

REPORT TO PARLIAMENT
ON CANADA'S ACTIVITIES AS A MEMBER NATION
OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)
OF THE UNITED NATIONS (UN) FOR THE PERIOD
APRIL 1, 1988 TO MARCH 31, 1989

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Act of 1945, this report places before Parliament a summary of the main activities undertaken by the Canadian Government during 1988-89.

2. Financial Contribution by Canada and General Financial Situation

The FAO Conference fixed Canada's assessment for 1989 at US\$8,810,744, or 3.6% of the Regular Budget, making Canada the 7th largest contributor. Canada promptly paid its full 1989 assessment, thus easing somewhat the difficult financial situation faced by the FAO. At the end of the period under review, 110 members (of 158) have not paid their assessments for 1989, and 65 owed funds from previous years. The largest amount outstanding was owed by the United States (US\$143.5 million).

3. Reform and Renewal

A recurring issue of the debates within the Organization during 1988-89 was "reform". In the most sweeping review in FAO's history, the 1987 Conference charged the Programme and Finance Committees with jointly re-examining all FAO programmes and formulating recommendations. To assist them in their task, two groups of independent experts were set up by the Committees to study (a) the FAO's Objectives, Role, Priorities and Strategies and (b) Field Operations. In addition, a number of consultants' studies were commissioned dealing with such matters as personnel, finances and common services. The objective was to verify that the Organization is responsive to changing circumstances and the needs of its membership. The experts' and consultants' reports were tendered in early 1989, are now being considered, and will be debated at the 25th General Conference in November 1989.

Major themes which have emerged are sustainable development, a policy advice role for FAO in assisting developing countries with structural adjustment in the agriculture sector, and greater focus in governing bodies on field operations. In line with the reform objective of a greater voice for Member States in the decision-making and