures incurred in preparing the new headquarters to the Governing Council in February 2008;

Noting that, at its ninety-second session, the Executive Board endorsed the need for an extension of the period for the use of the uncommitted amount of the special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters by one year;

Having considered the report on the special expenditure for IFAD's new headquarters contained in document GC 31/L.7;

Decides that:

1. The extension of the period for the use of the uncommitted amount of the special expenditure to finance the common areas and facilities of IFAD's new headquarters at Via Paolo di Dono, 44, Rome, to 31 December 2008, is approved.
2. The President of IFAD is requested to provide a report on the expenditures incurred in preparing the new headquarters to the Executive Board and to submit a final report thereon to the Governing Council in February 2009, in lieu of February 2008.

Resolution 150/XXXI

Re-establishment of a committee to review the emoluments of the President of IFAD

The Governing Council of IFAD,

Taking into account section 6, paragraph 1 of the By-laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD which states, inter alia, that the salary, allowances and other entitlements of the President of IFAD shall be determined by resolution of the Governing Council;

Recalling resolution 76/XVI and resolution 118/XXIII, adopted by the Governing Council on 22 January 1993 and on 17 February 2000 respectively, whereby a committee was established to review the overall emoluments and other conditions of employment of the President of IFAD in relation to other heads of United Nations agencies and international financial institutions, and resolution 82/XVII, adopted by the Governing Council on 28 January 1994, whereby the Governing Council, upon the recommendation of the committee, decided, inter alia, that the Governing Council shall re-examine, together with the salary, allowances and other entitlements of the President of IFAD, the representation allowance prior to the election of the successor to the incumbent President of IFAD;

Further recalling resolution 121/XXIV, adopted by the Governing Council on 20 February 2001, whereby the Governing Council, upon the recommendation of the committee, decided on the salary, allowances and other entitlements of the person elected as President of IFAD at the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council;

Having considered document GC 31/L.11, the proposal therein and the Executive Board's recommendation thereon;

Decides:

- (a) To re-establish a committee consisting of nine Governors or their representatives (four from List A, two from List B and three from List C) to review the overall emoluments and other conditions of employment of the President of IFAD. The committee shall submit to the Governing Council, through the Executive Board, a report thereon together with a draft resolution on the subject for adoption by the Governing Council at its thirty-second session;
- (b) The committee shall be provided with specialist staff to offer such support and advice as the committee may require.

