

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

Mr President,
Distinguished Governors and delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The thirty-fourth session of the Governing Council is now drawing to a close. This year's Council focused on the future and, in particular, on young rural people who, with the help of IFAD and its partners, must be positioned at the forefront of global strategies for food security, poverty reduction and income growth.

At the opening ceremony, we had the privilege of welcoming the United Nations Messenger of Peace, Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Al Hussein. In her address to the Governing Council, Her Royal Highness sounded a wake-up call to the international community. Noting that IFAD's mission is more timely than ever, Her Royal Highness urged Members to join her in committing to do more to combat the continuing scourges of hunger and malnutrition.

The Governing Council was also honoured with the presence of Mr Kofi Annan, Chairman of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa and former United Nations Secretary-General. Addressing the Council, Mr Annan outlined a compelling vision of Africa that would achieve its potential not only to feed its own citizens but to help create a secure global food system. Mr Annan underscored that IFAD and its Member States, united in the belief that efforts to end poverty need to be accelerated urgently, have an integral role in bringing this vision to fruition.

Representing IFAD's host nation, the Honourable Luigi Casero, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Italian Republic, addressed the Council at an important milestone in Italy's rich history, as the country prepares to celebrate the 150th anniversary of its unification. The Governing Council took pride in the appreciation of IFAD's presence in Rome, serving as a tangible symbol of Italy's commitment to international cooperation, and welcomed our host government's continued generosity and support.

In his inaugural statement, President Nwanze looked towards the end point of the Millennium Development Goals and expanding the Fund's "bottom up" model so that poor rural people become true partners in their own development. As IFAD is the only international agency exclusively dedicated to reducing rural poverty in developing countries, the President called for increased investment in political, financial and human capital to help create more vibrant rural economies. The President's statement is both a forceful and hopeful declaration of just how the Fund envisions its future path.

The Council welcomed the creation of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum and was pleased by what promised to be a valuable addition to the events organized around the Governing Council sessions.

In concluding the opening ceremony, the Governing Council paid tribute to the recipients of the IFAD staff awards for their outstanding achievements. This tribute should favour a competitive spirit among staff.

Over the past two days we have heard many powerful statements by IFAD's Governors, affirming the importance that the Member States and the international community place on the Fund's work and renewing the call for a united effort to bring about a better future for the world's rural young poor people.

Distinguished Governors,

Turning to the business of the session, we had the pleasure of welcoming the Republics of Uzbekistan and Hungary as new Members of the Fund. I am sure I speak on behalf of all Governors in welcoming both these countries to our organization.

The Council took note of the status of the Eighth Replenishment of IFAD's resources. More significantly, the Council established the Consultation on the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources. With this decision we have entrusted the Consultation with reviewing the adequacy of our Fund's resources, with a view to further enhancing its capacity to respond to the needs of rural poor people. This task is critical for the future vitality of IFAD, and I wish the Consultation members every success.

The Council approved IFAD's consolidated financial statements for 2009. The Council also approved the budgets of IFAD and of the IFAD Office of Evaluation for 2011 and, in so doing, Governors endorsed a record programme of IFAD loan and grants for 2011, totalling US\$1 billion. The summary records of this session will place on record the abstentions by Germany and Italy in regard to the budget.

Governors adopted a resolution concerning the Voluntary Separation Programme for IFAD. The Council postponed consideration of the revision of IFAD's Lending Policies and Criteria to the thirty-fifth session of the Governing Council. The Council adopted a resolution on the re-establishment of the Emoluments Committee, noting the change in composition with respect to the initial proposal made during the preliminary discussions, whereby List B, or Indonesia, has been replaced by Gabon. Finally, the Council heard reports on the implementation of the performance-based allocation system and the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

Distinguished Governors,

Once again Governors benefited from a lively interactive discussion in plenary session and compelling parallel events on regional themes. These events afforded Members an opportunity to exchange views, showcase IFAD's achievements and provide an important impetus for its future work.

Fellow Governors,

I am sure I speak for the Council in offering our thanks to the IFAD staff who have shown commendable expertise in planning and organizing this conference. A special word of thanks goes to the interpreters, the technical staff and, of course, the conference messengers. Their efficiency, thorough organization and professionalism have ensured the success of this session.

I would like to express my appreciation for having been honoured with the duty of presiding over these past two sessions of the Governing Council. Serving as Chairperson of the Council has indeed been an enriching experience. I must thank my colleagues on the Bureau for their generous support and assistance. And of course, I wish to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication to the cause of enabling rural poor people to overcome poverty.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As members of the highest-level governance mechanism of IFAD, we should be pleased with the work we have accomplished over the last two days. The thirty-fourth session of the Governing Council has been extremely fruitful. Our work has been all the more facilitated by the efforts of the Executive Board, which it should be recalled, held its 100th session in 2010.

Before ending the work of the current session, may I wish those of you leaving Rome a pleasant journey home to your respective countries, and productive discussions to the delegations attending the first session of the Consultation on the Ninth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources here tomorrow.

I hereby adjourn this thirty-fourth session of the Governing Council.