
Review of the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD

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Useful references: Report of the Governing Council Bureau on the review of the established practice for the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD ([GC 41/L.9](#)); Report and recommendations in relation to a special session of the Governing Council ([GC 45/L.6](#)).

Action: Further to the Executive Board's consideration of the present document, the Governing Council is invited to adopt the draft resolution contained in the annex.

Technical questions:

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I. Background

1. At its fortieth session in February 2017, the Governing Council, by resolution 197/XL, tasked the Bureau to review the established practice for the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD and make proposals in order to enhance such practice for future appointments. At its forty-first session in February 2018, the Governing Council adopted resolution 202/XLI, approving the recommendations of the Governing Council Bureau as contained in document [GC 41/L.9](#).
2. In September 2021, further to the nomination of the President of IFAD, Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, for the position of Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Management consulted with the Governing Council Bureau. A report and recommendations in relation to a special session of the Governing Council ([GC 45/L.6](#)) was submitted to the Governing Council, which adopted resolution 227/XLV, setting out, inter alia, the modalities to be adopted for the conduct of the special session, noting the need to ensure fair and equitable parameters for the appointment process for the President of IFAD.
3. The first special session of the Governing Council was held on Thursday, 7 July 2022, at IFAD headquarters and paper ballots were used for the purpose of the appointment of the President.
4. Members commended the Governing Council Bureau for its guidance and its support to the Secretariat, which ensured a high level of professionalism, exhaustive attention to detail and adherence to the relevant rules and procedures. It was consistently noted that these qualities characterized the strong organization and conduct of the special session and the process leading to the appointment of the President of the Fund. As per the normal lessons learned process, IFAD solicited feedback from Bureau members, the tellers and Member State representatives for potential adjustments to further strengthen the process and support IFAD business continuity going forward. Representatives identified some areas that could benefit from benchmarking with comparable processes in other United Nations agencies and international financial institutions. These included:
 - (a) **Timely communication of nominations:** representatives noted that several weeks had elapsed between the deadline for submission of nominations and their communication to Governors;
 - (b) **While protecting Member States' control of the appointment process, possible enhancement of the participatory nature thereof:** some areas that may be benchmarked against comparable institutions include:
 - (i) In addition to the Membership meeting with candidates, public meetings with the candidates could be organized to include other stakeholders such as representatives from civil society, farmers' organizations and Indigenous Peoples' organizations;
 - (ii) Revisiting the conduct of the election process in a private meeting, granting access to additional Member State representatives; and disclosure of intermediate results;
 - (c) **Voting modality:** representatives expressed concern about the cumbersome and time-consuming nature of the paper ballot process, including the lengthy counting procedures and announcement of results. Bearing in mind resolution 217/XLIV, whereby the Governing Council approved the use of an automated

voting system that may be used when voting by secret ballot is deemed necessary, further consideration to be given to adopting a "closed" electronic voting system to increase efficiency and to considering the application of acclamation when there is only one candidate remaining.

- (d) **Business continuity:** addressing the situation where the sitting President is running for a position in another organization or entity, and clarifying the procedure for appointing an officer-in-charge should the position of President become vacant.

II. Recommendation

5. In light of the foregoing, the Executive Board recommended that the Governing Council request the Bureau, assisted as needed by the IFAD Secretariat, to review the current process leading to the appointment of the President and make recommendations to further enhance said process. The Governing Council is further invited to adopt the draft resolution contained in the annex.

Draft resolution .../XLVI

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The Governing Council of IFAD,

Taking into account article 6.8(a) of the Agreement Establishing IFAD, section 6.2 of the By-Laws for the Conduct of the Business of IFAD and rule 41 of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council;

Recalling resolution 176/XXXVI and the endorsement by the Governing Council of the established good practice for the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD and the proposal that this practice be reviewed from time to time by the Governing Council Bureau as appropriate;

Further recalling resolution 202/XLI and the endorsement by the Governing Council of the recommendations of the Governing Council Bureau following its review of the established practice for the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD, as contained in document GC 41/L.9;

Having considered the recommendation made by the Executive Board at its 137th session as contained in document GC 46/L.7;

Decides to request the Governing Council Bureau to review the process leading to the appointment of the President of IFAD, taking into consideration best practices in use for comparable processes at other United Nations agencies and international financial institutions, and make proposals in order to enhance this practice for future appointments. The Bureau shall be assisted in its task by the IFAD Secretariat and shall submit a report on the results of its review and any recommendations thereon to the Executive Board in December 2023, for submission to the Governing Council for endorsement at its forty-seventh session in February 2024.