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REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

WHO, Geneva  
9-11 February 1971

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Introduction

1. The Executive Committee held its Sixteenth Session at WHO Headquarters, Geneva, from 9 to 11 February, 1971. The Committee was presided over by the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr. G. Weill (France), and in the presence of two of its three Vice-chairmen, Mr. A. Miklovicz (Hungary) and Mr. G.R. Grange (United States of America). The following representatives from the geographic locations mentioned were present: for Africa, Dr. S. Miladi from Tunisia; for Asia, Mr. K. Ando from Japan; for Europe, Dr. D. Eckert from the Federal Republic of Germany; for Latin America, Mr. A.A. Sanchez and Mr. L.M. Laurelli (for Item 4 of the agenda only) from Argentina; for North America, Dr. D.M. Smith from Canada; for South-West Pacific, Mr. I.H. Smith from Australia. The Executive Committee was informed that Dr. N.A. de Heer (Ghana), a Vice-chairman of the Commission, had expressed his regret at not being able to attend the Session.

2. The Executive Committee was welcomed to WHO Headquarters on behalf of the Director-General of WHO by Dr. L. Bernard, Assistant Director-General of WHO. Dr. Bernard stressed the importance which WHO attached to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, especially those aspects of the activities of the Commission which were particularly concerned with the protection of the health of the consumer. He indicated that a review of the Commission's activities and future work trends had been presented to the 47th Session of the WHO Executive Board, held in January 1971, at the request of the Executive Board. The Executive Board of WHO recognized the growing importance of the work of the Commission and this work would continue to receive the full support of WHO. The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation of the remarks of Dr. Bernard and indicated that it attached particular importance to the excellent cooperation which existed between WHO and FAO in this field, the interest of WHO being mainly in the field of consumer health protection and the interest of FAO being mainly in facilitating international trade in food.

Adoption of Agenda

3. The Executive Committee adopted the provisional agenda with a slight rearrangement of the order of items. The Committee agreed to discuss a paper entitled "Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards for Pesticide Residue Tolerances" which had been presented by Mr. I.H. Smith (Australia) in conjunction with item 9 of the provisional agenda\* The Executive Committee also agreed to discuss a request of Professor Högl (Switzerland), which had been communicated to the Committee by the Chairman of the Commission, regarding the development of the draft European Regional Standard for Natural Mineral Waters.

Progress Report on Acceptances of Recommended Codex Standards and on Membership of the Commission

4. The Executive Committee had before it a paper on the above subjects prepared by the Secretariat. The Committee was pleased to note that within the relatively short time since the four Recommended Codex Standards (General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods, Standard for Canned Pacific Salmon, European Regional Standard for Honey, and first series of International Tolerances for Pesticide Residues)

had been sent to governments for acceptance, eleven countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran, Liberia, Israel, Monaco, Portugal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and United States of America) had indicated their positions regarding one or more of the Recommended Standards. The Committee considered that it would be premature to examine the replies at this stage, but thought that a number of the replies needed some clarification. In this connexion the Committee recognized that while the transmission of Recommended Standards to governments for acceptance would need, as heretofore, to be at a high level in and in accordance with the appropriate procedure of both Organizations, it recommended that any follow through action with governments, such as the seeking of any necessary clarification in replies from governments, should be pursued by the Joint Secretariat through the appropriate channels. The Committee also considered that the Joint Secretariat, in seeking such clarifications, should ask governments (a) whether a product meeting the Recommended Codex Standard concerned would be permitted to be distributed freely within the country under the name and description laid down in the standard; (b) whether a product which did not meet the Recommended Codex Standard concerned would be prohibited from being distributed within the country under the name and description laid down in the standard and (c) if the answers to (a) and (b) were other than affirmative answers, to describe in detail the specific requirements which the product would have to meet in order to be permitted to be freely distributed in the country. In this connexion, the Committee noted that the Legal Officers of FAO and WHO were currently examining the text of the letter which the Directors-General had issued to governments in April 1970 asking them to consider accepting the four Recommended Standards referred to above, with a view to drafting it in such a way as to elicit the most complete information from governments.

5. The Committee noted that one of the governments which had replied had indicated that it accepted a number of the standards with minor deviations. The Committee agreed that it would be premature at this stage to attempt to consider the minor deviations, more especially in the absence of any criteria on which to base a judgement as to whether the deviations were minor or not. A member of the Executive Committee considered that, at the appropriate time, it might be necessary for the Codex Committee on General Principles to establish criteria for determining whether a deviation was minor, and that it would probably be necessary for Codex Commodity Committees to review acceptances with minor deviations in the light of these criteria. On the other hand, some members of the Executive Committee thought that it might ultimately be necessary to amend this form of acceptance and that this also would be a subject for consideration by the Codex Committee on General Principles. The Committee agreed however that the entire subject of minor deviations and how they should be dealt with would need to await a greater number of replies from governments covering a much wider range of standards. In the meantime, it was agreed that the Secretariat should present a further progress report on acceptances for the next session of the Executive Committee.

6. The Committee noted that since the last session of the Commission seven more countries (Costa Rica, Jamaica, Korea, Qatar, South Yemen, Cyprus and Indonesia) had become Members of the Commission, bringing the current membership up to 82 countries.

Report on Action taken by the Fifty-Fifth Session of the FAO Council regarding matters of interest to the Commission

7. The Executive Committee noted that Rule XII of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission concerning the languages of the Commission, as amended by the Commission at its Seventh Session, had been approved by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO and confirmed by the Council of FAO. The Committee also noted that the Council of FAO had recommended to the Sixteenth Conference of FAO that the report of the Seventh Session of the Commission concerning Rule VI.3, governing the elaboration of standards for regions or groups of countries, be accepted and that the appropriateness and the timing of any amendment to Rule VI.3 might best be judged by the Commission. The Executive Committee further noted that the Council of FAO had been informed that the procedures of the Joint FAO/WHO Committee of Government Experts on the Code of Principles concerning Milk and Milk Products had been fully aligned with those of the Commission, as had been requested by the Fourteenth Conference of FAO. The Council had recommended that the Sixteenth Conference of FAO be advised of this.

Replies of Host Governments on the use of the Spanish Language at Codex Committee Sessions

8. The Executive Committee was informed that, on the recommendation of the Seventh Session of the Commission, the Director-General of FAO had written to governments responsible for hosting Codex Committees, stressing the importance of at least providing simultaneous interpretation in the three languages of the Commission at Codex Committee sessions which they chaired. Replies had been received from the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. In view of the replies, it appeared to the Executive Committee that in general there was no way of providing either interpretation or other facilities in the three languages of the Commission at Codex Committee sessions other than by providing for these facilities in the budget of the Commission, and that this question should be considered by the Commission at its next session. The representative of Latin America stressed the great importance of making available full facilities in Spanish, and considered that the budget for 1972/73 should provide for these facilities. Attention was drawn to the fact that, while under the Rules of Procedure of the Commission governments hosting Codex Committees were required to provide facilities in two of the languages of the Commission, these languages need not necessarily be English and French. The suggestion was put forward that consideration might be given by the Spanish speaking countries to sharing the cost of providing facilities in Spanish or indeed by English-speaking or French-speaking countries to sharing the cost of providing facilities in English or French if one of these languages were not one of the two selected as working languages at Codex Committee sessions. Mr. G.R. Grange considered that the principle of the host governments bearing the cost of language facilities should be adhered to, and that it would be best to continue to urge host governments to provide simultaneous interpretation in Spanish as well as in French and English, provided timely notice was received of the intended participation of Spanish speaking delegates. He also drew attention to the difficulties of providing a draft report at Codex Committee sessions in three languages. For the remainder of the current biennium, the Executive Committee agreed that the Secretariat should approach host governments once again urging them to provide at least interpretation facilities in the three languages.

Report on Budget for (a) remainder of current biennium 1970/71 and (b) 1972/73 (estimates)

9. The Executive Committee had before it details of the budget for 1970/71 as approved by the governing bodies of both organizations, details of the estimated expenditure in 1970 and the estimated balance available for 1971. It was noted that the estimated balances available in 1971 in respect of (i) salaries and common staff cost, (ii) travel and (iii) meetings would be adequate to meet commitments but that there would be a significant shortfall in respect of external printing and translation of Codex documents. The shortfall was mainly the result of the need to publish in 1970 an accumulated number of Recommended Codex Standards. Similar difficulties had arisen concerning consumption of the Programme's internal printing allocation in 1970. Economy measures had been introduced to restrict the Programme's requirements concerning internal printing to within its biennial allocation but despite drastic reductions in the Programme's requirements for printing and translation, the programme would be faced with a shortfall of \$15,240 for its total translation requirements for the remainder of the biennium. A submission had been made to the Publications Committee of FAO with a view to obtaining any savings that might be available in other sectors of the Organization. The Executive Committee would be kept informed of developments.

10. Attention was drawn to the fact that some countries would probably need substantial numbers of Codex Standards, over and above the allocation made to them under current arrangements. The question of what would be the best arrangements for supplying additional copies of standards over and above the normal allocation would be studied by FAO and WHO. The question of what would be the best arrangement for dealing with this situation arose, therefore, and was already under consideration by the Secretariat with the Director of Publications in FAO. The Executive Committee stressed the importance of the need for making arrangements, such that important Codex documents, but especially standards, would be readily available in substantial quantities. The question of what would be the most appropriate channels for distributing the standards would also need to be considered. Certain distribution procedures might be envisaged, e.g. (i) through UN Sales Agencies, (ii) through Codex Contact Points, and (iii) through the Secretariat. The Executive Committee did not think it practicable, however, that the Secretariat should be the dissemination point. The Executive Committee instructed the Secretariat to present a full report on this subject to the next session of the Executive Committee.

11. The Executive Committee took note of the 1972/73 estimates for the Programme. No increase in the numbers of professional and general service staff had been provided for, nor in the expenditure on duty travel and meetings. A slight programme increase had been provided for in respect of external translation and printing. The main increase in the cost of the Programme in 1972/73 was attributable to the mandatory increases likely to affect all UN Agencies. These increases were the result of cost of living and pay awards common to the UN Service or peculiar to the Rome duty station. The proposed budgetary estimates would, when finalized by the Directors-General, be submitted to the Governing Bodies of both Organizations for approval and inclusion in the Programmes of Work and Budget of FAO and WHO. The Executive Committee also noted that FAO had been requested to make the same volume of staff translation and internal printing available as in the current biennium, but that owing to expected increases in the rates for translation and printing, this would cost significantly more than in the current biennium.

Procedure recommended by the Codex Committee on Food Additives for the Elaboration of Food Additives Specifications

12. The Commission, at its Seventh Session, had requested the Codex Committee on Food Additives to consider and make proposals regarding the further elaboration of specifications for food additives established by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives, so that they could be brought before the Commission for final approval as recommended international specifications (see paragraph 156, ALINORM 70/43). The Codex Committee on Food Additives, at its Seventh Session, had proposed a slight modification to the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards contained in Appendix V of its Report (ALINORM 71/12).

13. The Executive Committee was in agreement with the proposal of the Codex Committee on Food Additives regarding Steps 1 to 4, but decided that the text describing the way in which specifications should be submitted to the Commission at Step 5 should be amended as follows:

"Only those specifications which, in the opinion of the Codex Committee on Food Additives, are suitable for publication as recommended international specifications for food additives and for which Steps 6, 7 and 8 could be omitted, should be submitted to the Codex Alimentarius Commission at Step 5 for final adoption".

14. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the relevant specifications arising from earlier meetings of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives were in the process of being consolidated into one document. However, owing to heavy commitments regarding the translation and printing of Codex documents during the 1970/71 biennium, the publication of the document would be delayed for approximately one year. As regards specifications established by the 10th and later meetings of the Expert Committee on Food Additives, special arrangements had been made to make these available to governments for comment.

Food Standards Needs of Africa

15. The Executive Committee had before it two Secretariat papers on the above subject. One contained a proposal of the Secretariat that a Food Standards Conference be convened in Africa in the 1972/73 biennium to assess the special needs of Africa in the matter of food standards and basic food legislation and to consider ways and means of meeting these needs; the other dealt with the question of whether it would be opportune to recommend to the Commission the establishment of a Co-ordinating Committee for Africa or, alternatively, the appointment of a Co-ordinator for Africa. The Committee considered these papers in the light of written comments which had been transmitted to the Committee by Dr. de Heer (Vice-chairman). The representative for Africa drew attention to the fact that the needs of Africa in the food standards and allied fields could not be taken as a unit, and that it would be necessary to proceed on a sub-regional basis, taking the different food production patterns into account. He also called attention to the needs of the region of Africa as a whole in the field of education and training of personnel as well as in laboratory facilities and equipment and stressed that the assistance of FAO and WHO in meeting these needs would be appreciated.

16. The Executive Committee took note of the topics which had been listed by the Secretariat in document CX/EXEC/71/16/11 as possible items for discussion at the proposed Food Standards Conference. The Committee agreed that the Secretariat should prepare for the next session of the Executive Committee a draft agenda for the

proposed Food Standards Conference incorporating the proposals which had been made on this subject by Dr. de Heer. Following review by the Executive Committee, the proposed draft agenda would be submitted to the Eighth Session of the Commission for consideration, in particular, by the African delegations at the session.

17. The Executive Committee took no position on the question of whether it would be more desirable to recommend the appointment of a Co-ordinator for Africa rather than the establishment of a Co-ordinating Committee for Africa, as it considered that this was a matter which should be decided by the African members of the Commission. The Executive Committee recognized, however, that a Co-ordinator for Africa would have a very important role to play in assisting the Secretariat to prepare for the proposed Food Standards Conference, if the Commission decided that it would be desirable to hold such a conference. The paper to be prepared by the Secretariat should cover the merits of working on a sub-regional basis. It should also explain what the role of the Co-ordinator would be and deal with the suggestion of possibly appointing Coordinators for groups of countries within the region of Africa. The Executive Committee considered that it would be necessary to assemble as much information as possible on food legislation in Africa and, in this connexion, the services of the Legal Branches of both FAO and WHO should be utilized.

#### Observations of the Codex Committee on Food Additives on a possible third Joint FAO/WHO Conference on Food Additives

18. The Executive Committee was informed about the opinion of the Codex Committee on Food Additives concerning the desirability of holding a third session of the above conference (paras. 15-17, ALINORM 71/12). It noted that the Codex Committee on Food Additives had concluded that provided its terms of reference were enlarged, it could discuss the items proposed for the Conference (see working paper CX/EXEC 71/16/4) and there would not be a need to hold a Conference. It was brought to the attention of the Executive Committee that the Director of the Nutrition Division of FAO had made certain arrangements for the inclusion of the Conference in the proposed programme of work and budget of FAO for 1972/73. The representative of WHO pointed out that, as the proposed Conference was a Joint FAO/WHO meeting, this matter would have to be discussed by the two Organizations; furthermore, the proposed agenda for the Conference did not appear to justify the holding of a Conference. The representative of the North American Region was of the opinion that there was a need to hold a conference to discuss matters beyond the responsibilities of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives, e.g. the problem of total load of contaminants arising from all sources such as pest control, manufacturing practices and environmental pollution. If such a Conference were desired by governments, it would be up to the governments to propose this to the Governing Bodies of the two Organizations.

19. The Executive Committee noted that FAO and WHO were considering the holding of a third joint conference on food additives and requested that the draft agenda for such a conference be communicated to its 17th Session for information. It was agreed that it was necessary to give consideration to the work of other UN agencies and International Organizations in the field of food contamination so as to prevent duplication of work. The Executive Committee also agreed that, in the meanwhile, the Codex Committee on Food Additives should confine itself to its regular work.

## Procedure for the Elaboration of Pesticide Residue Tolerances

20. The Executive Committee had before it a paper prepared by the representative of the South-West Pacific Region stressing the need to expedite work in the field of pesticide residues in food. He drew the Executive Committee's attention to the fact that the rate of development of new pest control agents had outpaced the progress of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues as well as that of the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues. He also expressed concern about the effect on food production and international trade in food products of the increasing incidence of resistance and cross resistance to pesticide chemicals of pests of great economic significance, and stressed the urgency of the establishment of pesticide residue tolerances for alternative chemicals.

21. The Executive Committee agreed that the work of FAO/WHO on pesticide residues was of extreme importance requiring high priority. It was therefore agreed:

- (a) to recommend to the Directors-General of FAO and WHO that they should ensure that, in the appropriate divisions of FAO and WHO, the staff and budget allocated to this activity in connexion with the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues be thus full-time employed, and that due consideration be given to the importance of work in the field of pesticide residues;
- (b) to recommend to the Codex Alimentarius Commission that the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards in respect of pesticide residues be amended so that the omission of Steps 6, 7 and 8 would be possible by a two thirds majority of the votes cast.

22. The Representative of WHO pointed out that the Executive Board of WHO had emphasized the importance of expediting the distribution of the reports of Expert Committees. As for the reports of the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues, these would be edited, translated and printed within the Organization in the future, thus expediting their publication. The Executive Committee emphasized that every effort should be made to avoid delays in distributing the reports and monographs arising from the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues.

23. In connexion with 21 (b) above, the Committee agreed that the amendment should be so phrased as to take into account contaminants as well as pesticide residues and that this might best be done by referring to standards elaborated by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues and Codex Committee on Food Additives rather than to "pesticide residues and contaminants". It was also agreed that the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues should indicate, on the basis of appropriate criteria, to which pesticide residue tolerances the omission of steps would apply.

24. It was further decided that the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues be requested to give due consideration to the establishment of priority lists taking into account particularly the hazard to health as well as economic considerations. There was the possibility that a group in the Environment Committee of OECD might be making economic studies along these lines, which would be useful in this connexion.

25. Mr. G.R. Grange stated that he had been requested to bring to the attention of the Executive Committee the extreme interest of the United States of America in trying to reach international understanding on pesticide residues through the sponsorship of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The importance of the Codex Alimentarius

Commission in this regard was strongly endorsed by the other members of the Executive Committee.

Proposed Meeting of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Pesticide Residues recommended by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues

26. The Executive Committee received a report from the Secretariat on the action taken to convene an ad hoc working group on Pesticide Residues as decided by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (see paragraph 15, ALINORM 71/24) and authorized by the Seventh Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (see paragraph 162, ALINORM 70/43). The Executive Committee noted that steps had been taken to ensure that the provisos laid down by the Codex Alimentarius Commission would be fulfilled but that the question of host country had not yet been resolved. The Executive Committee expressed strong support for the convening of the ad hoc working group recognizing that the items for discussion by the ad hoc group represented important questions which needed to be resolved. The Executive committee wished to be kept informed about further developments regarding the ad hoc working group.

Sampling

27. The Executive Committee had before it a paper prepared by the Secretariat dealing with the Sampling Plans for Processed Fruits and Vegetables elaborated by the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables, as well as the question of sampling as a whole. The Executive Committee noted that a number of Codex Commodity Committees had included provisions for defective units in their standards and had applied the Sampling Plans (AQL-6.5, probability 95%, ALINORM 69/27) to these defectives as defined in the standards. It was noted that the primary task of adopting desirable sampling plans was the responsibility of the Codex Committee which developed the product standard. It also noted that the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling was considering a document dealing with technical procedures for sample taking. The Executive Committee considered that international agreement on sampling plans was important in order to achieve uniform enforcement of a standard, but that it was a refinement which might not require immediate attention. The Executive Committee noted that ISO had developed a layout setting out a programme of work in the field of sampling as well as a vocabulary of terms used in sampling, but that detailed sampling procedures would still have to be elaborated. The Executive Committee also noted that there was no duplication between the ISO work on sampling techniques and Codex work on statistical sampling plans.

28. The Executive Committee agreed that the Sampling Plans be published under the title Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods after appropriate editorial changes. It was understood that the Sampling Plans would not have the status of a mandatory text except insofar as they were attracted to appropriately defined 'defectives' in Codex Standards. In this respect it was necessary to rewrite the 'scope' section to make this fact clear but, at the same time, describe the nature of the attributes for which the Sampling Plans would be suitable.

29. It was pointed out that Codex Commodity Committees should give due consideration to the classification (definition) of 'defectives' and to the selection of appropriate acceptable quality levels (AQL) before considering the application of the above Sampling Plans or other types of sampling plans. The Executive Committee noted that a whole range of sampling plans was available with AQL's ranging from less than 0.1 to above 25 and that these would be made available to Codex Commodity Committees on request.

30. It was agreed that there would be no need to employ a consultant for the time being and that the holding of a special session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling did not appear to be necessary until ISO had developed further detailed texts for examination by the above committee. Meanwhile, those Codex Commodity Committees which had decided to include provisions for 'defectives' or other criteria in their standards which required the establishment of an AQL, should examine thoroughly the existing Sampling Plans (AQL-6.5) or any other sampling plans which were appropriate.

Liaison and Relationship between the proposed Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene and the Codex Committee on Processed Meat Products in the field of Meat Hygiene

31. The Executive Committee considered the above subject in the light of a paper (CX/EXEC 71/16/9) which had been prepared by the Secretariat. The Committee noted that the Codex Committee on Meat had agreed at its last session that the subject of meat hygiene warranted the establishment of a separate Codex Committee. The Executive Committee also noted that the government of the Federal Republic of Germany had indicated that, in view of its present commitments in hosting Codex Committees, it could not undertake to host a further Codex Committee (Meat Hygiene), although it was of the opinion that the subject was sufficiently important to warrant the establishment of a separate committee. It was also the general view of the Executive Committee that there was a need for the establishment of a separate Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene.

32. There was some discussion on the role other international organizations could play in developing a Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat, and in this connexion it was noted that, in accordance with the normal procedures, all interested international organizations such as the International Office of Epizootics, would be invited to participate in the work.

33. Taking into account the nature of the work of developing a Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat and that this work would be carried out by veterinarians and meat hygienists, the Executive Committee agreed that there was no need to establish liaison between the proposed Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene and the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene." It would not be necessary, therefore, to refer the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. The Executive Committee recognized, however, that there was a need for liaison between the proposed Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene and the Codex Committee on Processed Meat Products. As regards the question of whether the Code of Hygienic Practice for Processed Meat Products, which was being developed by the Codex Committee on Processed Meat Products, should be referred to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, the Executive Committee thought it sufficient to recommend to the Codex Committee on Processed Meat Products that in developing end product specifications in the draft code, it should take account of end product specifications which had been included by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene in the Codes of Hygienic Practice which had been developed by that Committee.

34. The representative for the South-west Pacific Region expressed the view that the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat should be developed as a standard rather than as a code.

35. On the question raised by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene of a possible overlap between the Code of Hygienic Practice for Processed Meat Products and the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice being developed by the Codex Committee on Food

Hygiene for Frozen Pre-Cooked and Semi-Cooked Foods, the Executive Committee agreed that the author country (Canada) of the Draft Code for Frozen Pre-cooked and Semi-Cooked Foods should take account of other relevant Codes of Hygienic Practice, which were not many, being developed within the Codex.

36. The Executive Committee agreed that there was no need to amend the guidelines for Codex Committees nor the terms of reference of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. The Executive Committee drew the attention of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene to the fact that its position in relation to Codes of Hygienic Practice being elaborated by other subsidiary bodies of the Commission was governed by section (b) (ii) of its terms of reference.

37. The Executive Committee took note of the terms of reference proposed by the Secretariat for the Codex Committee on Meat and Proposed Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene, but did not take any decision on the terminology of these terms of reference at this stage. The Executive Committee requested the Secretariat to review the proposed terms of reference in the light of the decisions taken by the Executive Committee.

Matters arising from the Reports of the Seventh Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene and the Sixth Session of the Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on the Standardization of quick Frozen Foods

38. The Executive Committee took note of the request for guidance from the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene as set out in paragraphs 16b and 17 of ALINORM 71/13 concerning the development of the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Frozen, Precooked and Semi-Cooked Foods. The Executive Committee agreed that the response to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene should be as follows:

- (i) the Executive Committee notes that the Food Hygiene Committee (a) attaches importance to the development of a code of hygienic practice for frozen pre-cooked and semi-cooked foods and (b) considers that it would be desirable to have a single code covering those products;
- (ii) the area of possible overlap with other relevant codes being developed within the framework of the Codex Alimentarius Commission appears to be very limited. Apart from the Food Hygiene Committee itself the only other Codex Committee which is developing codes of hygienic practice that would cover some pre-cooked or semi-cooked foods is the Codex Committee on Processed Meat Products. Such pre-cooked or semi-cooked foods would, of course, be products containing meat. There is also the draft code of practice for quick frozen foods being developed by the Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Quick Frozen Foods. In addition, there is the future work programme of the FAO Ad Hoc Consultation on Codes of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products, which envisages the development of a code of technological practice (which would of necessity include some provisions on hygiene) for pre-cooked, breaded and fried products;
- (iii) it would be more appropriate for the Food Hygiene Committee itself to decide, in the light of (ii) above and in the light of its programme of future work and priorities, whether to proceed with or discontinue work on the code. Alternatively, as the codes referred to in (ii) above are still at a very early stage of development, the Food Hygiene Committee might think it advisable to postpone work on the development of this code until the likely content of the other relevant codes is more fully developed.

- (iv) If the Food Hygiene Committee judged it advisable to proceed with the Code, either now or at a future date, there would be no objection to some overlap with other relevant codes provided account was taken of the other relevant codes, in order to guard against inconsistencies in the texts. The question of whether the code should have a general scope would best be judged by the rapporteur in the light of the contents of the other relevant codes.

39. As regards the matter raised in paragraph 10 of ALINORM 71/13, the Executive Committee agreed that although the definition of quick frozen fruits, vegetables and their juices as adopted by the Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on the Standardization of Quick Frozen Foods incorporated provisions on transportation, storage and distribution - unlike the definition of these products appearing in the Code of Hygienic Practice for them - the draft code should still be advanced to the Eighth Session of the Commission for consideration at Step 8. The Executive Committee noted that the matter of the definition could be settled by the Commission at its next session.

#### Natural Mineral Waters

40. The Executive Committee received a communication from Professor O. Högl, concerning the Draft European Standard for Natural Mineral Waters, requesting the Executive Committee to consider whether it was opportune to re-submit the draft standard to the Commission at its next Session. The Executive Committee noted that the Commission had decided at its Seventh Session to seek information from governments on the criteria on which they based their recognition of waters having properties favourable to health. The Commission had also agreed that medical opinion on such claims would be required and a paper summarizing all information received would have to be submitted to governments for comment, which in turn would have to be submitted to the Coordinating Committee for Europe (paragraph 103, ALINORM 70/43). The Executive Committee was informed that a certain quantity of medical information had been received which would need to be considered by WHO.

In view of the foregoing the Executive Committee decided that it would not be opportune to place the draft standard for natural mineral waters before the Eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and requested the Chairman to so inform Professor Högl.

#### Codex Mark or Symbol

41. The Executive Committee considered a suggestion that the Commission should study the possibility of adopting a Codex Mark or Symbol which could be used to indicate that a food conformed to the requirements of the Codex Alimentarius. It was agreed to request the Secretariat of the Commission and the Legal Counsels of FAO and WHO to examine this question in all its aspects and to submit a report to the Executive Committee on this matter taking into account the practices of other international organizations such as the IOOC, ISO, The International Wool Council and the International Seed Testing Association.

#### Proposed Phasing of Codex Sessions

42. The Executive Committee examined a tentative proposal of the Secretariat concerning the scheduling of Codex Sessions for the next four years. It was agreed that the Secretariat should approach the governments responsible for the chairmanship of Codex Committees concerning the proposed timetable. The views of the Codex Committees were to be sought on the state of work in each Committee and its likely progress over the next few years. In the light of this survey of current work, the

governments responsible for the chairmanship of Codex Committees should give their opinion upon the frequency of meetings required by the Committees. Members of the Commission should also be requested to give their views on the required frequency of meetings of the Committees and of the Commission. The Executive Committee emphasized that it should not be axiomatic that Committees meet routinely at given intervals but only when the workload was such as to justify meetings. The Executive Committee wished to draw to the attention of Codex Committees the need to plan their work over a period of three to four years. The Executive Committee also considered that a closer application of the criteria for new work, contained in the Commission's Procedural Manual, should be applied within Committees. Concerning the proposed phasing of Codex Sessions, the Executive Committee stressed the need for the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues to meet at intervals not exceeding twelve months in view of the importance and urgency attached by governments to the need to establish tolerances for pesticide residues. Regarding 1971, it was agreed that if the Ad Hoc Working Group on Pesticide Residues were to meet in October, it would probably be desirable for the next regular session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues to be held in February 1972 and thereafter annually. The Executive Committee considered that the other proposed arrangements for 1971 should be finalized by the Secretariat in consultation with the Host Governments and that provision should be made for a meeting of the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses in December 1971. The Executive Committee would review these matters again at its next session in the light of the views of governments responsible for the chairmanship of Codex Committees and of Members of the Commission.

#### Provisional Agenda for the Eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

43. The Executive Committee agreed to a proposal that all aspects of the work of a Codex Committee should be taken as a single item on the Agenda of the Commission in order to facilitate consideration of the business of Codex Committees and the attendance of experts at the Commission's session. It was agreed that precedence in the order of items on the Agenda should be given to those Committees which had submitted standards at Step 8 to the Commission and that the Secretariat should request governments chairing Codex Committees to act as rapporteurs in guiding the Commission's consideration of matters especially at Step 8.

#### Other Business

44. The representative of the European Region informed the Executive Committee that the government of the Federal Republic of Germany was not in a position to continue responsibility for the chairmanship of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany had also drawn attention to the advantages of having this Committee located in Europe. The Executive Committee requested that this decision of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany be conveyed to all Members of the Commission requesting their opinion as to the need to continue the Committee and if so whether any Member of the Commission would be willing to take on the Chairmanship of the Committee. The Executive Committee expressed regret that this decision had to be taken and thanked the host government (Federal Republic of Germany) and, in particular, the Chairman of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, Professor Dr. R. Franck.

#### Place and Date of Next Session

45. The Executive Committee noted that its next session would be held at WHO Headquarters, Geneva, on 25 June 1971.

### Valediction

46. The Chairman, Mr. G. Weill (France), on behalf of the Executive Committee, expressed the great appreciation of the Executive Committee to Dr. C. Agthe of WHO for his services to the Codex Alimentarius Commission since its inception, and expressed their best wishes to him in his new position in the International Agency for Research on Cancer.