

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON,  
HER EXCELLENCY CLÉMENTINE ANANGA MESSINA  
CLOSING THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

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

We now come to the end of this, the thirty-third session of the Governing Council of IFAD. This session marked a milestone in IFAD's history. It is the first Council to be held in IFAD's new headquarters and allow me to reiterate our thanks to the Italian Republic for the support it provides to our Fund. This Council also marks the beginning of the Eighth Replenishment period, when IFAD shall strive to significantly increase its outreach to poor rural women and men.

At the inaugural ceremony, we have been privileged by the presence of His Excellency Giorgio Napolitano, President of the Italian Republic. Listening to the President's words, the Governing Council was once again reassured of the commitment of Italy to our organization – as host country to IFAD and one of the staunchest advocates of international aid for sustainable development. The Council was assured of Italy's continued generosity and support.

The Council was further honoured by the presence of the Honourable Mizengo Peter Pinda, Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania. In delivering the address of His Excellency, President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, he highlighted the importance of IFAD's mandate in helping poor rural people tackle the myriad of challenges facing them. Also, he outlined the role to be played by developing countries themselves in this global struggle. Of late, Tanzania has emerged as a strong example of Africa's capacity for reform, growth and development. Their emphasis on the need for an integrated approach to the problems of poverty in order to ensure sustainable development is a call to which we should all respond with our knowledge, experience and financial resources.

The message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations once again emphasized IFAD's importance as a member of the United Nations family, underlining the centrality of agriculture on the international agenda. It also emphasized the importance of diverse and innovative partnerships, as well as comprehensive and sustained action, in addressing the many challenges that stand in the way of achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development.

President Nwanze's statement to the Council was compelling. IFAD's role and mandate are more relevant than ever before to the realities poor rural people face today. This relevance has been recognized not just in the record replenishment level achieved last year, but also in IFAD's increasing inclusion in the key events on the international calendar. I am sure I speak on behalf of all those present when I join with President Nwanze in urging the international community to continue to support IFAD and to partner with the Fund to help smallholder farmers and poor rural people rise out of poverty.

Partnership and cooperation continued to be central themes in the remarks by Dr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Mr Amir Mahmoud Abdulla, Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating

Officer of the World Food Programme. The presence of IFAD's Rome based partners further underlined their continuously evolving relationship, coordinating and working together to form the foundations of the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security, and Nutrition.

Overcoming geographic and cultural differences, the Fund's Governors spoke as one in their support of the Fund's mandate, in their encouragement of the ongoing evolution of the Fund towards greater effectiveness, innovation and efficiency and in their call for IFAD to persist in its ever increasing engagement in the global effort to reduce poverty.

Fresh in the memories of all Members was the recent disaster which had struck Haiti and the Council expressed its full support for the people of this member state and IFAD's related rehabilitation initiatives.

Distinguished Governors,

The Council considered the report on the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. The record level of both the replenishment's target and the pledges so far received, as well as the recent declaration of effectiveness are tangible and welcome demonstrations that agricultural development is front and centre on the international agenda. This also eloquently underlines the importance IFAD's Member States ascribe to the Fund's mandate and to providing it with the resources necessary to significantly increase the role it plays.

At the recommendation of the Executive Board, the Council approved IFAD's audited financial statements for 2008 and its first ever results-based programme of work and administrative and capital budgets. The Council approved the administrative budget of IFAD for 2010, in the amount of US\$131.99 million inclusive of PDFF expenditures. It also approved the capital budget of IFAD for 2010 in the amount of US\$3.53 million. The Council further approved the administrative budget of IFAD's Office of Evaluation for 2010 in the amount of US\$6.2 million. The records of this session will note the abstention of the Italian Republic on the Fund's administrative budget.

In approving the Revision of IFAD's Lending Policies and Criteria, the Council decided that, upon the proposal of the President, the Executive Board shall submit to the thirty-fourth session of the Governing Council in 2011 revised Lending Policies and Criteria. In the interim period prior to the adoption of the revised Lending Policies and Criteria by the Governing Council, the Executive Board shall have the authority to create a category of lending terms similar to the hardened terms offered by the International Development Association (IDA) and apply such terms to IFAD loans to countries to which IDA provides hardened terms.

Finally, the Council reviewed both the progress report on implementation of the performance-based allocation system and the progress report on the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The session welcomed the synthesis of the deliberations of the third global meeting of the Farmers' Forum, which was held in conjunction with this session of the Governing Council. The Forum underlined the need for continued support of smallholder farmers around the world, and recognized IFAD's role as an important and active partner in this regard.

This Governing Council will stay in our memories thanks to the new level of interaction it afforded us. The interactive plenary panel discussion, which was particularly captivating and intensive, and the side events on regional issues and the 2010 Rural Poverty Report provided plenty of scope for IFAD's membership to both discuss the global issues facing poor rural people, as well as exchanging views and providing input on the practical issues facing the Fund.

During this Governing Council, IFAD also displayed a high degree of responsiveness in organizing a side event on the situation in Haiti. This insightful and important event provided us with an update on IFAD's response to the devastation and suffering caused by the earthquake in Haiti. By also outlining the coordinated efforts for rehabilitation of agricultural areas, the event reminded us all of the need to help this stricken country. The side event took note of the commitment by its participants to support IFAD in providing permanent debt forgiveness to Haiti. It is understood that such debt relief will not be at the expense of the financial capacity of IFAD or the resources needed to finance projects and programmes in other member states. Participants expressed a desire that all members support such an initiative together with IFAD.

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 thank you for the trust you have invested in us by electing us to the Governing Council's Bureau. Our thanks should go as well to the staff of IFAD, whose expertise in planning and organizing this conference is commendable. A special word of thanks goes, as always, to the interpreters, the technical staff and, of course, the conference messengers. The efficiency, thorough organization, and professionalism demonstrated by all have ensured the success of this session.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Much work has been done, but as always, much work lies ahead. At the heart of each deliberation and each decision was the plight of poor rural people and the conviction that we must make a difference. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all distinguished Governors when I express our support of President Nwanze and his team. In addressing the challenges facing the close to one billion poor people in the world, they enjoy the support of the entire membership. IFAD's strength lies in its membership, their commitment and ability to transcend geographic and cultural boundaries, to encompass both donor and recipient countries in the Fund's structures and processes. Poverty and hunger know neither borders nor limits – nor do we, the membership of IFAD, in our support of this Fund and its mandate.

On this note, I hereby close the thirty-third session of the Governing Council.