Resolution 692 (1979)[1]

Reply to the 10th biennial report of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the 10th biennial report presented to the Council of Europe by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (Doc. 4296) and of the report of its Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 4308) ;

2. Concerned by the fact that the food situation in certain developing countries has deteriorated still further despite the build-up of world cereal surpluses to over 200 million tons, an all-time record ;

3. Aware that these surpluses are still concentrated in developed exporting countries, whereas in most developing countries targets and needs are not met, a situation which forces these countries to import considerable quantities to the detriment of their balance of payments ;

4. Recalling that 450 million people, including a particularly high proportion of children, suffer from malnutrition ;

5. Adhering to its view that this situation calls for slower population growth ;

6. Being of the opinion that the food problem must, of necessity, be solved by the radical transformation and diversification of agricultural production in the developing countries, in particular by the abandonment of "colonial" crops and, where appropriate, by the reintroduction of former "pre-colonial" crops ;

7. Convinced that food transfers cannot solve the problem of hunger in the long term, but that the economic structure of these countries must be reorganised with international assistance in order to formulate appropriate national policies in the sphere of agriculture and food production,

8. Welcomes the action programme of FAO, especially the Food Security Assistance Scheme for the implementation of the International Undertaking on World Food Security and the Prevention of Food Losses Programme ;

9. Approves FAO's methods of action which are increasingly orientated towards practical field work through administrative decentralisation and, particularly, through the implementation of a technical co-operation programme which enables it to help countries in difficulty with its own resources ;

10. Stresses the importance it attaches to developments in the regime of the sea, the management of living maritime resources in Europe (Resolution 674 (1978)) and the trends in and prospects for the timber industry in Europe (Doc. 4055), subjects at present being studied by its Committee on Agriculture and which were also discussed in 1978 at the last Regional Conference for Europe of FAO ;

11. Instructs its Committee on Agriculture to watch the progress of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development which will be held in July 1979, and hopes that this initiative will help combat economic backwardness, poverty and environmental deterioration in rural areas ;

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1. Assembly debate on 8 May 1979 (3rd Sitting) (see Doc. 4308oc. 4308, report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 8 May 1979 (3rd Sitting).

12. Invites the governments of member states of the Council of Europe :

12.1. to implement a real global strategy to solve the problems of hunger and malnutrition in the world ;

12.2. to support action aiming towards the conclusion of the negotiations of a new international agreement on cereals ;

12.3. to back up the operational role of FAO as the best means of directly being of service to the developing countries ;

12.4. to carry out the measures taken in the action plan of FAO for the implementation of the International Undertaking on World Food Security ;

12.5. to support the Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and the launching of an action programme at world level ;

12.6. to back the technical co-operation programme which the FAO Director General intends to launch in order to assist the developing countries to exploit the maritime living resources in their exclusive economic zones ;

12.7. substantially to increase official development aid by raising the minimum rate thereof to 0.7% of their GNP and by seconding FAO's proposal to step up the amount of all contributions to agricultural assistance to a minimum of 8.3 thousand million dollars.