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COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FIRST SESSION, HELD IN ROME FROM 11 TO 22 NOVEMBER 2002

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## I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

### A. Welcoming ceremony

1. On 11 November 2002, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, welcomed participants to the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC).

2. Welcoming addresses were also made by Mr. Rogatien Biaou, Chairperson of the CRIC, Mr. David A. Harcharik, Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Mr. Charles Bassett, President of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 5) and Hon. Roberto Tortoli, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection of Italy.

3. Summaries of the statements made during the welcoming ceremony are to be found in annex I.

### B. Official opening

4. The first session of the CRIC, convened pursuant to decision 1/COP.5, was officially opened in Rome, Italy, on 11 November 2002, by Mr. Rogatien Biaou, Chairperson of the CRIC.

### C. Opening and general statements

5. At the 1st meeting, on 11 November 2002, the Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification made a statement.

6. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Venezuela (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Denmark (on behalf of the European Union and its member States), the Syrian Arab Republic (on behalf of the Asian Group) and Uruguay (on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group). Summaries of these statements are to be found in annex II.

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

### A. Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 2)

7. At its 1st meeting, on 11 November 2002, the CRIC adopted the agenda as contained in ICCD/CRIC(1)/1.

B. Election of officers other than the Chairperson of the Committee  
(Agenda item 1)

8. At its 1st meeting, on 11 November 2002, the Committee elected the following officers to serve as Vice-Chairpersons of the Bureau for the first session of the CRIC:

Ms. Gisela Alonso Domínguez (Cuba)  
Mr. Khaled Al-Shara'a (Syrian Arab Republic)  
Mr. Franco Micieli de Biase (Italy)  
Ms. Ketevan Tsereteli (Georgia)

The Committee designated Mr. Franco Micieli de Biase (Italy) as Rapporteur.

C. Organization of work  
(Agenda item 2)

9. At its 1st meeting, the Committee approved its organization of work for the session as contained in annex II to document ICCD/CRIC(1)/1, as orally amended by the Chairperson of the CRIC.

10. The CRIC held eighteen meetings from 11 to 22 November 2002, and considered the reports on implementation of the Convention submitted by African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean, Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country Parties, as well as relevant subregional and regional reports.

11. It also considered the reports by developed country Parties on measures taken to assist in the preparation and implementation of the action programmes of affected country Parties of all regions, including information on financial resources they have provided, or are providing, under the Convention, as well as information provided by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention.

12. Likewise, the Committee considered the documents containing inputs from the regional meetings that were convened in preparation for its first session in accordance with decision 1/COP.5.

13. In accordance with its terms of reference, the first session of the CRIC proposed concrete recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention. They are contained in chapter VI of the present document.

D. Attendance

14. Representatives of the following 149 country Parties to the UNCCD attended the first session of the CRIC:

Albania	Egypt	Mauritania
Algeria	El Salvador	Mexico
Angola	Eritrea	Monaco
Antigua and Barbuda	Ethiopia	Mongolia
Argentina	European Community	Morocco
Armenia	Fiji	Mozambique
Austria	Finland	Myanmar
Azerbaijan	France	Namibia
Bahamas	Gabon	Nepal
Bangladesh	Gambia	Netherlands
Barbados	Georgia	Nicaragua
Belarus	Germany	Nigeria
Belgium	Ghana	Niue
Benin	Greece	Norway
Bolivia	Grenada	Oman
Botswana	Guatemala	Pakistan
Brazil	Guinea	Panama
Bulgaria	Guinea-Bissau	Paraguay
Burkina Faso	Haiti	Peru
Burundi	Honduras	Philippines
Cambodia	Hungary	Poland
Cameroon	India	Portugal
Canada	Indonesia	Qatar
Cape Verde	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Republic of Korea
Central African Republic	Israel	Republic of Moldova
Chad	Italy	Romania
Chile	Jamaica	Rwanda
China	Japan	Saint Lucia
Colombia	Jordan	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Comoros	Kazakhstan	Samoa
Congo	Kenya	Sao Tome and Principe
Costa Rica	Kyrgyzstan	Saudi Arabia
Côte d'Ivoire	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Senegal
Cuba	Lebanon	Sierra Leone
Cyprus	Lesotho	Slovakia
Czech Republic	Liberia	Slovenia
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Solomon Islands
Denmark	Madagascar	South Africa
Djibouti	Malawi	Spain
Dominica	Malaysia	Sri Lanka
Dominican Republic	Mali	Sudan
Ecuador	Malta	Swaziland
		Sweden

Switzerland	Turkey	United States of
Syrian Arab Republic	Turkmenistan	America
Tajikistan	Tuvalu	Uruguay
Thailand	Uganda	Uzbekistan
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Venezuela
Togo	United Republic of Tanzania	Viet Nam
Trinidad and Tobago		Yemen
Tunisia		Zambia
		Zimbabwe

15. The session was also attended by observers from the following six States not Parties to the Convention:

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Latvia
Holy See	Russian Federation
Iraq	Ukraine

16. The following United Nations organizations, offices and specialized agencies were represented:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)  
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)  
Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) for Italy  
World Bank  
World Health Organization (WHO)  
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

17. Twenty-one intergovernmental and 46 non-governmental organizations were also represented.

E. Documentation

18. The documents submitted for the consideration of the CRIC are listed in annex V.

### III. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

#### A. Legislative mandate

19. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 1/COP.5, established the CRIC to assist the COP in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention, in the light of experience gained at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, and to facilitate the exchange of information on measures adopted by the Parties, pursuant to article 26 of the Convention, in order to draw conclusions and to propose to the COP concrete recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention.

20. By the same decision, the COP decided to adopt the terms of reference of the Committee as contained in the annex to decision 1/COP.5, and defined the tasks of the Committee at sessions held between and during ordinary sessions of the COP, including the first session of the CRIC.

21. By the same decision, the COP further decided that the review should focus on specific thematic issues identified by Parties. Accordingly, the COP identified seven key thematic topics for review, up to and including the seventh session of the COP. These topics were reflected in the deliberations of the Committee.

#### B. Composition of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

22. According to decision 1/COP.1, which contains the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, and decision 1/COP.5 on additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist in the review of the implementation of the Convention, the CRIC shall be composed of all Parties to the Convention. Any other body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which wishes to be represented at a session of the Committee as an observer may be admitted unless one third of the Parties present at the session object.

### IV. KEY ASPECTS AND TRENDS OF THE PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### A. Features of the proceedings

23. The regional meetings organized in accordance with decision 1/COP.5 took place in July/August 2002 in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, for Asia; in Windhoek, Namibia, for Africa; in Geneva, Switzerland, for the Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe and other affected country Parties; and in Bridgetown, Barbados, for Latin America and the Caribbean. The presentation of national reports and resulting exchanges in the regional peer review process were fruitful and the outcome provided a sound frame of reference for the deliberations of the CRIC. The findings will continue to serve as a key

reference for further progress under the regional implementation annexes of the UNCCD.

24. The information contained in the present report is intended to round off the review exercise in the light of the presentations and deliberations of CRIC 1. The conclusions of the Ad Hoc Working Group, contained in document ICCD/COP(4)/AHWG/6, have not lost their validity in the year under review. Many of them were reiterated during the second generation of UNCCD reporting.

25. Chapters IV and V contain highlights of the debates, in which there was a high degree of agreement amongst all Parties. Chapter VI.A contains the thematic conclusions and recommendations, and chapter VI.B, complementing these, sets out some key conclusions and recommendations in the light of decision 1/COP.5.

B. Presentations by affected country Parties

26. Thematic case studies contributed to experience sharing and successfully reported on steps taken as required. They usefully demonstrated the relationship between combating desertification and eradicating poverty. In many cases, progress was shown to have been achieved on a wide front. The next cycle of information before the CRIC could focus more on analysis of accomplishment, measurement of impact achieved and goals reached. Recommendations by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) on benchmarks and indicators should be applied in this work for affected developing country Parties.

27. On the other hand, affected country Parties stressed that reports by developed country Parties on their contributions to the UNCCD process should be more precise and complete. The reporting process before the CRIC should be more balanced in reflecting the obligations of all Parties.

28. The national action programme (NAP) expresses a country's commitment to the UNCCD. While NAPs are in various stages of advancement or finalization - often with minimal external support - predictable financial resources, both domestic and international, for enabling activities under the UNCCD are clearly required to foster implementation, support policy formulation for sustainable land use, capacity building, technical assistance in specific areas and for pre-feasibility studies for investments. Although HIV/AIDS was scarcely mentioned in the presentations, it remains a concern of particular importance in Africa and the impact of this scourge on efforts to combat desertification must be taken into account.

29. A difference in approach to the funding of the Convention was noticeable among the Parties. While developed country Parties presented a range of activities for drylands development in developing countries, it was noted that most of them were not related to the action programmes process. The focal points stand ready to mainstream the Convention into national policy frameworks, and they will succeed in doing so when their partners support linkage of their assistance to UNCCD implementation.

C. Information and advice provided by the Global Mechanism

30. The Global Mechanism (GM) expressed its interest in an exchange of experience on benchmarks and indicators, an area considered critical to performance monitoring and resource mobilization.

31. The participatory process of NAP implementation had turned out to be a demanding process, which fell, however, short of attracting the anticipated substantial resources in support of UNCCD implementation. This was due to a number of factors, including: (a) an overall decline in official development assistance (ODA) over the past decade compounded by a shrinking share for agriculture and natural resource management; (b) the inadequate level of mainstreaming, if any, of the UNCCD objectives into government strategies, planning and budget processes at sector and national levels (including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)); and (c) poor integration of NAP objectives into the strategic cooperation frameworks with the development partners and the related project portfolio. As an illustration, the modest amount of ODA allocated by the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in absolute and relative terms<sup>1</sup> for combating desertification reflected - besides the considerations on classification of activities - the low priority assigned to this issue at bilateral negotiations.

32. Against that background, the GM would build on its experience in terms of (a) assistance to an increasing number of countries and subregions in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, in formulating and mainstreaming NAPs and subregional action programmes (SRAPs) and elaborating roadmaps and frameworks of partnerships or similar arrangements for resource mobilization at national and subregional levels; and (b) effective collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implementing and executing agencies to facilitate access to GEF planning grants - leading to GEF full project grants - for national and subregional initiatives, illustrating the multiplier effect of GM catalytic resources.

33. The next steps in the GM intervention would consist of: (a) consolidating and expanding the financing opportunities for UNCCD implementation including thematically and geographically oriented bilateral and multilateral support to sustainable development activities; (b) fine-tuning a resource mobilization strategy to assist countries in lowering the threshold for accessing resources under the new GEF window; (c) strengthening the strategic partnerships with the members of the GM Facilitation Committee based on a business plan approach in support of NAP formulation and implementation; and (d) stepping up resource mobilization from foundations, private-sector funds and other potential funding sources.

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<sup>1</sup> Less than three per cent according to the preliminary findings of a study by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD "Aid Targeting the Objectives of the Rio Conventions 1998-2000".

D. Information and advice provided by the Committee  
on Science and Technology

34. The CST noted that not all of its recommendations had been fully taken into account in the activities of the Parties in the period under review, and drew attention to the documents available on issues such as early warning systems and the use of benchmarks and indicators, as well as to decision 10/COP.4 inviting Parties to better integrate CST activities into the national reports and the NAPs.

35. In the reporting process at future sessions of the CRIC, each topic should contain elements to demonstrate the linkages between the state of knowledge on the particular topic, the extent and scale of impacts, the opportunities for mitigation and the policy implications, specifically including the implications for socioeconomic and cultural policies.

36. The CST urged UNCCD focal points fully to involve members of the scientific community in the NAP, and suggested that where their involvement was not possible, Parties should include an analysis of the reasons for the difficulties in their report. The recommendations of the CST appear in chapter VI of this report.

E. Comments by developed country Parties

37. Developed country Parties recognize the UNCCD's global importance for sustainable development and poverty eradication. Decentralization and participatory processes are encouraged. Identification and promotion of incentives for ownership, land tenure, access and use of productive natural resources are regarded as important in creating an enabling framework for sustainable and equitable land use. Synergies between the multilateral environment agreements are seen as a critical issue, which can be addressed through the UNCCD.

38. Developed country Parties acknowledged the merits of a political dialogue to foster implementation of the Convention and urged governments to clarify the roles and influence of the national coordinating bodies (NCBs) and the national focal points (NFPs) within the national planning process. The contribution of donor country Parties consisted, *inter alia*, in support to affected Parties and their sectoral policies, to scientific institutions and (sub)regional organizations and to local development through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs).

39. In the view of the developed country Parties, more should be done to incorporate the results of research and relevant projects into NAP implementation and impact monitoring. Indicators must be developed to measure socioeconomic developments, in addition to biophysical changes.

40. Developed country Parties again observed that, in some cases, UNCCD implementation was not raised in appropriate governmental forums in which affected country Parties determine their national ODA programmes. On the other hand, they acknowledged the need for more internal coordination on the UNCCD within their own administrations, especially between central departments and their field representatives. Some Parties are actively seeking greater coherence between multilateral and bilateral finance flows.

41. Poverty reduction is the overall objective of development cooperation, as expressed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There is a need for increased awareness and understanding of the linkages between poverty and environment, particularly the impact of changes in dryland ecosystems on poverty in vulnerable communities.

42. The need to improve the enabling environment, and improve conditions for cooperation with the private sector for natural resource management, was emphasized. Besides improving the legal and institutional framework, that meant eliminating obstacles, as well as identifying incentives to the sustainable use of natural resources by local communities.

F. Information provided by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention

43. United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) presented relevant activities and recalled their traditional role in supporting policy formulation for sustainable development, technical assistance, capacity building, information and data exchange. The degree of UNCCD mainstreaming in their procedures and programmes varies, and there appears to be a growing interest in synergy related issues.

44. NGOs contributed actively to the CRIC assessment. In their view, the current participatory practice remained prescriptive; it was usually carried out in the same manner everywhere as if people and societies were the same everywhere. Local communities, especially women and youth, should have access to productive assets such as land, water, credit, information, training and capacity building, if they were to play their full role in UNCCD implementation. This could be achieved by developing the capacities of major groups and providing cost-effective tools, including technologies, for implementation.

45. The lack of funding had been the major barrier to implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, the access of civil society to funding remained problematic. NGOs looked forward to swift implementation of the decision concerning GEF funding and the commitments made by the GM and donor countries.

46. NGOs should be involved in the mainstreaming and synergy process at all levels in order to ensure that synergies took effect at the field level. Lessons learned from traditional practices and scientific research in the various areas should be harnessed, to improve UNCCD implementation. In the integration of NAPs and PRSPs, activities in the agriculture sector should be designed so as to improve the livelihoods of the rural population and minimize possible negative impacts.

47. The Poverty Reduction Strategies intensified the competition for land and other inputs between agriculture for local consumption, and cash crops for exports. The Convention needed to address this thematic area urgently if it was to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goal by reducing hunger in the dry lands. NGO and CBO initiatives towards achieving this goal should be supported by the Parties. Furthermore, the dissemination of rural desertification-related expertise and knowledge should be enhanced and further encouraged.

48. The present CRIC session did not allow a full presentation of the reality on the ground. The success stories presented hardly addressed the problems and constraints. There was a need to develop actual benchmarks and indicators, not only biophysical but also socioeconomic, of the participatory implementation of the NAPs and the reports submitted to the CRIC.

G. Regional wrap-up meetings

1. *Africa*

49. Presentations and exchanges suggested that the African region had made substantial progress in UNCCD implementation and was moving in the right direction. It was suggested that the success stories presented at the first session of the CRIC should be replicated in other African country Parties with the support of various partners, and the results disseminated to all interested parties.

50. The consultative process at the national and local levels should be improved and it was suggested that indicators should be developed to measure the level of participation of civil society. Particular attention should be paid to the involvement of women and youth.

51. With regard to the harmonization of existing legal frameworks, African country Parties expressed the need for assistance from specialized experts and/or institutions. As for the synergies between the Rio conventions, linkages should be strengthened at national, but also at local and global levels between the respective secretariats and subsidiary bodies of their COPs.

52. Resource mobilization was a major issue in the discussions, and the need for support to access existing sources of funding was underlined, especially with regard to the elaboration of projects and programmes eligible for GEF. Concrete information on resources mobilized so far by the GM was also requested.

The importance of partnership frameworks and of the allocation of national funds was mentioned as a pre-condition for successful implementation at national level. The importance of integrating the UNCCD process into the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was underlined.

53. Considering that the recommendations of the CST had not been taken into account by most of the national reports, the full participation of the scientific community in the process was urged. Finally, innovative approaches such as joint evaluations and the elaboration of country profiles to complement the national reports should be further pursued.

## 2. Asia

54. Exchanges focused on recapitulating key issues raised in the first week of deliberations and cross-fertilizing them with the proceedings of meetings relating to other regions. The Syrian Arab Republic, as Chairperson of the 5th regional meeting of Asian focal points, presented the outcome of the meeting, as contained in ICCD/CRIC(1)/3/Add.3. The general issues covered by the six Asian regional thematic programme networks (TPNs) were reviewed, and while institutional progress was recognized, the issue of financial support for programme activities and implementation was again raised. The treatment of gender issues was discussed after a Chinese NGO presented the reforestation project promoted by a Chinese women's group in Inner Mongolia.

55. Compilation and dissemination of success stories, in particular best practices on replenishment of national funds for desertification, and mobilization of internal resources through coordination at national level were emphasized. It was suggested that the UNCCD secretariat should compile a record of best practices and disseminate them. Further efforts were required to strengthen the enabling role of the focal points and NCBs with a view to facilitating UNCCD implementation.

56. Other subjects raised were the lack of sufficient and timely financial resources under the UNCCD process, increased provision of incentives and removal of obstacles for facilitating sustainable natural resource management, mainstreaming of NAPs into policy development and budgeting processes, promotion of linkages with other conventions at the level of policy development and field operations, awareness raising, development of subregional collaboration for reinforcing ecosystem-based natural resource management, and the promotion of resource mobilization and partnership building with the continuous support of the GM and the UNCCD secretariat. Synergy, partnership, women's participation, rangeland management and biodiversity-related activities were prominent in the efforts of Asian countries to implement the Convention. Emergency situations such as the Aral Sea crisis needed the attention of the international community. Proposals were made concerning the Pacific country Parties and development of the Asian subregional action programme.

*3. Latin America and the Caribbean*

57. The debate showed that, although progress had been made in implementing the Convention, much remained to be done to resolve the major problems in the region. Particular mention was made of the participatory process, which must be deepened and promoted at all levels if implementation of the Convention is to be effective.

58. Country Parties mentioned the severe vulnerability of ecosystems, especially those of smaller countries and islands that had to deal with the limitations in terms of land, human, natural and financial resources, imposed by their size. The long-standing economic crises afflicting the entire region prevented countries from directing essential resources to effective action at the institutional, political and technical levels and from facing the outstanding challenges, thus increasing their environmental, social and economic vulnerability.

59. Accordingly, the region called upon the international community, in particular cooperation partners and international institutions, to create the conditions for equal trade and fair competition, as well as to assist Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries with the necessary technical and financial resources for the design and application of instruments essential to the implementation of the Convention, such as national, subregional and regional action programmes.

60. The NAP, in particular, was defined as the central issue to foster the entire process in a coherent and participatory manner, addressing desertification-related issues such as land conservation and rehabilitation, sustainable use of natural resources, early warning, poverty eradication and food security, through, *inter alia*, the sound traditional knowledge and practices existing in the region. The potential benefits to UNCCD implementation to be derived from synergies were emphasized, especially the efficient use of resources, exchange of information and coordinated action among the different actors, both at national and international level.

*4. Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country Parties*

61. It was clear from the presentation and discussion of case studies on UNCCD implementation in Europe and other affected country Parties that experience in implementing the UNCCD in Europe is similar to other regions. Cooperation between Annex IV and Annex V country Parties, and between Annex IV and Annex I country Parties, should be established and/or strengthened, in particular in the context of scientific capacity building.

62. Despite the fact that some affected Annex IV country Parties are developed, they too are facing difficulties in ensuring a participatory process and an appropriate institutional and legislative framework and in mobilizing financial resources for NAP preparation and implementation. Affected developed

country Parties should share their success experience with developing country Parties.

63. The important role of European Community's environmental and agricultural policies for the implementation process in European country Parties was recognized. Soil protection should be an issue not only for ministries of environment but also for ministries of agriculture and finance.

64. The involvement of NGOs in the UNCCD process remains weak in Europe. The same applies to cooperation between NGOs and governmental bodies in Central and Eastern European country Parties. Land degradation and desertification are still of low importance for European environmental NGOs and media. The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters might be a relevant instrument to further the participatory process.

65. The issue of non-implementation of CST decisions was also raised, and the need for incentives to involve the private sector in land rehabilitation underlined.

66. Information on the preparatory process for the fifth ministerial conference "Environment for Europe", to be held in Kiev, Ukraine, in 2003, as well as an invitation to integrate land degradation and desertification issues into this process was appreciated.

#### H. Global interactive dialogue

67. Following the introductory words of the Chairperson of the Committee, Hon. Valerio Calzolaio made a statement. Underlining the intimate relationship between desertification and poverty, he stressed challenges that would arise from adoption by the GEF of a new focal area on land degradation and its readiness to become a financial mechanism of the Convention if the COP so decides. The Chairperson then called on Professor Marc Bied-Charreton to act as a moderator for a group of panellists. Their interactions triggered a wider dialogue among the Parties. The names of the panellists appear in annex III.

68. Panellists representing major groups (NGOs, local authorities, private sector, and scientific community) commented on the conditions for improved decentralization and coordination among stakeholders. Consultative processes under the Convention still needed much strengthening. The contribution of the private sector could bring together ecosystem conservation and sustainable livelihoods and, in this context, a consortium of interests could be promoted under the UNCCD. Innovative technologies linked to traditional ones could be introduced by enterprises under secure market conditions. Prospective strategic planning over the long term greatly helps public-private partnerships.

69. Experts from United Nations agencies (IFAD, FAO, UNDP) discussed their technical experience, investment potential and their role in supporting normative and policy frameworks or mechanisms to assist the UNCCD. The national

integration of sectoral measures necessary to combat desertification emerged as a strong priority. Multi-partnerships, especially to support the efforts of the least developed countries, could help in promoting NAP-related issues. The expert from the secretariat of the OECD emphasized the necessity for a demand-driven aid process and for integration of cross-sectoral programmes, which must involve more than just environment ministries. He also spelled out ways and means by which donors could help the UNCCD further, particularly in a PRSP context.

70. In the ensuing debate, Parties and observers welcomed recent developments under the GEF. They highlighted the importance of giving the UNCCD a higher political profile in the context of the poverty/desertification/food security nexus, as the additional demand for food would largely come from vulnerable areas. They also stressed the need to recognize the global socioeconomic impact of land degradation in the form of, for example, mass migrations. Approaches to capacity-building and empowerment were also discussed.

#### **V. HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY THEMATIC TOPICS, INCLUDING IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCE**

##### **A. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental and community-based organizations**

71. Drylands communities are often marginalized or disassociated from development processes. Stakeholders at various levels have often been drawn into UNCCD implementation through participation in the NCB as well as through a decentralized consultative process. The survival/coping strategies of the relevant communities must be integrated in field-level UNCCD approaches. Authorities should take their input into account in land use planning. Various participatory methodologies continue to be tested in many countries.

72. Effective participation of civil society, NGOs and CBOs is on the increase in countries fostering a more open decision-making regime for sustainable development and decentralization. Strong local institutions and conditions conducive to private investment are among the enabling conditions. The role of primary stakeholders, rural communities and youth in emergency and rehabilitation programmes was appreciated. Rural women are key to the implementation of the UNCCD. The critical role of indigenous people should be more clearly recognized.

73. Careful planning of the participatory process, wide stakeholder involvement, open information and the resulting empowerment of communities have been shown to be key to the sound and equitable management of the environment and helpful in eradicating poverty and hunger. Effective participation by civil society, NGOs, CBOs and the scientific community is on the increase, as is decentralization. These partnerships should be strengthened at national and local level.

74. The importance of establishing or strengthening collaboration mechanisms between governments, NGOs and CBOs under the Convention, for the purposes of joint planning and information sharing, was underlined as a critical enabling activity. This experience could also serve other natural resource management processes. Significant results had been obtained in some countries in terms of decentralization and local mobilization and this suggested that people-centered approaches must influence the whole process of analysis, planning and or implementation. The involvement of NGOs, CBOs and scientists in international forums should be actively encouraged.

75. Although gender mainstreaming is taking place in land use practices and efficient land rehabilitation and protection, women and youth should be targeted more specifically.

76. Self-help groups and empowered community institutions, responding to local needs and opportunities in the context of the poverty-environment nexus, would increasingly benefit from awareness campaigns, information networks, micro-credit and training in participatory mechanisms and incentive systems. Some of the successful experiences could be further upscaled under the NAP strategic framework.

77. Many speakers called for the development of indicators to accurately assess and monitor stakeholder participation and the participatory process itself in UNCCD implementation.

B. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements

78. UNCCD NCBs, serviced by the NFPs, constitute a good institutional framework, in the context of the implementation of the Convention, for mainstreaming environmental issues into national development strategies. They can foster interministerial coordination, cross-cutting linkages with sectoral policies, synergies and communication with other conventions. They facilitate the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders in the decision-making process and in steering nation-wide awareness campaigns. Yet, to realize this potential more fully, the NFP, as the secretariat of the NCB, must be appointed at the appropriate level of seniority. His/her technical competence must be backed by political support to allow better access to administrative and financial resources.

79. A holistic rather than sectoral approach should be pursued. Mainstreaming the fight against desertification into national development plans, key sectors or strategies has taken place in some countries but does not appear to be a sufficient condition for securing the required national or external support, including new additional resources. Many completed NAPs have been prepared with minimal external support and need to be strengthened, *inter alia*, with a base-line country profile that will provide references to measure progress, more detailed analytical assessments, a road map leading to partnership financing and a strong monitoring and evaluation system.

80. Weak institutional capacities often combine with policy inconsistencies and poor harmonization of environmental laws to hamper the implementation process. Yet, some positive results can be reported in terms of high-level coordination mechanisms to improve decision-making, the adoption and enactment of new regulations, institutional strengthening and environmental education.

81. The discussions showed the benefits of complementing sectoral legislative measures in the different environmental fields relevant to combating desertification with framework provisions at a higher hierarchical level. Equitable land use and water rights are essential to sustainable development.

82. Fair progress has been achieved in several countries in the preliminary review of existing laws. National land use legislation, conservation codes and regulatory frameworks dealing with the environment, natural resource management and sustainable development strategies often need to be updated. The review and harmonization of relevant legislation on natural resource management, land and water rights and decentralization remain a daunting but necessary task.

83. Progress in law enforcement has been achieved in several cases, notably in linking enforcement to a network of science-based monitoring stations. But, on the whole, the enforcement of existing conservation codes can be problematic in the absence of supporting incentive systems.

84. Better framework conditions for cooperation with the private sector, investments in the drylands and more open markets for drylands products provide important support to local livelihood systems.

C. Resource mobilization and coordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements

85. The perceived difficulties of mainstreaming the NAPs and insufficient national and international financial resources for the Convention in the period under review did not help the task of the national focal points and more should be done to avoid losing momentum in this critical phase of the implementation.

86. Some country Parties stated that, seven years into the life of the UNCCD, combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought still suffered from insufficient attention, despite the severe nature of these threats. The magnitude of the cost of combating desertification is hard to identify given the cross-sectoral nature of such activities and the scarcity of resources allocated to the assessment of this complex phenomenon. Meanwhile, the existing pattern of sectoral and rather infrastructure-oriented investments tends to by-pass the fight against desertification.

87. Measures to protect threatened ecosystems are less costly than rehabilitation measures, and in this context, the ecosystems of developing island states and/or of sub-humid areas need due attention. Financing preventive measures must be a priority in vulnerable areas, with the involvement of schools, NGOs, CBOs and the scientific community. On-the-ground investment

in drylands development targeting direct funding to local communities, while highly desirable, has not been forthcoming to a sufficient extent.

88. Institutional and/or administrative procedures can be simplified to tap pools of existing funding. Some countries stated that consultations to identify common strategies for implementing the NAPs at country level had often not been successful in mobilizing the representatives of developed country Parties. In some cases such meetings had taken place, but concrete results in terms of prospective funding had been slow to materialize.

89. Some progress had been achieved in partnership dialogue. The presence of developed country Parties from the outset in the ongoing process of coordinating UNCCD implementation is welcome, to reach a common understanding on ways and means of implementing the action programmes. Participants also called for harmonized channelling of financial and technical assistance to establish the required partnership dynamic.

90. This consultative process ought to be sustained by in-country mechanisms such as: support to the policy coordination process from a resident bilateral or multilateral organization, nomination of a chef de file, constitution of liaison donor groups, memoranda of understanding on partnerships defining the roles of, and synergies between the different partners. The UNCCD secretariat is invited to contribute to, and the GM is invited to be proactive in, this process and to complement the inputs provided by other agencies that are required to support the UNCCD.

91. It was further observed that the level of financial resources available for ODA had declined, which had negatively affected the ability of developing country Parties to implement the Convention and the capacity of some multilateral organizations to deliver the expected services. The decisions taken by the GEF Council at its meeting in October 2002 and by the second Assembly of the GEF represented a milestone achievement.

D. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies

92. Natural resources such as forests, rangelands, wildlife and wetlands are also assets that provide economic opportunities to all local communities. The conservation of natural resources through separate and parallel processes in response to various multilateral environmental agreements does not always facilitate the integrated management of these resources. The introduction of the GEF focal area on land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, provides a unique opportunity for encouraging the NAPs to promote an integrated land use planning more responsive to conservation imperatives and local needs.

93. The progress made on synergies is considered to be insufficient. Efforts are required to build synergies with other conventions and their activities, such as the ongoing National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) for climate

change under the UNFCCC process with the involvement of the UNCCD focal points. The risk of duplication of effort must be minimized to enhance cost effectiveness and promote harmonization at all levels.

94. Synergies between environmental conventions should be enhanced at the national level through institutional synergies, especially at the local level. The considerable possibilities of the UNCCD for synergistic rationalization and linkages with the other Rio conventions and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands need to be more fully developed. Sustainable land management and use in the drylands can effectively promote biodiversity conservation and genetic resources. It is also critical for range quality and soil conservation. Therefore it is important that the common work plan between the UNCCD and CBD secretariats is extended to the UNFCCC secretariat.

95. Mainstreaming NAP implementation in important national development and investment programmes is a key factor for successful UNCCD implementation. Linkages with other planning frameworks, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) or the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), would be more easily achieved if the required interagency cooperation were supported at country level through a consultative process including the national focal points and donor agencies.

96. One point of entry for developed country Parties is often the PRSP. It would be helpful if Parties could take action from their side to make PRSP frameworks more responsive to the UNCCD and natural resource management. Country-led planning frameworks such as the PRSP, Agenda 21 or NEPAD provide unique opportunities to integrate issues of environmental sustainability in poverty reduction efforts.

97. It was suggested that synergistic implementation would facilitate the sharing of information and knowledge among the involved stakeholders and give impetus to participation. The inherent complexities of the Rio conventions require awareness-raising measures at governmental as well as local level.

98. Methodologies for synergistic implementation have to be established. They can facilitate joining resources for concrete implementation measures: land use planning, watershed management, soil and water conservation, management of pastoral and forest resources including the necessary investments in capacity building.

E. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought

99. It was not always clear that presentations relating to NAP activities should promote and spread best practices for sustainable land and water management, watershed management and erosion control. Control of soil salinization and reduction of nitrate pollution of the ground water are among the rising concerns. A number of successful practices have been introduced. Land slides, salinization, deforestation, water and wind erosion, rangeland

degradation and loss of biomass are some of the problems that have worsened since the entry into force of the Convention but have not been adequately tackled by prevention measures in many countries.

100. Improved on-farm resource management, including organic farming, afforestation, off-farm income generation and strengthening community-level institutions, are some of the necessary elements in the rehabilitation of degraded land. Watershed management and the wise use of scarce water resources have been the focus of renewed attention, notably in relationship with the specific conditions of mountain ecosystems, whose role is particularly important in the drylands.

101. Options to increase the competitiveness of arid or semi-arid dryland products and services to relieve users' pressure on degraded lands include such activities as cash crops (greenhouse/hydroponics production), aquaculture, recreation and eco-tourism or adherence by the mining/extraction industry to codes of sustainable land-use practices.

102. A sharper focus should be given under the UNCCD to supplementing scarce traditional fuels with new and alternative sources of energy.

103. The UNCCD can promote a higher level of preparedness to natural disasters such as prolonged droughts, dust storms, forest fires or flash floods due to deforestation and degradation of soil. Early warning systems and environmental risk assessments should be systematically used as tools to chart the course of NAP implementation, to move from crisis management to risk prevention. Early warning systems need to be less reactive and more prevention-oriented.

#### F. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment

104. The increasingly erratic distribution of rainfall in several countries and the consequent recurrence of extreme weather events, sometimes with catastrophic consequences, indicate an urgent need to combine early drought and flood warning systems with a preventive focus on an operational early warning system on drought and soil moisture.

105. In a context of increasing vulnerability to droughts and other natural disasters in a large number of countries, the national and/or subregional assessment and monitoring capacities have not received the support necessary to enable them to provide more accurate forecasting and early identification of coping strategies. Monitoring is mostly limited to the observation of the biophysical effects of desertification.

106. The thematic programme networks of the regional action programmes can play an important role in the UNCCD process provided they are built on a comprehensive work programme and on strong commitments by member countries. Progress in resource mobilization is needed if they are to support the work of the CST in such areas as the assessment of biophysical (soils, water, vegetation) or socioeconomic (vulnerability, poverty eradication) factors. They

could also be instrumental in a regional evaluation effort on impact in specific themes or sectors.

107. Capacity building is required in this field. Limited access to technology for Geographical Information System (GIS) and/or remote sensing remains a widespread concern. Access to base-line information and data processing for an effective early warning system response is not facilitated, as benchmarks and indicators are often aligned to other processes.

108. Benchmarks and indicators are under development, but testing, quantification and standardization have not yet begun. Acceptance of benchmarks and indicators at the operational level remains a challenge.

G. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how

109. The constraints most frequently identified remain the same: weak networking among scientific institutions, absence of early warning systems on drought and soil moisture, limited exchange of data and work carried at varying geographic scales, the chronic shortage of financial resources and limited access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how. Furthermore, the results of research, when available, are often not meaningfully absorbed by decision-makers or end-users of natural resources.

110. South-South cooperation, thematic programme networks and/or regional working groups are some of the mechanisms for disseminating traditional knowledge, and they may capitalize on existing initiatives on benchmarks and indicators with a view to achieving common standards for decision-makers.

111. Concerns were expressed about the limited impact of CST-related activities on programme activities. The involvement of the international scientific community and the dissemination of pertinent data must be encouraged through the group of experts.

112. The CST should address issues of land degradation in its work programme. It could encourage work on production technologies for promoting sustainable soil management. It could also encourage a basin-wide approach to natural resource conservation and management. The CST could also encourage cooperation with the private sector.

**VI. CONCLUSIONS AND CONCRETE RECOMMENDATIONS ON FURTHER STEPS  
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

113. The conclusions and recommendations listed in this chapter are a summary compilation of ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by various delegations during the first session of the CRIC to further the implementation of the Convention. This chapter identifies potential action that could be undertaken at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, including by the secretariat and the GM, after consideration and appropriate decisions by the Conference of the Parties, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

114. In the light of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and the Monterrey Consensus at the International Conference on Financing for Development, the UNCCD should be used by its Parties as a key instrument for the promotion of sustainable development in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas and for channelling investments into affected areas. As the Convention enters in a broader implementation phase, it will contribute to implementation of the commitments to eradicate poverty spelled out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Plan of Implementation of WSSD and those entered into at the World Food Summits in Rome, Italy, in 1996 and 2002. Participants expressed their gratitude to the world leaders who attended the WSSD for their strong political support for the Convention, which they recognized as an important tool for poverty eradication. In this regard, delegations underlined the importance of the UNCCD for achieving the internationally agreed development objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and objectives relating to food security. Participants also expressed their gratitude to the GEF Assembly for designating land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as one of its focal areas.

A. Conclusions and recommendations relating to the key thematic topics

1. *Participatory processes involving civil society,  
non-governmental and community-based organizations*

115. In order systematically to improve the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, capacity-building measures and incentives are urgently needed, particularly as the UNCCD moves into the broader implementation stage. The affected Parties, the GM, the GEF, United Nations agencies and IGOs and NGOs should put in place an enabling scheme at appropriate levels, which takes into consideration instruments such as local and community development, participatory land use planning, alternative income generation and land tenure regimes, while catering to the need for capacity building arising in this context within the UNCCD framework.

116. The UNCCD secretariat, taking into account the advice of the CST and its group of experts, and in cooperation with interested partner agencies, was urged to facilitate the assessment of the participatory process under the UNCCD through the identification of appropriate criteria and indicators.

117. It was suggested that further work on methodologies and tools to improve the participatory process and to upscale successful practices in this respect must be actively pursued. Parties should ensure that the role of various actors is clearly defined and that measures are taken to ensure that CBOs and end-users are guaranteed long-term rights to natural resources.

118. Scientific matters pertaining to the Convention should be integrated into the participatory approaches, thereby bringing benchmarks and indicators closer to the end-users and to an eventual application.

119. The content of education programmes should be relevant, and appropriate information material should be developed.

120. The World Day to Combat Desertification has provided a useful focus for awareness campaigns. Its celebration could rally renewed national commitment to the UNCCD and promote the sharing of experience and expertise. A more concerted awareness campaign for the UNCCD should link up with education and research programmes and target a wide range of stakeholders, from political and governmental circles to the grass-roots level. Simultaneously the driving and sustaining forces influencing behaviour changes should receive serious attention and application.

121. A participatory world awareness campaign on desertification and drought might include several key messages and rest on four pillars: (i) recognition of the growing threat to ecosystems and sustainable livelihood under a scenario of increasingly extreme climate events; (ii) advocacy for integrated participatory rural development as a key element for poverty reduction strategies; (iii) recognition of the widespread downstream geo-political consequences of the phenomenon, such as forced migrations and conflicts; and (iv) in the light of the above, recognition that prevention of further land degradation is more cost-effective than facing later the devastating consequences of inaction.

## *2. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements*

122. In order to bring greater consistency to sectoral development and natural resource conservation, the issue of mainstreaming NAPs into appropriate planning frameworks must be addressed through a consultative process, which should include the UNCCD national focal points, resource allocation ministries and other organizations that are involved in combating desertification.

123. Participants recognized the critical role of national focal points in the implementation of the UNCCD, in servicing the NCBs and in contributing to a more coherent strategic planning for natural resource management. Accordingly, the institutional capacity of their offices should be strengthened and their mandates defined in such a way as to ensure their effective influence on national planning processes (mainstreaming the UNCCD process) as well as the integration of ongoing UNCCD activities into national activities. Cooperation

between the local representatives of development agencies, the GEF national focal points and the UNCCD national focal points should be encouraged.

124. A compendium of laws is needed to deal with the commitments entered into under the extensive requirements of the Convention. The need for more coherent legislative codes, policy instruments and strategic frameworks dealing with sustainable land management emerged as one of the main challenges and opportunities for the UNCCD process. A stocktaking exercise on national legislation compliance with the UNCCD could be undertaken by interested Parties and institutions.

125. Incentive systems, land tenure regimes and protection codes for natural resources should be reviewed, where necessary, to integrate aspects relating to land degradation, desertification and drought, recognizing the role of the UNCCD, and emphasize preventive measures.

126. Despite the fact that progress has been made on environmental legislation, an assessment of the impact in terms of enforcement is necessary to evaluate its effectiveness. A study on this topic might help to ascertain how legal measures have helped to strengthen the fight against desertification.

127. Law enforcement and harmonization were mentioned as a potential bottleneck due to the limited human resources available to effectively translate laws into concrete activities. Country Parties should specify their needs in terms of capacity building and training schemes to effectively address this concern, including at local level.

128. To promote sustainable livelihoods in affected areas and stimulate the involvement of the private sector in combating desertification, legislative measures should address sustainable land use rights and secure investments. Furthermore, the country Parties, interested agencies and the UNCCD secretariat should examine the feasibility and potential benefits to UNCCD implementation of facilitating access of affected developing country Parties to international markets for drylands products.

*3. Resource mobilization and coordination, both domestic and international,  
including conclusions of partnership agreements*

129. In order to identify, and provide a perspective on the finance requirements of the UNCCD in response to public interest concerns in the environmental, economic, social and political areas, a comprehensive study should be undertaken by an appropriate institution, the GM and the secretariat into the cost of inaction. The study should cover biophysical and socioeconomic factors and relate to the work of the Millennium Assessment on drylands ecosystems.

130. It was mentioned that Parties to the Convention, with the support of the GEF, the GM and partner agencies, could, with the support of the secretariat, assess and define, on an indicative basis, the level of financial resources

required for the implementation of action programmes, particularly national action programmes, with a view to drawing up a clear plan of resource allocations prior to COP 7.

131. Bilateral and multilateral development partners of affected developing countries are called upon to review and adjust, as appropriate, their policies and procedures to facilitate participation in a partnership dialogue aiming at fostering the implementation of action programmes under the UNCCD.

132. Affected developing country Parties and developed country Parties, with the help of interested multilateral organizations, the GM, the GEF secretariat and the UNCCD secretariat, are invited to set up a country-driven consultative mechanism in countries having finalized their NAP. This mechanism should aim at longer-term partnership building with a view to identifying jointly the best options for mainstreaming the UNCCD in national development frameworks and to mobilizing, in a more predictable manner, the much needed financial resources for NAP implementation.

133. Governmental commitment to the UNCCD in affected countries, which have joined a regional implementation annex, must express itself in an allocation, under the national budget, to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, as well as through the adoption of incentives to combat desertification at the local level.

134. Priority resource allocation should aim to finalize and/or adapt the NAPs, SRAPs and RAPs as required, and to foster participatory local area development through the early disbursement of on-the-ground investments in the context of projects identified under the NAPs.

135. The GM, within its mandate and together with the members of its Facilitation Committee, is called upon to promote consultation platforms between national actors and bilateral and multilateral development partners in order to foster a common understanding of NAP implementation and potential synergies between different partners and to support the efforts of national focal points in implementing the NAPs.

136. The GM should make mobilization of financial resources for the NAP its highest priority, without neglecting support to the Convention's subregional and regional programmes. In this context, the GM should ensure the identification of the sources of finance necessary to complement forthcoming GEF resources.

137. To promote UNCCD implementation, it is necessary to enhance, at country level, the coherence of the response of the United Nations system in line with the recent report of the United Nations Secretary-General on an agenda for further change. Henceforth the resident coordinators in affected country Parties should ensure, in particular under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, that the system as a whole is more responsive to supporting the UNCCD, and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is invited to take steps to this effect.

138. Incentive systems and best practices which help to mobilize the private sector in combating desertification should be more widely known, not least to promote public-private joint ventures under the NAPs. Private-sector involvement should be linked, *inter alia*, to the identification of economic and commercial opportunities created by a more favorable trading regime for drylands products.

4. *Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies*

139. Enhanced strategic mainstreaming of NAPs in relevant national development and investment programmes, such as poverty eradication and food security strategies, national strategies for sustainable development, employment creation programmes, pluriannual programmes for social and economic development, should be facilitated by governments and development partners.

140. Synergies should take place above all at field level. The treatment of land degradation, desertification and drought under the UNCCD NAPs should lead to a greater recognition of the interconnectedness of ecological cycles, and the realization of cumulative impact through better integrated programming at a specific spatial scale.

141. In this respect, drylands offer wide spatial options for synergies based on sustainable forest management that would lead to enhanced benefits such as soil and water conservation, biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration. The implementation of the NAPs should, as appropriate, ensure linkages with initiatives discharging the obligations under various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

142. The affected developing country Parties, with the support of donor Parties, the UNCCD secretariat and concerned agencies, are invited to promote capacity-building measures for stakeholders to carry out specific synergistic programmes in the NAP context. The purpose is to prevent land degradation and rehabilitate degraded land, mitigate the effects of drought, maintain natural vegetation cover, protect biodiversity and restore wetlands and coastal areas at the local level.

143. In order to maximize the NAP capacity for strengthening synergies, facilitating joint activities and, in particular, designing cooperative frameworks to implement specific action, the secretariat is invited, with other relevant secretariats, to assist in organizing joint desertification focal point meetings with officials from other conventions and the GEF national focal points.

144. Social science research and inputs in participatory and synergistic land use planning, especially through the CST group of experts, should be significantly enhanced.

*5. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land*

145. Issues relating to the sustainable management of natural resources are common concerns of the Parties. Partner agencies and all Parties should further strengthen the linkages between planned financial and technical support in these areas and initiatives envisaged under the UNCCD, while interministerial cooperation should be pursued in affected developing countries with a view to promoting integrated programmes.

146. In this context participants expressed a desire to focus action on a specific territorial or spatial scale so as to approach in a more holistic manner the local ecological and socioeconomic conditions. Consequently, further measures and actions should be taken to promote and implement small and medium size projects and activities at the local level.

147. Capacity strengthening for mitigating the effects of drought must be wide-ranging, covering areas such as the adaptation of appropriate agricultural production systems, soil conserving and water-saving technologies and the management of decentralized food storage systems.

148. The prevention of land degradation, rehabilitation and sustainable management of degraded land must rely upon a large number of relevant parameters specific to each location.

149. Preventing further land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas means relieving the land of the burden of unsustainable agriculture practices while maintaining or increasing income generation. This must be facilitated by the use of new and traditional technologies, the creation of alternative livelihood opportunities and by the integration of land and water conservation practices in land management systems.

150. Incentives to support the production-processing-marketing chain of natural resource products, including improved access to national and international markets, must be enhanced.

151. A strong focus should be given to the analysis of the causes of land degradation and on measures for prevention of desertification in parallel with measures for rehabilitation.

*6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment; early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought*

152. Available data and observations provided by global climate and modelling centres as well as by regional and national early warning centres should be used more efficiently.

153. The UNCCD secretariat, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and interested partner agencies should extend full support to the further development and implementation of a comprehensive programme of early warning on

a regional basis, including the strengthening of technical capabilities and community-based organizational activities to make the programme operational.

154. Indicators for monitoring the implementation performance of the Convention, covering the establishment of enabling conditions and the impact of measures taken, must be developed and must include key biophysical and socioeconomic indicators, including socioeconomic impact indicators at the community and household levels. These indicators should be reflected in the help guides for national reports and used by Parties.

155. The monitoring systems of benchmarks and indicators and early warning systems should be designed as a function of the necessity of decision-makers for their application in concrete measures in combating desertification.

156. Efforts to enhance preparedness for natural hazards and natural disasters, particularly under the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, including early warning systems, vulnerability and risk assessments or fire/flood prevention systems, should be more closely integrated with the action programmes.

157. Parties are invited to implement the findings and recommendations of the CST ad hoc panels in accordance with the relevant COP decisions.

158. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment and early warning systems require the use of relevant technologies. Consequently, it is advisable that international agencies and developed country Parties make them available to developing country Parties.

*7. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how*

159. Developed country Parties should provide developing country Parties with further access to new technologies and know-how for the implementation of their action programmes.

160. Research institutions in affected country Parties need strengthening to develop innovative approaches and technologies, taking due account of, and adapting, as appropriate, traditional knowledge and knowledge systems of indigenous people, to develop both preventive and curative measures.

161. Traditional knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems addressing local problems must be more systematically exploited and innovations based on such knowledge encouraged and, where appropriate, in combination with modern technologies adapted to local conditions. Findings must be recorded and shared, notably through the thematic programme networks of the RAPs and the SRAPs, supported by regional and subregional institutions. The secretariat is urged to assist this effort to facilitate replication of successful solutions.

162. Best practices should be actively promoted through the CST and its group of experts, the national coordinating bodies and the media, including all kinds of information platforms and thematic programme networks, by highlighting these practices as points of reference.

163. South-South and North-South cooperation as well as regional and subregional initiatives, backed by scientific research, deserve more consistent support in the form of capacity building and financial allocation. South-South initiatives for promoting training programmes would also welcome triangular arrangements with partners from the North and/or United Nations agencies as well as IGOs and NGOs.

164. Activities such as the networking of scientific institutions, exchange of expertise, technology transfers, training at universities, internships and scholarships in desertification, should be systematically promoted through SRAPs and RAPs.

165. It was mentioned that the TPNs should promote, with the continued support of the secretariat, GEF and GM and other interested agencies, best practices on combating desertification and implementation of the priorities and recommendations of the CST.

166. Future meetings of the CRIC should be organized in such a manner as to facilitate inputs from scientists, such as the CST and its group of experts and provide the Parties with outputs of all previous related meetings at the regional and international levels. This would provide an opportunity for the CRIC to examine in depth scientific issues emanating from the reports submitted for review by the CRIC. This could be achieved, for example, by way of informal working group sessions that would allow for analysis and feedback.

B. Recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention

167. To achieve greater progress in the thematic areas under review, capacities should be built up for improved information and communication systems together with advocacy mechanisms aimed at general and on-going sensitization of policy-makers on the one hand, and public opinion, also in developed country Parties, on the other.

*1. Review process and procedures for communication of information, including information on the mobilization and use of financial resources as well as review of process and procedures for the quality and format of reports*

168. The UNCCD secretariat, in collaboration with partner agencies, is invited to assist country Parties to update the information provided to the CRIC through the preparation of country profiles within the national reports. At the same time, the secretariat is invited to review the help guide in the light of new circumstances and update it as appropriate, including indicators on women and youth participation.

169. The next cycle of national reports should provide the needed information about the state and dynamic of the UNCCD process and progress in combating desertification. The coverage content of national reports should be updated and the effective involvement of civil society in the assessment of progress should be more actively encouraged.

170. An in-depth review of national reports presented by Parties to the CRIC should be facilitated by the secretariat and partner agencies to promote a more substantive ground assessment of the implementation of the Convention at national level. This review should underline, *inter alia*, the usefulness of lessons learned with respect to land rehabilitation, improved livelihood and enhanced environmental governance, and focus on the impact of the measures taken.

171. The UNCCD secretariat and partner agencies should facilitate a joint evaluation of implementation of the Convention by developed country Parties and affected developing country Parties within the context of the regional implementation annexes and consolidate the findings and results of the evaluation in a report to be submitted to COP 7.

*2. Efficiency and effectiveness of measures in reaching the end-users of natural resources*

172. Consultative processes must involve central government, local authorities, CBOs and the private sector to orient and liaise with decision-makers, notably at the intermediary regional (district) level to achieve the necessary interface between national policies and local interests in land use.

173. In the light of experience, renewed emphasis and support must be given to spreading at the grass-roots level appropriate technologies for soil and water resource management, including rain-water harvesting, rain water storage in cisterns, treatment of used and brackish water, water-table or flood management and drip irrigation.

174. Efforts in education, capacity building and training of trainers must be intensified under the NAP, targeting, at the local level, major UNCCD

stakeholders such as women and youth, to encourage their greater involvement, particularly in local area development programmes.

*3. Synthesis of best practices, experiences and lessons learned and ways and means to promote experience sharing and information exchange among Parties and all other interested institutions and organizations*

175. Upscaling successful participatory local-level initiatives and/or synergistic approaches into national programmes, with a view to bearing upon sectoral or macro policy frameworks, is a major challenge ahead. Yet it could be sustained through institutional processes facilitated by the Convention. An in-depth review of national reports should be conducted to analyse and facilitate this process.

176. The design and implementation of a comprehensive work programme on best practices and an inventory of traditional knowledge should be considered under the regional implementation annexes of the Convention.

177. Regional and subregional centres of excellence should be invited to link up more closely with the UNCCD process (SRAPs and RAPs) in the promotion of synergies between MEAs for sustainable development.

178. Success stories should be collected and disseminated by the secretariat. The UNCCD web site could be developed into an interactive information and learning platform to accelerate the exchange of experience and common learning, and support should be provided to countries which do not yet have access to this tool.

179. Targeted efforts are needed to synthesize experience on incentive mechanisms for improved land and water use, environmental governance and successful decentralization of decision-making for natural resources management.

*4. Emerging and challenging issues deriving from implementation and necessary adjustments to the elaboration process and the implementation of action programmes*

180. The review of the key thematic topics, confirmed by the discussions in the regional wrap-up meetings and the Global interactive dialogue, recognized the progress achieved but indicated that the full potential of the UNCCD had yet to unfold. Measures taken under the UNCCD might have wide-ranging implications for poverty eradication, ecosystems preservation and food security. All Parties can contribute to achieving the objectives of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and contribute to achieving the internationally agreed development goals including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration through the Convention implementation process.

181. Combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought over the long term should be elevated to a higher level of governmental policy-making in

developed and developing countries, as desertification and drought are problems of global dimensions affecting all regions of the world. They should be included in wider negotiation forums and ministerial meetings, in a spirit of solidarity and partnership. The UNCCD can contribute to a renewed understanding of common interests in rolling back rural poverty, in preventing or mitigating natural disasters, in social stability, public security, preventing forced migrations of people and the potential causes of environmentally related conflicts.

182. Drought is a silent but enduring disaster, the devastating effects of which are likely to worsen under conditions of climate change. Scientific cooperation under the CST should be intensified to address this challenge, in order to provide advice and support to national decision-makers.

183. Marginalization of the programming instruments under the Convention through the elaboration of further parallel planning instruments with similar objectives should be avoided as it increases transaction costs and the incoherence of the national planning framework for sustainable land use.

184. Based on lessons learned during the early phase of the Convention's implementation, the NAPs should increasingly serve as the basis for a medium-term iterative framework for combating land degradation and desertification and for promoting sustainable land use while facilitating synergies with other relevant programming instruments.

185. Capacity building and technical assistance should be provided under the UNCCD process through the GEF, in particular for testing integrative and participatory programming methodologies that empower local authorities and communities to identify and execute synergistic programmes for combating desertification and sustainable land use under the NAP.

186. The COP is invited, at its sixth session, to consider recommendations relating to a country-driven consultative process to deliver commitments under the UNCCD, and to take appropriate action in this respect.

##### *5. Ways and means to promote know-how and technology transfer*

187. The CST and its group of experts should consider provisions related to the access to relevant technology, knowledge and know-how and the COP at its sixth session may wish to take appropriate action on this matter.

188. Governments should enhance policy measures and incentives to encourage the private sector to be proactively involved in supporting technological and scientific cooperation.

*6. Recommendations on financing Convention implementation by multilateral agencies and institutions, including the Global Environment Facility*

189. Participants welcomed the decision by the second Assembly of the GEF confirming the availability of the GEF as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, as called for by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and encouraged the COP, at its sixth session, to take appropriate action.

190. The GEF Council was invited to discuss, finalize and adopt at its meeting in May 2003 the new Operational Programme for land degradation. Participants recommended that the COP take into consideration the conclusions and recommendations of the CRIC in defining issues it wishes to see addressed in the implementation of the new Operational Programme.

191. Given the multiple sources of funding of the Convention, further support in the form of information and training programmes should be made available to the national focal points, including training for negotiation, integrative programme planning and awareness of resource mobilization opportunities in relation to the programming cycles of bilateral and multilateral development partners. Information should also be provided to UNCCD focal points and stakeholders, including NGO representatives, in order to familiarize them with the GEF tools and modalities.

192. More concerted support by the member institutions of the Facilitation Committee of the GM is called for. Moreover, appropriate action should be taken to facilitate the review by the COP, at its sixth session, of the policies, operational modalities and activities of the GM in response to decision 9/COP.3, in conformity with decisions 24/COP.1, 25/COP.1 and 10/COP.3.

193. Support to Small Island Developing States in the implementation of the UNCCD should be operationalized as appropriate.

**VII. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE  
FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**  
(Agenda item 5)

194. In accordance with the terms of reference of the CRIC as contained in decision 1/COP.5, at sessions held during ordinary sessions of the Conference of the Parties, the Committee shall:

- (a) Consider the comprehensive report of the inter-sessional session;
- (b) Review regularly the policies, operational modalities and activities of the Global Mechanism;
- (c) Review regularly reports prepared by the secretariat on the execution of its functions;

(d) Consider reports on the collaboration with the Global Environment Facility;

with a view to elaborating draft decisions, where necessary, for consideration and, as appropriate, adoption by the Conference of the Parties.

195. In accordance with the same decision, the secretariat is requested to prepare a provisional agenda for the second session of the CRIC in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee. At the beginning of its second session, the Committee shall adopt its agenda and organization of work.

196. Statements made under this agenda item are summarized in annex IV.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION**

**A. Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention**  
**(Agenda item 6)**

197. At its 18th meeting, on 22 November, the Committee adopted the draft report on its first session (ICCD/CRIC(1)/L.1), as orally amended, and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize it, with the assistance of the secretariat, as appropriate. Statements preceding the adoption of the report are summarized in annex IV.

**B. Closure of the session**

198. Statements made at the closing meeting are summarized in annex IV.

Annex I

**SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS MADE DURING THE WELCOMING CEREMONY**

1. Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, welcomed all the participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government and the people of the Italian Republic as well as to the FAO for hosting the first session of the CRIC. He referred to the substantial groundwork which had been accomplished since COP 5 to widen the support for the Convention, reflected in the fact that 185 countries had ratified or acceded to the Convention to date. Mr. Diallo invited countries that had not yet ratified the Convention to do so and thereby join in with the efforts of the international community to create the best possible conditions for sustainable development in countries affected by desertification.

2. While the Convention did not seek to provide answers to various issues inherent in the development process, its provisions nevertheless provided new opportunities to improve the living conditions of people in the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. That was why the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August-September 2002 had acknowledged the Convention as one of the tools for poverty eradication. Mr. Diallo also welcomed the positive developments that had taken place with regard to financing the Convention, which also showed the resolve of the international community to strengthen its support to the implementation of the Convention.

3. Mr. Rogatien Biaou, Chairperson of the Committee, reminded participants of the various stages of implementation of the Convention. The adoption of national, subregional and regional action programmes was only the beginning, while the mobilization of resources and implementation of concrete projects in the affected areas still remained pertinent tasks.

4. Mr. David A. Harcharik, Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), reiterated the close relationship between promotion of food security, the primary objective of the FAO, and the Convention's fight against desertification. He also emphasized other fields which the FAO and the Convention had in common, such as combating dryland degradation; restoring and maintaining the productivity of land; sustainably managing natural resources, especially water; and building capacity, strengthening institutions and improving knowledge to increase access to food. Mr. Harcharik stressed that the first session of the CRIC was both timely and opportune from the standpoint of reviewing concrete actions taken and assessing actual progress made in the implementation of the UNCCD, especially in the light of the outcomes of the World Food Summit: five years later, and the WSSD.

5. Mr. Charles Bassett, President of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 5), reviewed the outcomes of several important meetings that had taken place since COP 5, such as the summit of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Doha, Qatar, the International Conference on Financing for Development

in Monterrey, Mexico, the World Food Summit: five years later in Rome, Italy, the G8 summit in Kananaskis, Canada, the WSSD in Johannesburg, South Africa, and, finally, the meetings of the GEF Council and Assembly in Beijing, China. He expressed his conviction that the outcomes of the first session of the CRIC would lead to the adoption of concrete measures to improve the lives of some of the poorest and most disadvantaged people in the world.

6. Hon. Roberto Tortoli, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection of the Italian Republic, emphasized the need to promote synergies among the three Rio conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements and drew attention to the efforts which still had to be made in the implementation of action programmes at various levels, *inter alia* through innovative forms of solidarity, such as partnership agreements.

Annex II

**SUMMARY OF OPENING AND GENERAL STATEMENTS**

1. Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, stated that a major focus of the secretariat's activities since COP 5 had been assisting affected country Parties in the preparation of reports to be reviewed by the first session of the CRIC, including the organization of four regional meetings. The first session of the CRIC had come at a significant point in the history of the UNCCD as many country Parties were reaching the implementation stage of their NAPs. The 185 reports submitted for review showed that a variety of actions had been put in place in affected country Parties, including the legislative and institutional arrangements and measures to integrate combating desertification into the framework of other sustainable development measures, involving a wide range of stakeholders. However, the need to mobilize the technical and financial resources indispensable to implementing those action programmes remained paramount.

2. Mr. Diallo referred to two major global events with implications for the implementation of the UNCCD. The WSSD had proved to be a great success from the viewpoint of the UNCCD, since in its Plan of Implementation, the Summit had acknowledged the Convention as one of the tools for poverty eradication. The Summit had also stressed the need to mobilize adequate and predictable financial resources for the implementation of the UNCCD. To that end, the WSSD had called on the GEF Assembly to take action on the recommendations of the GEF Council concerning the designation of land degradation (primarily desertification and deforestation) as one of its focal areas, as a means of GEF support for the successful implementation of the UNCCD. In that respect, the GEF Assembly had responded to the call made by the Summit and decided to declare the Facility's availability to serve as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, should the Conference of the Parties so decide at its next session. Mr. Diallo expressed his conviction that, in light of those achievements, affected country Parties, particularly those which had already finalized their action programmes, would soon be able fully to launch the implementation of the Convention.

3. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Venezuela stated that the first session of the CRIC was crucial for fostering implementation of the Convention in affected country Parties belonging to that Group. It was very important to analyse not only the successes but also the shortcomings and obstacles in the implementation of the Convention. Emphasizing the paramount importance of providing substantial and predictable funding for implementation of the Convention, he welcomed the outcomes of the WSSD, which paved the way for provision of sustainable financial resources for the UNCCD, in keeping with the other two Rio conventions. He made concrete recommendations on behalf of the Group concerning preparation of the GEF Operational Programme on land degradation, to be considered at the GEF Council meeting in May 2003.

4. On behalf of the European Union and its 15 member States, the representative of Denmark stated that the CRIC marked a new phase in the

implementation of the Convention, aiming at keeping track of real progress achieved at national and other levels as well as identifying trends and lessons learned and how to make use of them in future work. He emphasized the particular importance of a bottom-up approach on a regional basis, which would help to identify lessons and constraints that could be synthesized for consideration and appropriate action by COP 6, while taking full advantage of the inputs from the GM and the CST in that respect.

5. On behalf of the Asian Group, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic stressed that the Asian region had a large number of problems in the fields of environment protection and poverty alleviation. He called for continued help in meeting the international commitments under the UNCCD regional implementation annex for Asia, in particular for further support for NAP development and implementation.

6. On behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, the representative of Uruguay stressed the mobilization of resources as a key precondition for the UNCCD to become a strong instrument for the eradication of poverty, in particular for the Latin American and Caribbean region where food security, rather than desertification itself, was one of the major problems to be tackled. She called for substantial international investments that would enable full and effective implementation of the Convention in the region.

Annex III

**LIST OF PANELLISTS AT THE GLOBAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE**

Professor Marc Bied-Charreton  
Moderator

Mr. Wankoye Boureima  
Société Achat Services International (ASI), Niger  
Private Sector

Hon. Valerio Calzolaio  
Member of the UNCCD Panel of Eminent Personalities

Mr. Philip Dobie  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Dr. Manfred Kern  
Bayer CropScience  
Private Sector

Ms. Sina Maiga  
Association de formation et d'appui au développement (AFAD), Mali  
Non-governmental organization

Mr. Juan Merega  
Fundación del Sur, Argentina  
Non-governmental organization

Mr. Mihyemba Ouali  
Mayor of Gaoua, Burkina Faso  
Local Authority

Mr. Remy Paris  
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Mr. Fawzi Rihane  
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Mr. El Hadji Sène  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Professor Willem Van Cotthem  
Scientific community

Annex IV

**SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS MADE ON THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION**

Summary of statements made on the programme of work  
for the second session of the Committee

1. Representatives of several country Parties asked for the meetings of the second session of the Committee and other meetings of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties not to coincide in time, in order for the delegations' members to be able to attend both of these meetings.
2. The discussion on agenda item 5 provided an opportunity for the Parties to exchange their views as well on the programme of work and organization of the future inter-sessional sessions of the CRIC - summarized below - and to advise on preparatory activities.
3. The representatives of some country Parties suggested that the Committee's inter-sessional sessions should last five or six days. Several country Parties asked for a reduction in the number of key thematic topics considered for each region, while a number of others asked for new thematic topics to be included in the Committee's work.
4. Some country Parties emphasized the need better to define the role of all stakeholders in the preparatory process in the run-up to the Committee's sessions and to ensure complementarity between regional preparatory meetings and the Committee's sessions.
5. It was stressed that inter-sessional sessions should attempt fully to reflect and comprehensively to review the implementation of the Convention by all the country Parties, including the developed country Parties, with emphasis given to priority areas such as resource mobilization and technology transfer, as well as socio-economic issues.
6. Several country Parties underlined the positive and constructive features of both the thematic review and the Global interactive dialogue and added that wrap-up sessions might benefit from certain adjustments.
7. In the view of some Parties, inter-sessional sessions of the CRIC could profit from small, time-limited thematic working groups, which could focus on issues across regions. In addition to that, it was mentioned by several Parties that the CST's group of experts should be actively involved in the process.
8. Whereas some country Parties believed that success stories and examples of subregional and regional cooperation should be promoted in addition to case studies about individual affected country Parties, others asked the Committee not to concentrate only on success stories but also to discuss problems and shortcomings in the implementation of the Convention.

9. Following the statements by the representatives of some country Parties, it was affirmed that it was necessary for the CRIC to have more than one session, in order to be able to conduct a thorough and objective review of its terms of reference, its operations and its schedule of meetings. In this context, the Chairperson reminded the participants that decision 1/COP.5 had invited the Parties to submit written proposals to the secretariat, no later than 31 January 2003, on criteria against which the Committee would be reviewed, with a view to determining such criteria at the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties.

Summary of statements made at the conclusion of the session

*Summary of statements preceding the adoption of the report of the Committee*

10. The Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur, Mr. Franco Micieli de Biase, introduced the draft comprehensive report of the Committee (ICCD/CRIC(1)/L.1).

11. The representatives of several country Parties proposed amendments to chapters II, IV, V and VII of the draft report, most of which are reflected in the present document, as appropriate.

12. A number of Parties also suggested changes in chapter VI of the draft report, in particular to paragraph 149 to include concerns relating to renewable energy sources, and paragraph 190, which they would have preferred to replace by paragraph 71 of ICCD/CRIC(1)/CRP.1, which reads:

"The GEF is invited to accelerate support to enabling activities of the new Operational Programme for the Prevention and Control of Desertification. Enabling activities for the implementation of the UNCCD through the iterative action programmes process, particularly NAPs, would include support for activities such as: capacity building, base-line studies on status of land degradation, monitoring of implementation and of affected ecosystems, desertification and drought, process reporting to the CRIC, in-depth analytical studies on relevant policy frameworks, consultations for partnership building, synergies, participatory process methodologies and pre-feasibility studies for integrated local area investment projects. The CRIC also called for enabling support to SRAPS and RAPs aimed at sustaining subregional and/or regional cooperation."

13. Following clarifications by the Chairperson and by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, it was agreed that no changes would be made to chapter VI of the draft report (ICCD/CRIC(1)/L.1) and that the concerns raised by the Parties would be reflected in the present document.

*Summary of statements made at the closing meeting*

14. Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, stated that the first session of the CRIC 1 had been a unique opportunity to gain a detailed insight into the various stages of implementation of the Convention, with regard

to both its strong points and the obstacles encountered. He urged all stakeholders to remain mobilized and concentrated on the most important issues and to take advantage of complementarities when taking concerted action to make the UNCCD one of the most successful development instruments.

15. On behalf of the Asian Group, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic stressed that desertification and drought were global problems which required global responses and global solidarity. He was confident that the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties would represent a milestone and a positive juncture in the process of implementation of the Convention.

16. The representative of United States of America (on behalf of JUSCANZ) considered CRIC 1 to have been a very successful session. He looked forward to making submissions on how the process could be brought forward in ways that could help to secure increasing finance for the problems of desertification and drought.

17. On behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, the representative of Uruguay reminded participants about the environmental, social and economic hardship in her region and emphasized the need for increased financial support in that regard. Strategies for increasing preparedness to tackle the consequences of desertification and drought should include setting up necessary food reserves.

18. The representative of Venezuela (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China) said that the first session of the CRIC had provided participants with a clear idea of the current state of implementation of the Convention and the challenges ahead. He encouraged the international community fully to live up to its commitments and attribute to implementation of the UNCCD the attention it deserved as one of the main international sustainable development instruments.

19. The representative of the Czech Republic (on behalf of the Central and Eastern European Group) stressed the importance of the entry into force of regional implementation annex V of the Convention. She also emphasized the specific features of her region, which included countries with economies in transition on the road towards the European Union, which could assist other affected country Parties, as well as countries with low income per capita and/or those suffering from the consequences of recent conflicts and war.

20. On behalf of the European Union and its member States, the representative of Finland emphasized the importance of a bottom-up approach to implementing the recommendations made at the session, adding that efforts must be made to coordinate activities efficiently with the GEF, in particular with regard to enabling activities, capacity-building and GEF-eligible project preparations.

21. The representative of Cuba said she was grateful for the positive reactions to her country's offer to host the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties in Havana. Cuba would do its best to ensure the full success of the conference.

22. In his closing address, the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr. Rogatien Biaou, said that the session had proved that the establishment of the Committee had been a necessity. He expressed his conviction that the Committee would play a vital role in the process of implementation of the Convention. He urged participants to convey to all the stakeholders the message and the spirit of the recommendations made at the session in order to maintain the impetus for medium- and long-term action to combat desertification and land degradation world wide.

Annex V

**DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AT ITS FIRST SESSION**

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(1)/1	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work - Provisional agenda and annotations
ICCD/CRIC(1)/2	Review of reports on implementation by affected African country Parties, including on the participatory process, and on experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of action programmes
ICCD/CRIC(1)/2/Add.1(A)	Synthesis and preliminary analysis of information contained in reports submitted by affected African country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/2/Add.1(B)	Progress made in the formulation and implementation of subregional and regional action programmes in Africa
ICCD/CRIC(1)/2/Add.2	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by African country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/2/Add.3	Inputs from the regional meeting of affected African country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/3	Review of reports on implementation by affected Asian country Parties, including on the participatory process, and on experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of action programmes
ICCD/CRIC(1)/3/Add.1	Synthesis and preliminary analysis of information contained in reports submitted by affected Asian country Parties, and progress made in the formulation and implementation of subregional and regional action programmes in Asia
ICCD/CRIC(1)/3/Add.2	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by Asian country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/3/Add.3	Inputs from the regional meeting of affected Asian country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/4	Review of reports on implementation by affected Latin American and Caribbean country Parties, including on the participatory process, and on experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of action programmes

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(1)/4/Add.1	Synthesis and preliminary analysis of information contained in reports submitted by affected Latin American and Caribbean country Parties, and progress made in the formulation and implementation of subregional and regional action programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean
ICCD/CRIC(1)/4/Add.2	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by Latin American and Caribbean country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/4/Add.3	Inputs from the regional meeting of affected Latin American and Caribbean country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/5	Review of reports on implementation by Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country Parties, including on the participatory process, and on experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of action programmes
ICCD/CRIC(1)/5/Add.1	Synthesis and preliminary analysis of information contained in reports submitted by Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country Parties, and progress made in the formulation and implementation of subregional and regional action programmes in Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe and other affected country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/5/Add.2	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/5/Add.3	Inputs from the meeting of Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/6	Review of reports by developed country Parties on measures taken to assist in the preparation and implementation of action programmes of affected country Parties of all regions, including information on financial resources they have provided, or are providing, under the Convention
ICCD/CRIC(1)/6/Add.1	Synthesis and preliminary analysis of information contained in reports submitted by developed country Parties

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(1)/6/Add.2	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by developed country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/6/Add.3	Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by developed country Parties
ICCD/CRIC(1)/7	Review of information provided by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention
ICCD/CRIC(1)/7/Add.1	Review of information provided by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention - Addendum
ICCD/CRIC(1)/8	Review of available information regarding the financing of the implementation of the Convention by multilateral agencies and institutions, including information on the activities of the Global Environment Facility concerning desertification that relate to its four focal areas, as specified in article 20, paragraph 2(b) of the Convention
ICCD/CRIC(1)/9	Review of activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.1	Arrangements for the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention - Preliminary information for participants
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.2	Status of ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.3	List of participants to the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.4	Second reporting process on UNCCD implementation - Explanatory Note and Help Guide (Affected country Parties of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa)

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.5	Second reporting process on UNCCD implementation - Explanatory Note and Help Guide (Affected country Parties of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia)
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.6	Second reporting process on UNCCD implementation - Explanatory Note and Help Guide (Affected country Parties of the Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean)
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.7	Second reporting process on UNCCD implementation - Explanatory Note and Help Guide (Affected country Parties of regions other than Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean)
ICCD/CRIC(1)/INF.8	Second reporting process on UNCCD implementation - Explanatory Note (Developed country Parties)

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