

برنامج  
الأغذية  
العالمي



Programme  
Alimentaire  
Mondial

World  
Food  
Programme

Programa  
Mundial  
de Alimentos

**Executive Board  
Third Regular Session**

**Rome, 21 - 24 October 1996**

# PROGRESS REPORT ON THE STATE OF WFP PREMISES

Agenda item 10 b)

**E**

Distribution: GENERAL  
**WFP/EB.3/96/10-B**  
22/11/01  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

This document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies.



1. Following presentation of the Status Report “Provisional WFP Headquarters Premises” (document WFP/EB.A/96/9-B) to the Annual Session of the Executive Board in May 1996, Board Members urged the WFP Secretariat to provide a satisfactory and definitive solution to the current precarious state of WFP premises. After the decision was taken to seek alternative headquarters premises, WFP initiated an active search for a possible new location. The following criteria are being applied to determine the suitability of potential buildings:
  - a) a safe location, preferably inside the GRA (Rome ring road) within the southern half of the city perimeter, as most staff members reside in that area;
  - b) surroundings and building façade befitting the image and status of an international organization;
  - c) a covered usable area of at least 21,000 square metres for office space and related facilities;
  - d) parking space within the building premises or in the immediate vicinity for at least 250 vehicles;
  - e) availability of or potential for conference and cafeteria facilities;
  - f) outfitted with modern equipment, fittings and apparatus, and safety fixtures in compliance with existing Italian and European Union regulations;
  - g) proximity to an underground or railway station, preferably at a distance not exceeding 1.5 kilometres;
  - h) proximity to a bus stop, preferably at a distance not exceeding 500 metres;
  - i) availability of restaurants within the immediate neighbourhood; and
  - j) available for occupancy at the latest by the end of 1997.
2. Newspaper advertisements were placed on two separate occasions in national newspapers (focusing on special days when there is a concentration of real estate advertisements); direct contacts were established with the largest real estate agencies in Rome and notices were placed in the Rome Real Estate Stock Market (*Borsa Immobiliare*). Major construction companies were informed of WFP’s requirements and contact was made with the Holy See in view of their extensive ownership of real estate in Rome.
3. Since June, WFP personnel have visited some 35 buildings. Many did not warrant more than a fleeting look. The search was interrupted during the month of August, when it was impossible to establish any commercial contacts in the city. However, the time was usefully utilized to examine in greater detail available building plans of potentially viable premises. Although the search initially concentrated on already built vacant premises, interest has expanded to currently occupied buildings and buildings in various stages of construction or refurbishment. WFP is also studying a preliminary proposal by a developer for a custom-built headquarters building.
4. During the search for alternative premises, WFP has maintained close communication with IFAD, who are also without a permanent headquarters building. Joint inspections have been carried out in the event of the agencies sharing premises.



5. Despite the considerable effort that has been put into the exercise, progress has been painfully slow. Firstly, many vacant buildings have been unoccupied for many years, some for as long as two decades. Plans for these buildings are difficult to obtain and more meticulous preliminary investigations into their suitability need to be carried out. Secondly, most buildings do not have provisions for conference or cafeteria facilities. In view of the complex building laws and the strict hygiene regulations governing food preparation and catering, examination of the potential for such basic requirements is also time-consuming. Thirdly, most available buildings are either too large or too small. The latter can be dismissed quite quickly; however, for larger buildings, considerable effort must be expended to determine whether an appropriate area may be created without sacrificing safety and security concerns while ensuring adequate availability of common facilities such as stairways and elevators. Finally, it should be noted that, besides the interruption during the month of August, conduct of business in Rome is generally a slow process.
6. Despite the above, the Secretariat has managed to identify three buildings which warrant more detailed investigation and discussion. One is located in Parco dei Medici on the highway to the Fiumicino airport, approximately 15 minutes by automobile from WFP's present headquarters. Although vacant for nearly 20 years, the building has recently undergone major refurbishment. The complex consists of a covered area of 33,000 square metres contained in four towers in a triangular configuration set within its own lawned compound. There is covered and open parking for 600 vehicles within the perimeter fencing. As the entire complex is beyond the needs of WFP, discussions are under way with the owners to determine the feasibility of partitioning one of the towers for separate tenancy.
7. The second building is located in the south-eastern part of Rome, on Via Tuscolana (near Rome's largest shopping mall). Located 13 kilometres from the current premises in a light industrial area, the site is not ideal from the perspective of image, but the building is easily accessible by underground and is served by several bus routes. Construction is partially complete, but this is seen as an advantage as it does allow considerable room for adaptation to meet our special needs. When complete, the building will have a covered area of 65,000 square metres divisible into two sections. This building was originally constructed for occupancy by industrial and small enterprises. Some legal problems regarding reclassification of the zone designations would have to be overcome.
8. The third building is located in EUR, close to the current premises. It is owned by the Italian Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and currently houses offices of the Ministry on four floors. The other 14 floors are occupied by Telecom Italia. The Ministry has indicated that it will be vacating its portion within 1996. We understand that Telecom Italia also plans to move. However, it is not yet in a position to communicate the official date of departure. Telecom expects to reach a final decision on the actual date by the end of 1997. The Italian Representation to WFP has been active in assisting us to secure this option.
9. Concurrent with the search for alternative premises described above, the recommendations of our consulting engineers for reducing the safety hazards in the present building, contained in the Report presented to the Annual Session of the Executive Board in May 1996, have been implemented. These included civil works related to upgrading fire safety emergency exits; training on fire safety and evacuation procedures; and setting up an electrical maintenance servicing contract. Despite these steps, the current premises fall woefully short of meeting European Union building safety standards, which would entail major reconstruction works.



10. In summary, while we are making a closer examination of the three buildings considered to be potentially suitable, the Secretariat will continue to dedicate all efforts to identifying other options. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to submit a definitive solution to the Third Regular Session of the Executive Board.

