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SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 1999

In accordance with the methods of work of the Executive Board, the present document reflects the main points of its deliberations to be taken into account by the Secretariat in the implementation of the Board's decisions and recommendations, contained in document WFP/EB.3/99/13.

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FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

The WFP Biennial Budget for the Period 2000–2001 (1999/EB.3/1)

1. During discussion of WFP's biennial budget estimates for the period 2000–2001 as submitted by the Executive Director, and the comments of the FAO Finance Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the Board:
 - a) expressed its appreciation for the clear and concise presentation of the budget document;
 - b) took note of projected operational levels, including the expenditure components by programme and cost category as mentioned in paragraph 15, and as shown in Table 2 (Total projected resources and their utilization, 2000–2001) in paragraph 48 of WFP/EB.3/99/3-A;
 - c) encouraged WFP to continue to seek cost-saving measures in all programme categories;
 - d) supported efforts on security and related training initiatives;
 - e) urged continuance of WFP's gender support activities;
 - f) supported WFP's activities towards implementing a Results-Based Management (RBM) system; and
 - g) endorsed the adoption of a budget presentation format fully harmonized with other funds and programmes of the United Nations.
2. Several members of the Board expressed concern with the decrease in resources for development and encouraged WFP to fully implement the recommendations of the Enabling Development policy, with a view to increasing the availability of food aid for development activities.

Second Progress Report on the Implementation of Recommendations in the 1996–97 Audit Report of the External Auditor (1999/EB.3/2)

3. In response to questions raised by representatives, the Secretariat confirmed that the Office of the External Auditor conducted audit missions to country offices, which it selects as part of its audit work. The Secretariat assured the Board that food procurement rules and procedures remained the subject of continuous attention. During the period covered by the report, emphasis had been placed on developing the procurement guidance needed for non-food items. The Secretariat informed the Board that, although suppliers and banks were not under WFP's control, computer systems were Y2K-compliant. It felt confident and was working hard on the problem.
4. The Secretariat had finalized its investment policy, established an investment committee and given the Executive Director its recommendations on the appointment of external investment managers. In conducting the selection process, WFP had drawn on the experience of FAO and IFAD. The Secretariat added that it would be pleased to provide information on the Programme's investment policy.



Funding of WFP's After-service Medical Liabilities (1999/EB.3/3)

5. The Secretariat introduced documents containing information on the Executive Director's proposals on funding after-service medical liabilities and explained the background of the proposals. Support was expressed for the option proposed by the Executive Director to provide for and fund the liability as a one-time charge from the General Fund. It was clarified that this support would not prejudice future positions in respect of other agencies or future reviews of employees' health programmes, including contribution rates from active or retired WFP employees.
6. Following the Secretariat's response to questions raised on the expected level and impact on the General Fund and interest earnings, the Board endorsed the proposal contained in paragraph 23 of the Funding of After-service Medical Liabilities document.

EVALUATION REPORTS

Evaluation Reports (1999/EB.3/5)

a) Thematic Study of Recurring Challenges in the Provision of Food Assistance in Complex Emergencies

7. The Board praised the report's clarity of presentation of the issues, and its comprehensive coverage of the subject. Many members noted the need for a formal process to implement the report's many recommendations, and several expressed a desire to participate in that undertaking. Several delegates approved the emphasis in the report on joint action with the Programme's sister agencies and international and NGO implementing partners. The Secretariat assured the Board that joint action or cooperation were standard procedures in WFP field operations in conflict emergencies.
8. A number of members commended the report's recommendations on the need to ensure the application of relevant international law and respect for the sovereign right of nations to self-determination, and the principles of impartiality and universality in conflict operations. Some members noted the need to respect local laws as well, and to involve local authorities in programme decision. Several members noted with approval the recommendation that field staff be fully briefed on the local economic, social and political situation before deployment. Some representatives also supported the recommendation that the Programme exercise caution in deploying staff, and draw upon and utilize the knowledge of experienced field workers. A number of delegates commented on the need to provide timely reports on operations to better inform donors regarding their resource decisions.

b) Summary Evaluation Report on WFP Strategic Fleet Operations in the Great Lakes Region

9. Members generally agreed with the rationale for the original deployment of the Great Lakes Strategic Fleet, and also with the report's recommendation for the Fleet's continued operation, and commended the management of the Fleet. Several members doubted, however, that circumstances would necessitate the replication of the Fleet elsewhere, as was recommended in the report. Recognizing the capacity-building features of the Fleet management services contracts, some representatives cautioned



against future deployment where the Fleet could compete with existing and available private transport facilities.

c) End-of-term Evaluation of Country Programme—Pakistan (1994–1998)

10. The Board commended the frank and independent nature of the report and appreciated the presentation of the evaluation together with the submission of a new Country Strategy Outline for Pakistan. The shortcomings affecting health activities were recognized. In view of the continuing need for assistance in this sector, improvements had to be introduced for the next phase to ensure the desired impact of the assistance. The Secretariat confirmed that the current move towards a stronger focus on community forestry, with emphasis on asset creation for the rural poor, especially women, would be enhanced in the natural resource management sector. The representative of Pakistan emphasized the importance of this activity and confirmed that the Government would work closely with WFP in that regard.
11. The Board suggested that a number of lessons might be drawn from the evaluation. For the implementation of an effective country programme there must be: partnerships with other donors to strengthen the impact of the interventions; involvement of local communities to ensure that participants would be able to influence decisions concerning their activities; creation of assets for lasting benefits; and incorporation of relevant performance indicators in the design of operations.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Programme Strategy Outline—Palestinian Territory (1999/EB.3/6)

12. A number of members commended the analysis in the Programme Strategy Outline, noting that the proposed key areas of assistance identified in the document were in line with recent recommendations of the Board for development assistance. Many representatives expressed support for the proposed land improvement and agricultural production activity for marginal lands, urging that attention be given to water management and collaboration with other partners (donors, NGOs, FAO and IFAD). Several members commended the focus on the poorest, especially women and children. Income transfer, women's training and the proposed collaboration with UNICEF to promote fortification of wheat flour were considered appropriate activities. The Board took note of the precise targeting mechanism used by the Palestinian Authority's safety net, which helped avoid dependency.

Country Strategy Outline—Pakistan (1999/EB.3/7)

13. The Board recommended that the major points in the Country Strategy Outline for Pakistan document be taken into consideration in the preparation of the new Country Programme, to be presented to the Board in May 2000. These include the application of vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) to improve targeting of food aid to the poorest; the establishment of partnerships with provincial governments, other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations keeping up the good work on harmonization within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); emphasis on gender approaches taking into consideration cultural variables; incorporation of the basic lessons learned from the evaluation of the previous Country



Programme; and application of the policy guidelines emanating from the Enabling Development consultations.

Country Programme—Benin (2000–2003) (1999/EB.3/8)

14. The Board commended the focus of the Country Programme for Benin (2000–2003) on girls' education, and assistance to vulnerable groups and victims of malnutrition. Several representatives noted that the comments of the Board during its discussion of the Country Strategy Outline in October 1998 had been duly taken into account. Clarifications were sought in respect of rural development activities which should be prioritized in line with WFP's new Enabling Development policy. The Country Programme's activities should be carried out in close partnership with the Government, bilateral and multilateral donors, and national and international NGOs. All activities should be formulated through a participatory approach to ensure ownership by the beneficiary communities and sustainability.
15. Several members recommended increased government support to the education and social sectors and a strengthening of the quality of education through improved teachers' training. The need for a larger government cash contribution to all activities was emphasized. Further development of local purchases of commodities was encouraged. Clear objectives and performance indicators should be developed when designing each activity in order to measure results. WFP should strengthen its field presence to improve oversight of project management and end-use of commodities.

Country Programme—Lesotho (2000–2002) (1999/EB.3/9)

16. The Board expressed strong support for the Country Programme for Lesotho (2000–2002), noting its focus on the social sector, with emphasis on the needs of disadvantaged youth and the poorest people in rural mountainous areas, as identified through VAM techniques. The Board commended the collaborative and proactive efforts of the Government, donors and United Nations agencies to prepare the Country Programme through the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UNDAF process. The Board appreciated the involvement of NGOs in programme design and implementation and encouraged participatory approaches for activities to ensure ownership and sustainability, and to build local capacities.
17. The Board noted that, in Lesotho, boys of poor families in mountainous areas were particularly disadvantaged, while voluntary teachers were predominantly female. The food for capacity-building activity of the Country Programme was therefore a good example of gender targeting that took into account prevailing circumstances and benefited both sexes. A few representatives observed that the inclusion of four activities in a three-year Country Programme might reduce its impact. Some representatives observed that support for early childhood development centres was necessary to integrate small children into the community-building and education process. Dialogue on and support for HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, as discussed during the International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Africa (ICASA) in Lusaka, Zambia, was encouraged.



Development Project for Executive Board Approval—Sri Lanka 4521.01 (1999/EB.3/10)

18. The Board remarked that Development Project Sri Lanka 4521.01 was very much in line with WFP's Enabling Development policy, especially with respect to the focus on participation of local communities to ensure sustainability. Several members drew attention to the targeted high involvement of women both in the labour force and in decision-making by local farmers' associations, and requested the Secretariat to continue the increased focus on training local partners and ensure that the necessary links be established with NGOs. The Board noted that the project was a good example of cooperation with other Rome-based organizations. The new initiative of conducting household-level impact assessment studies was also appreciated. Several members pointed out that the targets and performance indicators in Annex III should include social indicators, specified by gender. The Board recommended that rehabilitation areas be selected carefully according to local priorities in order to avoid disincentive effects on communities engaged in voluntary rehabilitation. Replying to one member's query on benefits for landless people, the Secretariat explained that 30 percent of all food-for-work labourers were from landless households, and that lessons from the earlier project had been considered in the formulation of this expansion.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval—Afghanistan 6064.01 (1999/EB.3/11)

19. The Board expressed support for the objectives of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) Afghanistan 6064.01 and welcomed the creative alternatives proposed, such as food for work and food for seeds to discourage narcotics production and its effects on neighbouring and other countries; it also highlighted the need to include output indicators and supported the emphasis on gender. The Board noted that the evolution of the political situation would determine the status of food security in the country. One representative noted that two years was an appropriate duration for the PRRO because this would allow flexibility in responding to volatile local conditions. Another representative commended WFP for sharing information with partners in the field, and the usefulness of the WFP briefing for embassy representatives in Islamabad prior to the Third Regular Session of the Executive Board.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval—Angola 6159.00 (1999/EB.3/12)

20. In discussions on PRRO Angola 6159.00, the Board commended the tireless efforts to reach the vulnerable population deployed by WFP staff in Angola under difficult conditions. Considerable concern was expressed for the plight of the Angolan people, and for the security of WFP staff and humanitarian workers. The Board expressed support for the PRRO's strategy, in particular plans to reassess the situation and adjust the level of assistance when appropriate.
21. Several delegates noted the importance of a flexible approach given the current situation and the necessity of targeting all needy Angolans. The importance of strengthened coordination at the country level, including the involvement of a considerable number of NGOs, was acknowledged. One member recommended involving only partners with experience in and capacity for food distribution. The Board highlighted the need to include donor representatives in the Food Aid Committee in Angola. Noting the high costs of transport and distribution in Angola, the Secretariat



was requested to take all possible steps to reduce these cost. The Secretariat informed the Board that the PRRO for Angola was already outdated in terms of number of beneficiaries and food quantities. The actual number of Angolans needing food aid during the coming year was likely to reach 2 million. The Secretariat assured the Board that every effort was being made to ensure that WFP food reached the intended beneficiaries.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Armenia 6120.01 (1999/EB.3/13)

22. The Board recommended that WFP target its assistance carefully through close collaboration with the local authorities and partnerships with NGOs and donors. The shift towards recovery was noted and the emphasis on women-headed households and their food security endorsed. One member requested clarification regarding the number of beneficiaries. It was explained that beneficiary figures were based on a vulnerability index (*Paros*) established by the Government.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Colombia 6139.00 (1999/EB.3/14)

23. The Board expressed support for PRRO Colombia 6139.00, noting its focus on the needs of displaced persons while peace negotiations were being pursued. WFP's coordination efforts with United Nations agencies and donors were appreciated, and the strengthening of links with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was encouraged. The Board recommended that WFP and the local authorities ensure safe delivery of assistance and a secure environment for staff implementing operations in areas at risk. Regarding a possible increase in the number of internally displaced persons and the difficulty of targeting them in urban areas, the Board noted WFP's close collaboration with ICRC, UNHCR and NGOs, which would assist in contingency planning.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Democratic People's Republic Korea of 6157.00 (1999/EB.3/15)

24. The Board expressed satisfaction that WFP had designed an innovative PRRO as a platform for recovery while the emergency operation (EMOP) was continuing, in keeping with the Board's earlier request for a longer-term vision for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). It noted that in most food emergencies rural workers moved to urban areas in search of food, but in this extreme situation urban workers were moving to rural areas in the hope of sharing very limited agricultural production with extended families. In this context, the Board welcomed focused targeting and the incorporation of underemployed urban workers into the rehabilitation programme.
25. The Board acknowledged a number of strengths in the PRRO design, referring specifically to partnerships with United Nations agencies (including FAO and IFAD), NGOs and other partners, and requested further strengthening of these partnerships, especially with the European Commission. The importance of conducting a joint UNICEF/EU/WFP follow-up nutrition survey was stressed. The Secretariat confirmed that discussions with DPRK counterparts were continuing at all levels. The Secretariat noted that in DPRK, United Nations, NGO and other partnerships, including with the



UNDP Agricultural Recovery and Environment Programme (AREP), would be bolstered by the recent confirmation of the WFP Representative and United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator as the United Nations Resident Coordinator. While the PRRO's participation approach was positively acknowledged, the Board noted that this activity would depend on government commitment. It underlined that the cooperation and support of the Government was key to implementing the PRRO. Specifically, the Board would watch for continued progress and ongoing efforts with respect to monitoring and establishing an environment enabling rehabilitation and eventual recovery. The Board commended WFP for its well-run operation in the country, largely due to efforts by WFP staff since 1995. The observer of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea confirmed that his Government would fully support implementation of the PRRO, and thanked donors for their generous contributions.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Nepal 6151.00 (1999/EB.3/16)

26. In approving PRRO Nepal 6151.00 for one year, the Board noted the need for all parties to negotiate a solution to this long-standing refugee problem with a view to repatriation and/or resettlement in the near future. In the meantime, the role of food aid provided through WFP was recognized and supported. The absence of recovery activities due to limitations imposed by the Government of Nepal on activities in camps was noted.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Sri Lanka 6152.00 (1999/EB.3/17)

27. The Board expressed support for PRRO Sri Lanka 6152.00 and its satisfaction with the Government's own assistance to a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Secretariat explained that the areas receiving assistance would be different from those approved for development project 4521.01, located outside the conflict zone. The Secretariat advised that, in assessing the country-wide food security situation, WFP was leading a United Nations initiative that would provide information about the population living in conflict and cleared areas, comprising 15 percent of the total population and thought to be in a more critical situation than the national average. The Board welcomed the review mission planned for the first half of 2000, which would assess the nutritional situation within and outside the welfare centres, and would provide recommendations for focusing WFP's assistance. The two-year expansion of the PRRO and its flexibility regarding the balance between relief and recovery activities was supported. The Board encouraged WFP to give close consideration to staffing levels to provide adequate support to people affected by the "forgotten war".

Basic Activities within Approved Country Programmes, Approved by the Executive Director, 1 January–30 June 1999 (1999/EB.3/20)

Mauritania 6015.00 and 6016.00

28. The Secretariat informed the Board that in an effort to reduce post-c.i.f. commodity losses in Mauritania and as a result of the review of logistic procedures in the country and negotiations with Mauritanian authorities, the country office was now directly involved in food management and logistics, and its monitoring capacity had been strengthened accordingly. Reduced in-country losses were expected in the near future.



Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations Approved by the Executive Director, 1 January–30 June 1999 (1999/EB.3/21)

Algeria 6099.00

29. One member requested clarification on the WFP target population in PRRO Algeria 6099.00, noting that the current PRRO was for 80,000 people, the same as in the previous operation, but that in 1997 there had been an operation for 49,000 people. The Secretariat advised that the high level of assistance provided in 1997 through bilateral donors had justified a reduction in WFP's target population. The Secretariat added that food aid donors and operational partners assisting Western Saharan refugees met each month to ensure coordination of food deliveries. If additional food were needed, a budget increase could be processed.
30. With regard to the status of the referendum for Western Sahara, the Secretariat advised that the Secretary-General's report confirmed that voter registration had proceeded smoothly, but the number of appeals was much higher than expected. Since processing the appeals would take longer than foreseen, the movement of refugees was likely to be delayed until the latter part of 2000. A revised plan was expected from the Secretary-General's Special Representative in December 1999.

Bangladesh 6155.00

31. Regarding prospects for remaining refugees, especially after the current project finished by December 1999, the Secretariat explained that UNHCR and WFP, with other concerned parties, were discussing a lasting solution with the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar, which had recently held bilateral talks in Dhaka regarding continuing the repatriation exercise and/or absorbing some of the refugees into Bangladesh. In the meantime, WFP planned to extend the project for another six months to one year.

Progress Reports on Approved Projects (1999/EB.3/23)

Peru 5162.00

32. The Board commended the good results being obtained through the Peru 5162.00 project, as well as the high level of beneficiary participation and gender mainstreaming being achieved with financial support from several donors.

Guatemala 5279.00

33. The Board expressed support for WFP assistance to the Guatemala 5279.00 project and requested that, in view of recent large bilateral food shipments arriving in the country, and resulting market fragility, WFP should be particularly attentive regarding monetization.



ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Provisional Programme of Work for the Year 2000 (1999/EB.3/24)

34. The Board noted that one-week periods had been reserved for the sessions, even though the provisional programme of work seemed to indicate that more or less time would be needed for a given session. The Secretariat pointed out that the weeks reserved for WFP's Executive Board sessions would ensure that there would be no overlaps with meetings of the other Rome-based United Nations organizations. The dates of the actual sessions, however, would be adjusted to reflect the respective agendas.
35. Three working days would probably be sufficient to address the programme of the First Regular Session. It was expected that the combined Second Regular and Annual Sessions could be held over a five-working-day period, but given the large number of policy documents planned for submission at the Annual Session it was thought prudent to reserve an additional week. As for the programme foreseen for the Third Regular Session, it was noted that some of the documents planned might need to be postponed until the First Regular Session of 2001.
36. The Secretariat assured the Board that changes to the provisional programme of work would be brought to the attention of the Bureau, and that the Board would be kept informed.

Looking Forward: Humanitarian Policy Concerns for WFP (1999/EB.3/25)

37. The Board welcomed the document "Looking Forward: Humanitarian Policy Concerns for WFP", noting the timeliness and pertinence of the issues raised and the need for WFP to be proactive in addressing concerns shared by all those involved in humanitarian activities. In considering the document, members noted the complexity of the issues raised and the fact that there were no easy answers.
38. The Board emphasized the importance of coordination and partnerships in addressing the issues and endorsed the priority areas listed in the paper, including but not in order of priority:
 - internally displaced persons;
 - humanitarian access; and
 - disaster mitigation.

Members suggested that WFP also address other topics as time and capacity permitted, including the interface between the military, peacekeeping activities and humanitarian assistance; economic crises and their impact on vulnerable people, including those pockets of the population facing short-term food insecurity; and the humanitarian impact of sanctions. One member stressed the importance of also addressing the needs of refugees not living in camps. The Board also highlighted the importance of preparing for and preventing crises and disasters, and the importance of linkages among relief, recovery and development programmes.

39. Members of the Board encouraged WFP, in collaboration with other humanitarian agencies, to take an active advocacy role and seek ways to encourage informed media coverage of priority needs in less visible emergency situations. The Board emphasized the importance of coordination and partnerships in addressing the issues; the



complementary role of WFP; and the importance of blending relief, recovery and development activities, focusing on participation, collaboration and strengthening partnerships. It also welcomed WFP's close collaboration with its partners at the inter-agency level, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

40. The Board asked the Secretariat to develop a consultative approach to address the issues raised in the paper. Members welcomed the Secretariat's suggestion for short and timely papers on the topics listed in the document.

Revision of WFP's General Rule XIII.1: Contributions (1999/EB.3/26)

41. Recognizing that the Board had amended General Rule XIII.1 within the authority delegated to it by the General Regulations and following guidance received from the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, one member queried whether the Conference of FAO, through the Council, could also express its opinion on that issue. The Legal Counsel responded that the FAO Conference—as well as the United Nations General Assembly—always remained sovereign and could express its opinion and take such action as it deemed appropriate; the authority delegated to the Executive Board did not take away the sovereign power of the FAO Conference or the General Assembly.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL MATTERS

Review of the Methodology on Local Purchases (1999/EB.3/27)

42. The Board expressed appreciation and support for local purchases as conducted by WFP. It was noted that 60 percent of WFP purchases were made in developing countries. Members supported the notion that WFP tender to private sector suppliers, and requested that WFP internal control bodies actively review and monitor procurement practices and procedures. It was further suggested that the food procurement user guide be reviewed periodically given the volatile nature of the commodity procurement environment in developing countries. This, in addition to market reviews, the advice of local governments and the concept of "least delivered cost" import parity pricing of substitute commodities, would contribute to successful and economical local procurement conducted in such a way as not to disrupt local economies.

Status Report on the Security Awareness Training Initiative (1999/EB.3/28)

43. The Secretariat presented a summary of the WFP-wide, all-staff Security Awareness Training initiative and updated the statistics. One year ago, there was no corporate security training programme. Since January of 1999, 3,600 WFP staff from 45 different countries had received basic Security Awareness Training, and training would continue through December of this year. In 2000, WFP intended to provide additional training, focusing on specific needs identified through the initiative.
44. One member stated her Government's support for the initiative, noting that the training had included National Officers, and expressed support for efforts to ensure that training would continue and address the needs of new staff. Interest was expressed in whether there was or would be collaboration with other agencies, and in the cost of the



training initiative. Another member expressed her Government's congratulations to the Executive Director for that extensive and important initiative, and hoped that the training would help to reduce the security incidents and casualties suffered by WFP.

45. The Executive Director noted that an additional contribution of US\$2.75 million from the United States in 1998 had funded the training. In 1999, WFP had also invested in upgrading office facilities and communications for security purposes. WFP intended following up the basic training with additional training targeted at specific needs. The Executive Director highlighted the strong collaboration on security issues between WFP and UNICEF, UNHCR and UNSECOORD, in particular, and asked all donors to review their own contributions in support of United Nations security.

OTHER BUSINESS

Report of the Executive Board Members' Visits to Bangladesh and Mali (1999/EB.3/30 and 1999/EB.3/31)

46. On behalf of the Board members who visited Bangladesh and Mali, representatives of the two missions to review the progress of projects being implemented in those countries reported that the visits had been a great success. Board members on both missions had found the visits invaluable and indicated that they would like the Secretariat to plan further such visits in the future.

Bangladesh

47. The Board was informed that the visit had helped participants reach a better understanding of WFP's activities in the field. The mission had found the Bangladesh programme to be well run and well coordinated. Mission participants had been impressed by evidence they saw that food aid could make a valuable contribution to improving the standard of living of the poorest sectors of societies. The participants agreed that WFP's efforts to encourage the self-selection process and improve its efficiency were well placed.

Mali

48. Members of the mission to Mali paid tribute to the excellence of the Programme's coordination and stressed its important catalytic role. One mission particularly noted the strong desire of the poorest sectors of society to overcome their problems. The mission visited all three types of activity undertaken in the country—school feeding programmes, food-for-work programmes and activities to promote better health and nutrition—and felt that Mali provided a good example of how better targeting and, in particular, the targeting policies approved by the Board at its Second Regular Session of 1999 could actually be applied to reach the food insecure and the poorest more effectively.

Update on West Africa Coastal Region 4604.07 (1999/EB.3/32)

49. Following the request made by the Board at its Second Regular Session of 1999, a joint WFP/UNHCR/Donor assessment mission was carried out to review the changing situation in the West Africa Coastal region, to ascertain the number of beneficiaries and to adjust food aid requirements accordingly. The Secretariat informed the Board that the



number of beneficiaries had been reduced from 1,800,000 to 1,660,000. Food aid requirements were consequently reduced from 173,023 metric tons to 153,466 metric tons.

Seminar on Resource Mobilization in Slovakia (1999/EB.3/33)

50. The representative of the Slovak Republic informed the Board that the Ministry of Agriculture and WFP had co-sponsored a seminar for non-traditional donors from Central and Eastern Europe. The seminar sought to raise awareness about WFP's activities, building on the recent experience of several countries of the region that had contributed to WFP for the first time. Participants had evaluated the workshop as an excellent occasion from which they had greatly benefited. They looked forward to increasing cooperation with WFP and hoped that new contributions might be gained as a result of the initiative.

Update on the Balkans Operations (1999/EB.3/34)

51. The Board was informed of the challenges in implementing the Balkans operations, including developing realistic contingency plans, meeting staffing and logistic requirements at very short notice, and coping with food pipeline problems, as well as preparations for the winter and feeding of minority groups in enclaves. The Board was advised that the regional strategy for 2000 was: in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to gradually scale down activities in Kosovo and to keep Serbia and Montenegro activities under close review in light of the emerging economic situation; in Albania, to assist local vulnerable groups and support pilot rehabilitation activities; and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to support the remaining beneficiaries until a durable solution was found. Overall, WFP planned to reduce the number of food aid beneficiaries from about 1.6 million to just over 1 million between January and December 2000.
52. Transport and logistic challenges included competition for use of transport corridors and customs clearance procedures. At the request of the Board, a breakdown of current beneficiary numbers was provided. Members further asked about the planned budget of the emergency operation for 2000, which was US\$119 million. The rationale for continuing with an emergency operation in Albania was queried, given that some rehabilitation activities were planned. The Secretariat reported that the small number of beneficiaries in Albania had been included in the EMOP as it would be most appropriate to have only one operation in the Balkans in order to provide flexibility and strengthen its regional focus.

Update on the Activities of the Working Group on Governance (1999/EB.3/35)

53. The Chairman of the Working Group on Governance informed the Board that its Third Progress Report would be distributed shortly. The Working Group had asked the Secretariat to prepare a paper with some scenarios for varying the delegations of authority to the Executive Director and her staff, while at the same time addressing the issue of improved policy and accountability frameworks. After considering that and other inputs, the Working Group would present, by 20 December 1999, a paper for general consideration that would be discussed at an informal consultation open to all on



13 January 2000. Another informal consultation meeting would be scheduled during the week of the First Regular Session of the Board, in February 2000.

54. The Chairman pointed out that there seemed to be interest, on the part of Member States, to carry on the governance discussion to a more concrete and practical level and to see what those ideas and principles would mean in terms of the operation of the Board and the roles and responsibilities of the Board and the Secretariat. He further noted that the governance project was followed with a considerable degree of interest within the United Nations system, and that the project offered the opportunity to produce results of value not only for WFP, but also more generally for the United Nations system as a whole.

