

No. EC-68/Agenda Item 12/2017
19-21January 2017

AFRICAN-ASIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (AARDO)

68th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DHAKA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

19 – 21January 2017

SUMMARY REPORT

2, STATE GUEST HOUSES COMPLEX, CHANAKYAPURI
NEW DELHI, INDIA

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

The 68th Session of the Executive Committee of African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) was held at the Westin Hotel, Dhaka, Bangladesh during 19-21 January 2017 at the kind invitation of the esteemed Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

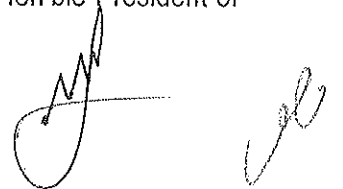
1.2 The Session was chaired by Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee of AARDO. H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh graced the occasion as the Special Guest.

1.3 Eleven members, out of the thirteen members of the Executive Committee, namely, (i) People's Republic of Bangladesh, (ii) Republic of China (Taiwan), (iii) Arab Republic of Egypt, (iv) Republic of India, (v) Republic of the Lebanon, (vi) Malaysia, (vii) Republic of Mauritius, (viii) Federal Republic of Nigeria, (ix) Sultanate of Oman, (x) Republic of the Sudan, and (xi) Republic of Zambia attended the Session. In addition, two officials from the Regional Office of AARDO for the Far East, Republic of Korea attended the meeting as Observer. His Excellency Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin, Secretary General, AARDO attended the meeting as the Member Secretary to the Executive Committee. The list of the delegates is at Annexure I.

1.4 The inaugural session was attended by a number of dignitaries, including Their Excellencies the Ambassadors/High Commissioners, senior representatives of international/regional organizations and officials from other ministries and departments of the esteemed Government of Bangladesh.

1.5 The following dignitaries were present on the dais at the inaugural function held on 19 January 2017:

- i. H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Chief Guest;
- ii. H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Special Guest;
- iii. Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee;



- iv. Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Ph.D., Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (LGRD & Cooperatives), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh;
- v. H.E. Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin, Secretary General, AARDO;
- vi. Mr. Anand Chandra Biswas, Additional Secretary (Planning & Development), Rural Development and Cooperative Division), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (LGRD & Cooperatives), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; and
- vii. Mr. M.A. Matin, Director General In-charge, Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogra, Bangladesh.

1.6 The Inaugural Function began with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, Gita, Bible and Tripitok.

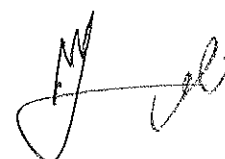
1.7 Mr. M.A. Matin, Director General In-charge, Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogra, Bangladesh, in his welcome address felt privileged, on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (LGRD & Cooperatives), Government of Bangladesh and on his own behalf, to welcome all distinguished delegates to the 68th Session of the Executive Committee being held in Dhaka. Bangladesh has skilled manpower and most of the people reside in rural areas. There is a need to ameliorate their living standards and rural development innovations in this respect are important.

1.8 Referring to the Programme Schedule of the meeting, he informed that his country would try to show the participants some of the successful rural development models and projects. He briefly made a mention of some of the renowned institutes in Bangladesh engaged in the field of rural development like the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogra, etc.

1.9 Mr. Matin thanked the Secretary General and the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee for giving Bangladesh the opportunity to host the 68th Session of the Executive Committee in Dhaka. Referring to long and cordial association between Bangladesh and AARDO, he mentioned that Bangladesh joined the Organization in 1994. Bangladesh has been a member of the Executive Committee since 2012.

1.10 He concluded his welcome address by, once again, welcoming the distinguished delegates to Dhaka.

1.11 Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, in his address mentioned that he really felt honoured to be at the inaugural session of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee. AARDO is one of the earliest initiatives of South-South cooperation during early 1960s in the field of rural development and always assisting its member countries in their rural development endeavours.



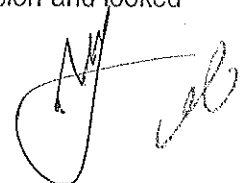
1.12 Speaking about the rural development scenario in Bangladesh, he mentioned that his Government has always emphasized rural development and its mission is to reduce poverty and improve the socio-economic conditions of poor people living in rural areas through rural development, cooperative based activities and conducting continuous research. The Rural Development and Cooperatives Division (RDCCD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives is the primary ministry to execute government's policies and decisions related with poverty alleviation and rural development. He briefly explained some of the mandates of Ministry. He mentioned that Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), the Department of Cooperatives, BARD and RDA are the four major national departments under RDCCD working for rural development and cooperatives.

1.13 Dr. Roy further mentioned that his Ministry is also implementing one of the dream projects of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh that is "Ekti Bari Ekti Khamar" (One House One Farm). The main thrust of this innovative project is to develop a Village Development Organization (VDO) in every village of Bangladesh and promote micro saving by members of those VDOs so that they can utilise their savings along with project grant for income generating activities.

1.14 He believed that the 68th Session of the Executive Committee will be able to provide a guideline to AARDO member countries on sustainable rural development. He expressed his gratitude to the Executive Committee for selecting Bangladesh as the host country and hoped that the Session will be helpful to the rural people of Africa and Asia. Before concluding, he wished the distinguished delegates an enjoyable and beneficial stay in Dhaka.

1.15 H.E. Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin, Secretary General, AARDO, in his address stated that it is a great honour and pleasure for him to extend to all a cordial and hearty welcome to the Inaugural Session of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee in Dhaka. He felt deeply privileged by the kind presence of H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Chief Guest to inaugurate the meeting. He extended his profound thanks to the esteemed Government of Bangladesh for hosting the meeting and for making impeccable arrangements. He also extended his thankfulness to H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh for taking keen interest in the organisation of the Session of the Executive Committee.

1.16 The Secretary General heartily welcomed Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee for his distinguished presence to preside over the Session. He believed that the Executive Committee would immensely benefit from Mr. Jadoo's dynamic leadership, deep knowledge, prudence and rich and varied experiences. He warmly welcomed the two Vice-Presidents of the Executive Committee from Africa and Asia, namely, the distinguished delegates from the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Sultanate of Oman, respectively for their inspiring presence. He felt greatly honoured by the gracious presence of the distinguished delegates of the members of the Executive Committee for sparing their invaluable time despite heavy schedules of work to attend the Session and looked forward to their cooperation and support.



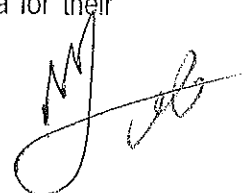
1.17 He extended a warm welcome to Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Secretary, Local Government and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of LGRD & Cooperatives for his benign presence and for overseeing all the arrangements for the smooth organisation of the Session. Welcoming Mr. M.A. Matin, Director General In-Charge, Rural Development Academy (RDA) for his kind presence, the Secretary General mentioned that Mr. Matin is fully aware of the activities of AARDO and is instrumental in materializing the organisation of a new training programme at his esteemed Academy for the benefit of AARDO member countries.

1.18 He took the opportunity to convey his gratitude to Their Excellencies, members of Diplomatic Corps, high dignitaries and senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh for their kind presence. He was especially thankful to the distinguished delegates from the Far East Regional Office of AARDO, Republic of Korea for their presence.

1.19 Referring to the close and cordial relationship that exists between the esteemed Government of Bangladesh and AARDO, the Secretary General mentioned that AARDO and its member countries have highly recognized and appreciated the generous support, assistance and cooperation the Government of Bangladesh has extended to the Organization over the years, culminating by hosting the 68th Session of the Executive Committee. The esteemed Government of Bangladesh has been a distinguished member of Executive Committee for two trienniums, including the current one. He briefly touched upon some of the technical activities undertaken in Bangladesh. AARDO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives and the BARD to organize a regional workshop-cum-training programme on "Micro-credit Delivery System and Good Governance in Rural Development" from the year 2010. The programme was upgraded to an international workshop from the year 2013.

1.20 The Secretary General briefly dwelt upon some of the achievements the Organization has made since the 67th Session of the Executive Committee held in Sudan in February 2016. He felt glad in informing the august gathering that the esteemed Government of the Republic of Namibia has applied for the membership of AARDO and the AARDO Secretariat has already initiated the process of admitting Namibia into its folds as its distinguished member since 2016. In fact, Namibia has begun taking part in technical activities of AARDO. With the admission of Namibia, the membership of AARDO has risen to 32, 16 members from Africa, 15 members from Asia and one Associate Member from Asia. The Secretary General urged the distinguished members of the Executive Committee to use their good offices with the prospective member countries, lying within their respective regions, by encouraging them to join AARDO.

1.21 He was also glad to inform that AARDO has renewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) for five years for the joint organization of the training programme on "Sustainable Rural Development (SRD)" in place of "Sustainable Agricultural Development (SAD)". Further, AARDO has also signed a MoU with the esteemed Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India to enable it further expand the scope and scale of its capacity building programmes for the benefit of the member countries. On behalf of member countries of AARDO and on his own behalf, the Secretary General deeply thanked the esteemed Governments of Republic of Korea and India for their



support. In addition, AARDO has signed Memoranda of Understanding with International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), New Delhi and Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA), New Delhi.

1.22 The Secretary General felt happy to inform the august gathering that the esteemed Government of the Philippines has agreed, in principle, to rejoin AARDO, and the AARDO Secretariat is waiting for a formal proposal from the esteemed Government. In this regard, he appreciated and thanked the Far East Regional Office (FERO) of AARDO, Republic of Korea for making efforts to increase the membership of the Organization.

1.23 He remarked that in a nutshell, it can be articulated that AARDO, the symbol of South-South cooperation and Africa-Asian solidarity, is moving ahead to achieve its vision and goal, as enshrined in its Constitution, namely, improving the quality of the rural people, and sustainable agriculture and rural development of the member countries. He assured all that AARDO would continue its sincere efforts to meet the needs and aspirations of member countries.

1.24 He briefly explained some of the important agenda items for kind consideration of the Executive Committee. Before concluding, he, once again, thanked the Hon'ble Chief Guest and Hon'ble Special Guest for their gracious presence. He expressed his gratitude, once again, to the esteemed Government of Bangladesh and her able officials of different ministries and departments for making excellent arrangements and extending all courtesies, especially the officials and staff of the esteemed Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Director General In charge, RDA and his staff members, CIRDAP, the Conference Officer and the Hotel Management.

1.25 Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee, in his address mentioned that it is indeed a great honour and privilege for him to cordially welcome H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Chief Guest to the Inaugural Session. He was equally thankful to H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Special Guest for his benign presence.

1.26 He welcomed the two Vice-Presidents of the Executive Committee from Africa and Asia, viz. the distinguished delegates from the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Sultanate of Oman, respectively. He extended a warm welcome to the distinguished heads of the delegation, distinguished delegates of the Executive Committee, members of the diplomatic corps and other invitees.

1.27 On behalf of AARDO, members of the Executive Committee and on his own behalf, he expressed his sincere gratitude to the esteemed Government of Bangladesh for hosting the meeting and for extending them kind hospitality and all courtesies.

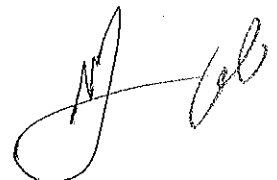
1.28 He was glad that the esteemed Government of Bangladesh is regularly organising technical activities for AARDO-sponsored candidates. With the organisation of such activities, the existing relationship among AARDO, the Government of Bangladesh and the members of the Organization will be further strengthened.

1.29 He further mentioned that Bangladesh is among the top 12 developing countries with a population of over 170 million, which have achieved 6 plus per cent growth for a number of years. According to the IMF, Bangladesh's economy is the second fastest growing major economy of 2016, with a rate of about 7.1%. It is one of the six countries chosen by the London-based BMI Research that it will be growth performer in 2016-2025 and rapidly climb the GDP country rankings between now and 2025. Bangladesh is the birth place of micro-credit programmes of the world. In fact, the Grameen Bank is the revolutionary institution in the field of microcredit and its model has been replicated in several countries around the globe. The group lending model of poverty alleviation is now being widely replicated in many developing countries of the world. Even in some poor regions of the developed countries such as USA and Canada, the group lending model is being followed to combat rural poverty. In fact, a large number of NGOs have been able to alleviate poverty of millions of poor households by generation of self employment by providing collateral free credit.

1.30 Making a mention of his country, he stated that Mauritius hosted the 18th General Session of AARDO Conference in April 2015 and assumed the President-ship of the Organization for the triennium 2015-2017. This was the second time that Mauritius hosted the General Session of AARDO Conference, the first being in 1984. Mauritius deems the President-ship of AARDO as an honour as well as an opportunity to bridge the two continents in a true spirit of South-South cooperation and African-Asian solidarity. It is also a matter of pride for Mauritius that it has always been a member of the Executive Committee since it joined AARDO in 1974.

1.31 Most of the countries in the African-Asian region are faced with the challenges of hunger, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, low economic growth among their rural population. The situation would be further exacerbated by climate change which is one of the most daunting challenges the world has begun to face and will be facing in the near future. All concerned, including governmental and non-governmental agencies, therefore must contribute in surmounting the encumbrances affecting the rural population of the African-Asian region. The Hon'ble President further mentioned that he firmly believes that there is an urgent need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their inter-linkages. It is also important to exchange ideas, success stories and strategies and best practices of poverty alleviation, accelerating the pace of rural development, among the stakeholders at national, regional and global level.

1.32 The Hon'ble President congratulated AARDO for its key role in assisting its member countries and through them the rural poor in tackling the scourges of hunger and poverty. It was encouraging to note that AARDO has realised many accomplishments in attaining its Mission of improving the quality of life of the rural people in its member countries. In this connection, he congratulated the Secretary General and his team of professional officials for their sincere and dedicated efforts.



1.33 Before concluding, he expressed, once again, his grateful thanks to the Hon'ble Chief Guest and the Hon'ble Special Guest for their kind presence. He thanked the two Vice-Presidents and distinguished delegates of the Executive Committee for their presence. He also thanked Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and his officials and staff, and other officials of the esteemed Government of Bangladesh for their full cooperation and support in organising this meeting. He expressed his profound thanks to His Excellency Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin, Secretary General, AARDO and his colleagues for their hard work.

1.34 H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Special Guest felt highly pleased to be invited at the inaugural session of the meeting. AARDO is a unique organization working in the field of rural development in Africa and Asia. The governments of AARDO member countries also aim at reducing poverty and hunger by taking different initiatives for the rural poor. However, still more efforts are needed for the benefit of rural people.

1.35 He further mentioned that his Ministry and its several agencies and departments are working for the welfare of rural poor. Bangladesh has three well-known national rural development training and research institutions, namely, BARD, RDA and Bangabandhu Academy for Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development (BAPARD). Considering the regional disparity and the successful implementation of several RDA Models and Green Innovations, the government is establishing two more Rural Development Academies in the country.

1.36 He mentioned that in rural Bangladesh, one can see many educated but unemployed youths which may also be a common problem in most African and Asian countries. So, all should work for them and settle them in productive sector. In this connection, he believed that AARDO is such a platform in the region to do so. With its activities, AARDO helps its member countries in their efforts for sustainable rural development.

1.37 He expressed his gratitude to the Executive Committee for selecting Bangladesh as the host country and hoped that the meeting will be helpful for the rural people of Africa and Asia. Before concluding, he wished all the distinguished delegates an enjoyable and comfortable stay in Dhaka.

1.38 Delivering his inaugural address, H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Hon'ble Chief Guest stated that he considered it a great honour to be invited to the meeting. AARDO is one of the earliest examples of South-South cooperation in rural development in the African-Asian region and comprises 32 members from Africa and Asia. AARDO is devoted to develop understanding among the members for better appreciation of each other's problems and to explore, collectively, opportunities for coordination of efforts for promoting welfare and eradication of thirst, hunger, illiteracy, disease and poverty amongst rural people. He also briefly spoke about the history of rural development in Bangladesh as well as the salient features of the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development (V-AID) programme, launched in



1953 with technical assistance from the Government of United States. V-AID encompassed all major sectors of rural development such as agriculture, primary education, health, sanitation, cooperatives, land reclamation, physical infrastructure, social and recreational activities.

1.39 After the independence of Bangladesh, the government of the new born country led by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman focused on rural development. The Government established the RDA in Bogra in 1974. Since its inception, RDA has developed many green innovations and models in Bangladesh in the field of agricultural and rural development. Some of these are: buried pipe irrigation system, rural water supply, solar powered multistoried agriculture, community based biogas plant, women in seed entrepreneur (WISE) model, etc.

1.40 The Hon'ble Chief Guest mentioned that Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), the Department of Cooperatives, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) are the four major nationwide implementing agencies under his ministry working for rural development, cooperatives, rural infrastructural development, and rural water supply and sanitation. The Hon'ble Chief Guest further mentioned Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh, felt that, for eradicating poverty and generating new employment in rural Bangladesh, each and every rural house should have a farmhouse. Therefore, his Ministry is implementing "Ekti Bari Ekti Khamar" (One House One Farm) Project. Apart from the government initiatives, NGOs, particularly local NGOs are doing tremendous work for rural development. Bangladesh is always so keen to ratify any favourable international and regional conventions and agreements in rural development. Dhaka is the headquarters of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP). Bangladesh always plays a key role in all activities of AARDO and CIRDAP.

1.41 The Hon'ble Chief Guest stated that he does believe that AARDO is a platform for the African and Asian countries to share with, disseminate to and learn from each other the good practices in the field of agricultural and rural development. He expressed the hope that the 68th Session of Executive Committee will be able to guide its member countries on issues relating to rural development, considering both present and future challenges like impact of climate change. Before concluding, he wished the delegates a pleasant, precious, and mutually beneficial stay in Dhaka. With these words, the Hon'ble Chief Guest inaugurated the meeting.

1.42 Thereafter, the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee presented a memento to the Hon'ble Chief Guest on behalf of AARDO. Similarly, H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Chief Guest presented a memento to the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee, and H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and Special Guest presented memento to the Secretary General, AARDO.



1.43 Mr. Anand Chandra Biswas, Additional Secretary (Planning & Development), Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Hon'ble Chief Guest for sparing his invaluable time to inaugurate the meeting despite his busy schedule of work; to the Hon'ble Special Guest for sparing his precious time to be at the inaugural function; to the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee to come all the way from Mauritius to Bangladesh to preside over the Session; to the distinguished delegates for enduring long distances to come to Dhaka to attend the meeting; to the Hon'ble Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh for overseeing all the arrangements; to H.E. the Secretary General, AARDO for coming to Dhaka to organize and attend the meeting; to Director General, RDA for making all necessary arrangements; to all officials from various Departments of Government of Bangladesh for their efforts; to electronic and press media for coverage of the function; and to hotel management for making available all the facilities.

1.44 A significant feature of the inaugural function was the signing of Memorandum of Understanding among AARDO; Rural Development & Cooperative Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh; and the Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogra for the organisation of a regional/international training programme at RDA. The ceremony was held in the august presence of the Hon'ble Chief Guest, Hon'ble Special Guest, many dignitaries and other officials.

1.45 The signing of the MoU was followed by a group photograph of distinguished delegates with the Hon'ble Chief Guest. The Hon'ble Minister also opened an exhibition on Rural Development Technology Farm organized by the esteemed Ministry of LGRD & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh at the venue of the inaugural function.

SECTION II


BUSINESS SESSION

2.1.1 Quorum being complete, the Secretary General requested Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee of AARDO to commence proceedings of the Session. The Hon'ble President welcomed the distinguished delegates to the first Business Session. The Committee thereafter took up the agenda items one-by-one.

1. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

(Agenda Item 1)

2.1.2 The Hon'ble President invited comments on the Provisional Agenda. The **Provisional Agenda was adopted** and a copy of the Approved Agenda is placed at Annexure II.



2. Adoption of Reports

Liaison Committee : 66th Session (26 August 2015)
: 67th Session (22 March 2016)

(Agenda Item 2)

2.2.1 The Hon'ble President informed the Executive Committee that in accordance with relevant provisions contained in the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Liaison Committee of AARDO, the reports/decisions of each meeting of the Liaison Committee are to be put up to the Executive Committee for consideration and adoption. The decisions of the 66th and 67th sessions of the Liaison Committee, held on 26 August 2015 and 22 March 2016, respectively were within the framework of AARDO Constitution, Rules of Procedure of AARDO as well as Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Liaison Committee.

2.2.2 He thereafter invited comments from the distinguished delegates on the agenda item. The Executive Committee **approved the decisions taken by 66th and 67th sessions of the Liaison Committee and also adopted their final reports.**

3. Follow-up Action on Decisions/Recommendations

I. Executive Committee : 67th Session (21-23 February 2016)
II. Liaison Committee : 67th Session (22 March 2016)
: 68th Session (24 August 2016)

(Agenda Item 3)

2.3.1 The Hon'ble President informed the Committee that the agenda item contains the follow-up actions taken by the AARDO Secretariat on decisions/recommendations/ suggestions by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee and the 67th and 68th Sessions of the Liaison Committee. He thereafter requested the Secretary General to explain the action taken by the Secretariat on the decisions of the above mentioned bodies. The Secretary General highlighted action taken by the Secretariat on some of the important decisions/suggestions as under:

2.3.2 As directed by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, the AARDO Secretariat approached the heads of the diplomatic missions of six member countries based in New Delhi, namely, Egypt, Ghana, Pakistan, Jordan, Republic of Korea and Zambia requesting them to kindly arrange to liaise with the concerned authorities in their respective governments to elicit a response on the (i) participation of the Honorary Regional Representative in the AARDO Conference and the meetings of the Executive Committee; and (ii) who would bear their expenses. The matter has been covered under agenda item 4 "Review of Activities (iii) Regional Offices.

2.3.3 As decided by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, His Excellency the High Commissioner of Mauritius & Chairman of the Liaison Committee and H.E. the Secretary General, AARDO called on Her Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines to India on 20 May 2016 and explained the activities of AARDO and the various benefits the Philippines could derive by rejoining the Organization.



2.3.4 As regards settlement of arrears, they suggested that the Government of the Philippines could organize some technical activities (workshop, training programme) in the country to adjust a part of the arrears and pay the balance in installments. However, the final decision in this connection rests with the Executive Committee and the AARDO Conference. Her Excellency mentioned that the Embassy would take up the issue with the different authorities in the country. It would, however, be difficult to reverse the decision taken by the Government. She further informed that she could impress upon the Government to rejoin AARDO if all its arrears were written off. The matter has been covered under agenda item 7 "Member Relations (IV) Reactivating membership of the Republic of the Philippines".

2.3.5 Regarding approval of the Executive Committee to raise the salary and allowances of the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General, these have been released with increased amount with effect from 03rd September 2015. About the increase in salary and allowances for the locally recruited AARDO Secretariat staff, the matter has been placed under Agenda Item 8 on "Service and Administrative Matters".

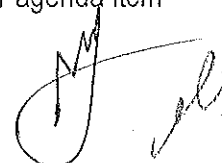
2.3.6 As regards acceptance of the offer of the esteemed Government of Bangladesh by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, to host the 68th Session of the Executive Committee, the meeting is being held in Dhaka. The Secretary General thanked the Government of Bangladesh for hosting the meeting.

2.3.7 With reference to the offer of the distinguished delegate from Bangladesh at the 67th Session of the Executive Committee to organize a training programme on rural development and poverty alleviation at the Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogra, AARDO, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and RDA have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the inaugural function of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee on 19 January 2017.

2.3.8 Subsequent to the signing of the MoU between AARDO and the International Sericultural Commission (ISC), Bengaluru on 1st September 2015, both the organizations jointly organized an international workshop-cum-exposure visit on "Potential of Sericulture and Silk Industry for Employment and Income Generation in AARDO Member Countries" in Mysore, India during 11-16 April 2016.

2.3.9 The suggestions of the Hon'ble Chairman of the Liaison Committee at the 68th Session of the Liaison Committee on increasing the membership of the Organization through sensitization and propagation and aggressive marketing of the immensely useful work being done by the Organization, etc., could be discussed under agenda item 7 "Member Relations".

2.3.10 The Hon'ble Deputy Minister, Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, Government of the Republic of Namibia called on the Secretary General on 10 September 2016 for discussions on matters of mutual interest and how Namibia could derive benefits from AARDO activities on becoming its member. The Secretariat made a presentation about AARDO, its objectives, vision, mission, organizational activities, etc. The matter has been dealt with under agenda item 7 "Member Relations II Membership of the Republic of Namibia".



2.3.11 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for his presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.3.12 The Executive Committee approved the follow-up actions taken by the AARDO Secretariat on the decisions/recommendations of the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, and the 67th and 68th Sessions of the Liaison Committee as presented in the Agenda Item.

4. Review of Activities (September 2015 – August 2016)

- I. HRD Activities
- II. Development Pilot Projects
- III. Regional Offices

(Agenda Item 4)

2.4.1 The Hon'ble President requested the Secretary General to briefly introduce the three sub-agenda items.


2.4.2 The Secretary General informed the Committee that the esteemed Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and AARDO have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for extension of the additional technical grant of US \$600,000 for the triennium 2015-2017. He informed that around 90-95 participants from member countries annually derive benefits from the additional technical grant.

2.4.3 With the signing of the MoU among AARDO, the esteemed Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, and RDA on 19 January 2017 for organizing technical activities at RDA, the number of AARDO centres of excellence has gone up to 27.

2.4.4 Explaining the activities undertaken by the Organization during the period September 2015 to August 2016, the Secretary General informed that 350 participants from AARDO member countries participated in International training programmes, APAP Forum, International/Regional//National level workshops, training-cum-workshops, study visits, deputation of experts, etc. The details of the participation are as under:

Sr. No.	Activity	No. of Participants
1.	International Training Programmes	202
2.	International/Regional//National level workshops, training cum workshops, study visits, deputation of experts, etc.	145
3.	Asia Pacific Agricultural Policy (APAP) Forum	03
	Total	350

The training programmes and international workshop-training programmes were organised at the centres of excellence located in Bangladesh, Egypt, Republic of China (Taiwan), India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Zambia.

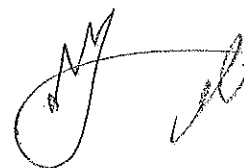


2.4.5 AARDO organised the following international workshop, Asia Pacific Agricultural Policy (APAP) Forum, International Workshop-cum-Training Programmes and regional Workshop/Training Programmes during the period under review:

- i. International Workshop-cum-Exposure Visit on "Potential of Sericulture and Silk Industry for Employment and Income Generation in AARDO Member Countries", in collaboration with the International Sericultural Commission (ISC), Bengaluru, India, in Mysore, India from 11-16 April 2016.
- ii. 14th Asia Pacific Agricultural Policy (APAP) Forum on "Regional Integration and Public Private Partnership for Sustainable and Inclusive Development", held in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 31 August to 1st September 2015. The Forum was organized by the Far East Regional Office of AARDO (FERO), Seoul, Republic of Korea in collaboration with Asia Pacific Agriculture Policy (APAP) Forum and Korea FAO Association. Two experts, one each from Republic of China (Taiwan) and Sri Lanka, deputed by AARDO, participated in the Forum and presented their papers.
- iii. 2016 Asia Pacific Agricultural Policy (APAP) Roundtable Meeting on "Sustainable Management of Water Resources for Agriculture and Food Security" at Beijing, China during 20-22 April 2016. It was organized by FERO in collaboration with Korea FAO Association, Global Agricultural Policy Institute and Renmin University of China. An expert from India was deputed by AARDO to present his paper at the Roundtable Meeting.
- iv. International Workshop-cum-Training Programme on "Governance in Micro Credit Delivery System for Rural Development", organized by AARDO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla at BARD from 23 February to 5 March 2016 and was attended by 29 participants from 14 member countries.
- v. International Workshop-cum-Training Programme on "Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation", organized by AARDO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Child Development, Government of Zambia at Mulungushi University, Kabwe during 09- 13 May 2016.

In addition, the following regional level, field training/national level programmes were organised during the period under review:

- i. The training programme for African Professionals on "On-Farm Water Use and Management" was organized by AARDO, in collaboration with the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) in Egypt, during 17-27 April 2016. It was attended by four young professionals from member countries.



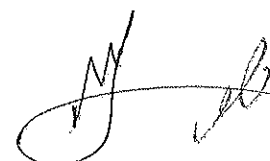
- ii. Regional Workshop on "Promotion of Micro- Enterprises for Sustainable Livelihood in Rural Areas" organised by AARDO in collaboration with the Establishment Division (Prime Minister's Office), Government of Pakistan and the Regional Office of AARDO for South and Central Asia, at AHK National Centre for Rural Development (AHKNCRD), Islamabad Pakistan, during 22-28 August 2016. It was attended by 20 participants.
- iii. National Training Workshop on "Sustainable Development Goals: Land Use, Food Security and Changing Pattern of Agriculture in Bangladesh", organized by BARD, Comilla during 29 November -03 December 2015. It was attended by 19 participants and 20 FGDs (Focussed Group Discussants) from different regions of Bangladesh.
- iv. National Workshop on "Capacity Building of Rural Women Leaders for Livelihood and Skill Development", organized by the Regional of Office of AARDO for North and Eastern Africa, Cairo, Egypt in Cairo from 16-18 February 2016. It was attended by 25 rural women leaders from 25 governorates of Egypt.

2.4.6 A Study Visit on "Role of ICTs in Agriculture/Rural Development and Governance" was organized by AARDO in collaboration with the Council of Agriculture, Government of the Republic of China in Taipei during 15-21 November 2015. It was attended by 16 delegates from 12 AARDO member countries. The Secretary General mentioned that it was for the first time that a study visit of such a high magnitude was organized in the history of AARDO.

2.4.7 Under AARDO's Study Visits Programme, a study visit for two member delegation comprising of the Hon'ble Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, Government of Mauritius and the Hon'ble Permanent Secretary in the Ministry was arranged in collaboration with the esteemed Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India during 19-26 September 2015. The main purpose of the study visit was to know more about poverty alleviation policies and programmes of the Government of India.

2.4.8 On the request of the esteemed Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (Cooperatives Division) of the Government of Mauritius, AARDO deputed an expert on "Restructuring and Consolidation for Cooperative Dairy Sector in Mauritius" for a period of two months during 28 April to 21 May 2016 under its deputation of Experts/Consultants Programme. Similarly, on the request of the esteemed Government of Sri Lanka, AARDO deputed three experts from Egypt to conduct International Training Programme on "Improved Technologies for Production Enhancement of Fruit Crops and Saline Affected Paddy" in Sri Lanka, during 23-26 March 2016.

2.4.9 During the period under review, a research study on "Water Demand Management in Drought Condition by Applying Organic Mulches on Wheat/Groundnut Rotated Crops to Enhance Soil Water and Nutrient-Holding Capacity", was conducted in Pakistan and the implementing agency, has submitted the final report of the study to AARDO during May 2016. This final report will be uploaded on the website of AARDO for the benefit of the member countries and concerned stakeholders.



2.4.10 The Secretary General also provided details about database of resource persons/experts, publications {English, Arabic and bilingual (English and Arabic)} brought out during the period under review, website, e-documentation and library services.

2.4.11 The Secretary General explained the current status of the following AARDO-assisted development pilot projects:

- i. "Establishment of E-Learning Centre" at AHK National Centre for Rural Development (AHK NCRD), Islamabad, Pakistan; and
- ii. Empowering Vulnerable Communities with Opportunities to Undertake Income Generating Ventures Intended to Mitigate Poverty and Food Insecurity, Zambia.

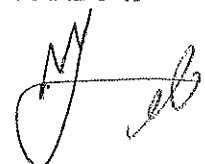
2.4.12 The Secretary General also briefly explained the activities carried out by the Regional Offices during the period under report.

2.4.13 As regards the issue of participation of the Regional Offices of AARDO in the AARDO Conference and the Executive Committee Meetings, the Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that as directed by the 18th General Session of AARDO Conference, held in Mauritius, on 6-9 April 2015, a comprehensive Paper on all aspects of the issue, including the cost implications was placed before the last Session of the Executive Committee for consideration and making recommendation to the 19th General Session of AARDO Conference. As desired by the Conference, the Secretariat also requested the six member country governments, hosting the regional offices, viz. Egypt, Ghana, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Pakistan and Zambia to kindly advise the Secretariat on (i) the participation of the Honorary Regional Representative in the AARDO Conference and the meetings of the Executive Committee; and (ii) who would bear their expenses.

2.4.14 The comprehensive paper was placed before the 67th Session of the Executive Committee held in Khartoum, Sudan from 21-23 February 2016. Since reply from the host country governments was awaited, the Executive Committee decided that the issue be taken up by the Ambassadors/High Commissioners of the Liaison Committee based in New Delhi to get a response from their respective capitals. Therefore, the Secretariat requested the Ambassadors/High Commissioners to elicit a response on the participation of the Honorary Regional Representative/Regional Office and bearing of the expenses on their participation. Till date, four countries, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Republic of Korea and Zambia responded. The Secretary General thereafter explained a summary of the responses received from these four countries for the kind information of the Executive Committee.

2.4.15 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for his presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.4.16 The distinguished head of delegation from Sudan informed that land, soil, water and environment are suitable for production in his country. However, the yield is low probably due to lack of technology for which the most important is poor quality of seeds. Therefore, he suggested to AARDO to carry out a research study on seed industry. Secondly, at times the rainfall in Sudan is erratic resulting in low yield. The distinguished delegate urged AARDO to



carry out a research study on water harvesting and supplementary irrigation using harvested water to avail the needed moisture to the grown plants. Thirdly, he also requested AARDO to do a research study on infrastructure development in Sudan and feasibility of establishing a seed bank as a model of pioneering project for all members of AARDO. This project will aim at the development of the traditional sector through the use of mechanization. The Hon'ble President advised him to send his proposal to the AARDO Secretariat for consideration.

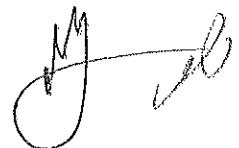
2.4.17 The distinguished head of delegation from Bangladesh suggested AARDO to undertake a research study for rural development of all its member countries in order to take a decision on what type of training or what type of collaboration or what type of visit, etc., would be beneficial to them.

2.4.18 Referring to the proposals made by the distinguished head of delegation from Sudan, the distinguished delegate from Bangladesh mentioned that Bangladesh has made some innovations like seeds, particularly potatoes. Earlier Bangladesh used to import seeds, but now it produces seeds. He requested the distinguished head to visit RDA, Bogra which has a big chunk of tissue agricultural land for producing seeds, especially tissue culture potatoes. Regarding the issue of irrigation in Sudan, if AARDO facilitates, he offered to visit Sudan to build up its irrigation and seeds facilities. Bangladesh possesses technical expertise in both the fields.

2.4.19 The distinguished head of delegation from India complimented AARDO for organizing programmes on diverse subjects of livelihood and poverty alleviation. He agreed to the proposal made by the head of delegation of Bangladesh for carrying out some kind of an assessment on the type of requirements of member countries pertaining to challenges on rural poverty, what are the approaches the countries are following, what type of approaches could become better across the world, etc. This would help AARDO further strengthen its presence. He laid stress on sharing knowledge and experience, etc., among member countries. He also suggested to AARDO to make use of information technology and website for sharing good practices across the world. Similarly, documentation of good practices through multi-media or audio-visual aids would go a long way in building up a better inventory of good practices in member countries.

2.4.20 The distinguished head of delegation from Zambia supported the recommendations made by the AARDO Secretariat on the participation of the regional offices in the AARDO Conference and the meetings of the Executive Committee. The issue could be reconsidered if the financial situation of AARDO improves in the future.

2.4.21 The distinguished head of delegation from Republic of China (Taiwan) commended the Secretary General and his team for doing the excellent work. Agriculture and rural development is the core activity of AARDO. The Government of Republic of China attaches great importance to addressing the issues of poverty alleviation, food security and climate change. He informed that his Government is willing to contribute to AARDO endeavours towards rural development and poverty alleviation in the African-Asian region and is ready share its expertise with other countries.



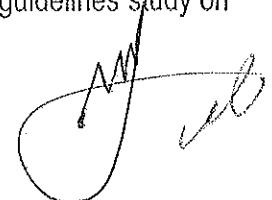
2.4.22 The distinguished delegate from India remarked that bearing the entire expenditure on the participation of regional representatives/regional offices in the AARDO Conference or Executive Committee meetings is not feasible due to AARDO's financial constraints. He therefore suggested for maintaining the *status quo* on the participation of regional representatives/regional offices. The host country governments could be advised to consider nominating regional offices in their delegations.

2.4.23 The Hon'ble President felt that there is a need to have assessment of needs of member countries and their actual requirements. Secondly, member countries may begin the process of identifying their best practices which could be shared. Thirdly, they may send their proposals to AARDO for assistance. The whole idea was to enhance better practices within the context of South-South cooperation. The proposals made could be considered for inclusion in the work programme of AARDO.

2.4.24 Responding to views expressed on the participation of regional representatives/regional offices in the AARDO meetings, the Secretary General explained the rationale behind their participation in AARDO Conference, Executive Committee meeting and the meeting of the Technical Programme Committee (TPC) of AARDO. The Secretariat has prepared the proposals based on the discussions in the AARDO Conference and responses from some host country governments of the regional offices. AARDO is not in a position to bear expenses on the participation of regional representatives/regional offices due to financial constraints. He supported the proposal to keep the *status quo*.

2.4.25 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon emphasized the need for evaluating the achievements of the regional offices vis-à-vis the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. Their achievements are mainly focused in their respective host countries. She suggested that the benefits of the activities of the regional offices be shared by the member countries. It was clarified by the Secretary General that the regional offices do try to project the image of AARDO in the countries lying within their respective regions. In this context, he cited the example of the visit of the Hon'ble Minister of Youth, Sport and Child Development, Government of Zambia to Botswana. The regional office for the Far East, Republic of Korea has been regularly making efforts to propagate the activities of AARDO in the countries lying in the region.

2.4.26 The distinguished delegate from Sudan suggested that the expenses on the participation of regional representatives/regional offices be met by the respective host country governments until the end of 2017 and thereafter by AARDO. An estimate could be made to know the cost of their participation in these events. He also proposed to AARDO to consider establishing a seed bank. He informed that in the past African Development Bank (ADB) had organized a workshop, which among other issues, laid emphasis on cereal production. AARDO may consider organizing a similar kind of workshop on the feasibility of seed bank and seek funding from the ADB. The Secretary General recalled that he had already discussed the idea of establishing the seed bank with the distinguished delegate some time ago. Welcoming the proposal, the Secretary General mentioned that AARDO always welcomes collaboration with international organizations and donor funding agencies in capacity building development and other activities. The distinguished delegate from Sudan promised to submit guidelines study on the proposed seed bank for consideration by AARDO.



2.4.27 The distinguished delegate from Republic of China (Taiwan) informed the Committee that the World Vegetable Centre, which Headquarters is located in his country, has the world's biggest seed bank of vegetables. The Centre also has a branch in the United Republic of Tanzania. In this connection, he assured that his Government would be happy to provide any assistance to member countries through the platform of AARDO. The statement was applauded by the Executive Committee.

2.4.28 There being no other comments, the **review of the activities for the period September 2015 - August 2016 as contained in the Agenda item, was adopted by the Committee. It also decided to approve the following recommendations** proposed by the AARDO Secretariat, for kind consideration of the 19th General Session of AARDO Conference scheduled to be held in Malaysia in early 2018:

- i. Allocating separate seats to the regional representatives will restrict their role and contribution to that of being the regional representatives. Presently, they contribute in the meetings as a part of their country government delegation, besides participating in as the regional representatives of AARDO. The country governments may, therefore, consider including them in their delegations in all the AARDO Conference and the Executive Committee meetings.
 - ii. AARDO is not in a position to provide more funds to the regional representatives for their participation in these meetings due to financial constraints.
 - iii. It is not out of place to mention here that out of the six honorary regional representatives of AARDO, except the regional representative for the Far East, Republic of Korea, the remaining five are working in their respective governments.
 - iv. In case the host country government of the regional office is not a member of the Executive Committee, the regional representative may be invited to the meetings as Observer. In this scenario, the expenses on his/her participation would be met by his/her government.
5. **Review of Membership Contribution (September 2015 – August 2016)**

- I. Review of Membership Contribution
- II. Scale of Membership Contribution for Full and Associate Eligible Countries/Organizations-A Proposal
- III. Raising of Additional Funds through Special Services

(Agenda Item 5)

I. Review of Membership Contribution

2.5.1 The Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that after 31st August 2016, the AARDO Secretariat has received membership contribution and arrears as per the following details:



i)	Contribution for the year 2016	<u>US \$</u>
	a) Jordan	12,000.00
	b) R.O Korea	88,000.00
	c) Nigeria	29,380.49(part)
	d) Palestine	9,000.00
	e) India	16840.00 (balance)
		<hr/>
	Total	155,220.49
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ii)	Arrears received during 2016	<u>US \$</u>
	a) Burkina Faso	2,340.95 (balance for the years 2008, and 2009 (part))
	b) Kingdom of Morocco	76,282.42 (balance for the year 2009 and for years 2010 to 2012)
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	Total	78,623.37

The above amount has been accordingly adjusted.

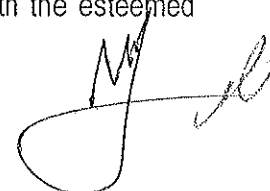
2.5.2 With this addition, the total amount received is US \$661,267.39 against the total membership contribution of US \$ 978,200.00 due for the year 2016. The contribution received is 67.61% of the total contribution. The amount remained unpaid as on 31st December 2016 is US \$ 316,932.61 which is 32.39% of the total contribution

2.5.3 In addition, membership contribution from the Sultanate of Oman amounting to US \$17,100 was received in advance for the year 2017 during the year 2016.

2.5.4 The Secretary General informed that out of a total annual contribution of US \$852,000 due for the year 2015, a sum of US \$ 584,620.16 i.e. 68.62% had been received from 16 member countries. The amount remained unpaid as on 31st December 2015 was US \$267,379.84 which was 31.38% of the total contribution. Further, an amount of US \$405,018.78 had been received from seven member countries towards realization of arrears of membership contribution during 2015.

2.5.5 The membership contribution from the Sultanate of Oman amounting to US \$17,100 and from the People's Republic of Bangladesh amounting to US \$12,000 was received for the year 2016 during the year 2015.

2.5.6 The Secretary General further informed the Committee that the total arrears included the membership contribution of Philippines towards AARDO amounting to US \$179,820 till the year 2012 as the country had sent communication for withdrawal from the membership of the Organization in 2011. In this regard, AARDO is in regular communication with the esteemed Government of the Philippines.



2.5.7 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for the presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.5.8 The distinguished delegate from Egypt informed the Committee that the financial year of the Government of Egypt starts from July and ends in June. This is different from the financial year of AARDO. The financial year of Egypt has not yet completed. There is a contradiction. The distinguished delegate wished to have a solution to the problem. It was clarified by the Secretary General that according to AARDO Constitution, the financial year of the Organization is from January to December.

2.5.9 The distinguished delegate from Sudan remarked that membership contribution is the main source of the Organization and therefore it is important that arrears are collected. Sudan has arrears of about US \$30,000. In this connection, the Central Bank of Sudan has been approached for transferring the arrears to AARDO. However, some problem cropped up. The distinguished delegate expressed the hope that the funds would be transferred to AARDO soon following the recent development of U.S.A lifting sanctions on Sudan.

2.5.10 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon informed that the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Lebanon has decided to pay the contribution and arrears. However, some problem occurred resulting in delay.

2.5.11 The Secretary General requested the member countries which are in arrears to pay their outstanding contribution so that the Organization could carry out its activities as contained in the work programme.

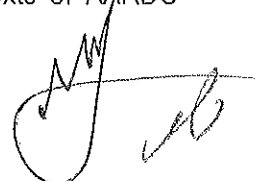
2.5.12 The Hon'ble President extended a warm welcome to the delegation from Nigeria which has arrived in the conference hall. The Secretary General joined him in welcoming the Nigerian delegation.

2.5.13 The head of the delegation from Nigeria expressed regrets for reaching late to the meeting due to some flight problems. He mentioned that his country is fully committed to the noble ideals of AARDO. Nigeria fully supports the Organization in its endeavours. Regarding arrears of membership contribution payable by Nigeria, the distinguished delegate mentioned that they are in touch with the concerned authorities to resolve the issue.

2.5.14 There being no other comments, the Executive Committee approved the review of membership contribution for the period September 2015-August 2016.

II. Scale of Membership Contribution for Full and Associate Eligible Countries/Organizations-A Proposal

2.5.15 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed that the scale of contribution for each country is decided by AARDO Conference from time to time on the basis of a formula with reference to the contribution payable by a country to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. He also explained the relevant texts of AARDO Constitution and Rules of Procedure for membership contribution.



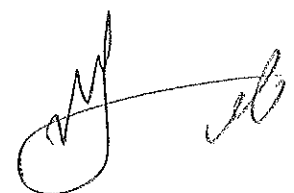
2.5.16 With regard to the membership contribution for eligible countries from the African-Asian region, the Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that the formula of Multiple Scale Pattern (MSP) of FAO was adopted in 1978 but the same was freezed at 1988-89 level and, thereafter it remained the only basis for calculation of membership contribution for all those countries who were members of FAO at that time. However, for the countries which became independent/joined FAO after 1988-89 such as Eritrea, Georgia, South Sudan, South Africa, Tajikistan, etc., it became difficult for AARDO Secretariat to calculate their annual membership contribution in the absence of any specific guidelines should they decide to join AARDO as its distinguished member. Accordingly, he suggested that for calculating the membership contribution of eligible African-Asian countries which were not member of FAO in 1988-89, the base year of FAO be applied with reference to the year of joining of FAO by eligible member country.

2.5.17 He further informed that as per Article II (1) (c) of AARDO Constitution, all those countries falling outside African-Asian region can join AARDO as an Associate member. By the application of this Article, countries in the continents of Europe, South and Central America, North America, Caribbean Ocean and Australasia are eligible to become Associate members of AARDO. In fact, category of Associate members contains both developed and developing countries. He stated that there are many countries in the world which support south-south cooperation and are interested in rural development. Such countries could immensely benefit AARDO if they decide to join in as associate member. Further, they could help AARDO in technical and financial ways. These countries could be classified as developed and developing countries. He recalled that he had met H.E the Ambassador of Netherlands to India last year and explored the possibility of Netherlands joining AARDO as an associate member. Netherland could help AARDO in dairy and fisheries sector. His Excellency the Ambassador wished to know the annual membership contribution of Netherlands on its joining AARDO as associate member.

2.5.18 With reference to the joining of AARDO by developing countries from South and Central America and Caribbean Ocean and Australasian continents as an Associate member, the Secretary General mentioned that the amount of membership contribution could be decided through mutual negotiation in the range of US \$ 12,000 to US \$ 75,000.

2.5.19 Continuing his presentation of the agenda item, the Secretary General informed that in accordance with relevant provisions in AARDO Constitution, any Organization or Foundation concerned with development of rural communities can join AARDO as an associate member. Further, for calculating the membership contribution of associate members which are not member of the United Nations and/or FAO, the amount of membership contribution payable would be determined through mutual agreement between the Secretary General and the concerned authorities. The decision thus arrived at would be put up to the Executive Committee for ratification.

2.5.20 The President thanked the Secretary General for his comprehensive presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

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2.5.21 The distinguished delegate from Nigeria supported the proposal for increasing the membership of AARDO by enrolling members from outside the African-Asian region. He proposed a system for countries outside Africa like full membership, sleeper membership and associate member of AARDO in order to encourage a kind of competition among them to pay membership contribution.

2.5.22 The distinguished delegate from Sudan suggested to enroll in AARDO major developed countries as Observer without paying anything and without any right to vote. However, when they get interested in attending AARDO programmes, they may be asked to pay an amount not less than US \$50,000 per programme. Those which are interested in supporting rural development of developing countries would join and pay based on their donation policy.

2.5.23 The distinguished delegate from Republic of China (Taiwan) placed on record his Government's support to the proposals made by the Secretary General to increase the membership of AARDO.

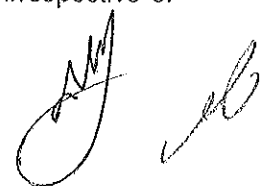
2.5.24 Appreciating the proposals made by the Secretary General to increase the membership of AARDO, the distinguished head of delegation of Sudan proposed that the Secretary General be authorized to negotiate and decide the amount of membership contribution of countries willing to join the Organization.

2.5.25 The distinguished delegate from Zambia supported the proposal made by the Secretary General to enroll members and associate members in AARDO. He urged the AARDO Secretariat to take initiative to bring on board maximum number of members.

2.5.26 The distinguished delegate from Bangladesh stated that there are about 97 countries in the African-Asian region and out of these only 31 are full members of AARDO. Whether AARDO can take initiative to involve all of them to come into its folds as members. Secondly, whether the privileges and rights of associate members of AARDO have been specified in the AARDO Constitution. Thirdly, what would be the role of the associate members and how AARDO would draw benefits from their associate membership.

2.5.27 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon stressed the need for inviting the prospective member countries within the African-Asian region. The joining of new members from outside the African-Asian region may result in new duties and burdens on AARDO.

2.5.28 Clarifying the issues raised by the distinguished participants, the Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that according to the Constitution of AARDO, any country/organization outside the African-Asian region could become a full or associate member of AARDO. The mandate and identify of the Organization would remain the same and there would be more members. Referring to the proposal of the distinguished delegate from Sudan, the Secretary General clarified that the negotiable amount for associate members is in the range of US \$12,000-75,000 per annum taking into consideration the developed and developing countries. According to the Constitution of AARDO, the Secretary General is fully competent to negotiate the amount of membership contribution. As an incentive to new members, they would pay the contribution fixed for a period of first three year, irrespective of any change in AARDO scale of contribution.

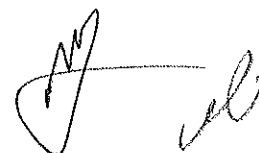
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2.5.29 The Executive Committee decided to make the following recommendations along with the list of countries contained in the annexures to the next General Session of AARDO Conference for confirmation. The Executive Committee approved that the Secretary General would follow the following guidelines while dealing with membership issues by virtue of powers conferred on him under the AARDO Constitution:

- A) For calculating the membership contribution of eligible member countries from African-Asian region who become independent after 1989 and wish to join as full member, the year of joining of FAO be applied as base year for membership contribution.
- B) The Secretary General may be authorized to negotiate the amount of annual Membership Contribution to be paid by each associate member country who wishes to join AARDO, without applying FAO formula of Multiple Scale Pattern. The negotiable amount be in the range of US \$ 12,000 - 75,000 per annum but this range can be open for the developed countries. The decision thus arrived at would be put up to the Executive Committee for ratification. This flexibility will help in getting more members in the Organization.
- C) For an apex level governmental or nongovernmental Organization/Foundation, interested in the development of the rural community, who wishes to become associate member of AARDO but not a member of UN and /or FAO, the amount of membership contribution payable be determined through mutual agreement between the Secretary General and the concerned authorities. The amount of contribution be in the range of US \$ 12,000 -75,000 per annum. The decision thus arrived at would be put up to the Executive Committee for ratification.
- D) As an incentive, new member would pay the contribution fixed for a period of first three year, irrespective of any change in AARDO scale of contribution.

III. Raising of additional funds through special services

2.5.30 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed the Committee that AARDO has a solid experience of more than half a century in African-Asian region in a variety of areas, including capacity building programmes, study visits, development pilot projects, documentation of information, etc. Besides, AARDO has a data bank of more than 120 experts and their services are utilized as and when required. With this in view, AARDO envisages entering into the areas of consultancy services required by any company/organization/corporation at national, regional and international level. This will help AARDO mobilize additional financial resources. In the past also, AARDO had raised additional resources by implementing activities on behalf of other organizations. He specifically referred to the request from the Government of Afghanistan to train 50 of their officials. Since Afghanistan is not a member of AARDO, the Organization is not in a position to raise funds by arranging training to their officials. He further mentioned that AARDO could raise funds through consultancy, e-documentation services, research studies, through advertisements in its publications and website, etc.



2.5.31 According to Article X of AARDO Constitution, *"The Executive Committee shall determine the procedure to raise, hold, invest and administer the fund and assets, movable and immovable of the Organization."* The Secretary General, therefore, requested the Executive Committee to consider allowing the AARDO Secretariat to raise additional funds by way of providing following services to various types of institutions including country governments, private companies etc., which are engaged in the field of agriculture and rural development:

- (a) Consultancy services to governments, institutions, organizations, private companies, corporations, Chamber of Commerce etc., in training/workshops/seminar/conference, infrastructure development, potential markets, information sharing, etc., for rural areas,
- (b) Deputation of Experts, Study Visits of Specialists, etc.,
- (c) Research Studies including Action Research,
- (d) Developing and Implementing Projects on Pilot Basis in Rural Areas,
- (e) e-Documentation Services,
- (f) Organizing Exhibitions,
- (g) Commercial advertisements in AARDO publications/website including sale of technical reports/research Journal etc.

2.5.32 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for the presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.5.33 The distinguished Head of delegation from Zambia, while supporting the proposal made by the Secretary General, wished to know how AARDO would strike a balance between assistance and services. He also enquired how AARDO would decide whether the country is eligible for services or for assistance.

2.5.34 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon wished to know whether the Secretary General has drawn any mechanism to implement the proposals. Agreeing to the observation, the Hon'ble President remarked that the mechanism must be there as well as a balance between services and assistance, as suggested by the distinguished delegate from Zambia to be taken into account.

2.5.35 Supporting the proposal put forth by the Secretary General, the distinguished delegate from Bangladesh mentioned that many international and even local organizations are following the practice of raising funds by offering their services. Further, there must be guidelines or roadmap which may be placed before the Conference for approval.

2.5.36 The distinguished delegate from Nigeria supported the proposals made by the Secretary General.

2.5.37 Responding to the above issues, the Secretary General clarified that AARDO would continue providing its services to member countries. The proposal is for non-members, organizations, private sector, corporates, etc., and there would be no extra financial burden on AARDO. As regards mechanism, he informed that AARDO would formulate a policy under which AARDO would negotiate with the other party (non-members, international/regional organizations, corporates, etc.) for providing services like consultancy, advertisements, deputation of experts, etc. He assured the Committee that all member countries of AARDO would continue enjoying the benefits free.



2.5.38 The distinguished delegate from Oman proposed that there should be redesigning of the programmes. AARDO may consider implementing big projects.

2.5.39 The Executive Committee considered the matter and **approved the matter subject to periodic review at interval of one year by the Executive Committee.**

6. Income and Expenditure - Review

- I. For the year 2015 (audited) and January-August 2016 (unaudited)
- II. Auditor's Report for the year 2015
- III. Comments of the AARDO Secretariat on the audit observations

(Agenda Item 6)

2.6.1 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed that as on 1st January 2015, AARDO started with a total amount of US\$ 1,243,434.

2.6.2 During the year 2015, an amount of US\$ 101,146 had been recorded as loss on conversion of currencies for the year. This was an accounting entry arisen due to valuation of Indian Rupees and Euro in US dollar as on 31st December 2015. He informed that AARDO maintains accounts in three currencies, namely, US Dollar, Euro and Indian Rupees to carry out its activities.

2.6.3 Under the 'Additional Capacity Building Programme by Government of India' the total expenditure incurred on issue of air tickets and others was of US\$ 46,855. The Secretariat has received US\$ 74,777 from the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India during the year 2015 towards reimbursement of airfare relating to previous year and part of year 2015. US\$ 6,046 was borne by the Secretariat under 'Additional Capacity Building Programme during 2015

2.6.4 The total income during the year 2015 was US\$ 1,128,254 including US \$ 100,000 towards surplus and savings from the previous years. The bulk of the income amounting to US\$ 996,029 (88.28 per cent of the total income) was from membership contribution. The other income amounting to US\$ 132,225 (11.72 per cent of the total income) was received from interest on deposits, miscellaneous income, sale proceeds of capital assets and surplus & saving from previous years.

2.6.5 The Secretary General further informed that the total expenditure incurred during the year 2015 was US\$ 982,404. The total amount spent on Work Programme during the year 2015 was US\$ 319,970 against the budgeted amount of US\$ 813,500. The activities under the Work Programme are organized in member countries on cost-sharing basis. In most of the cases, AARDO bears the international airfare of the participants and the local expenses like boarding, lodging, tuition fee, etc., are met by the host country government. The direct expenditure incurred by the Organization on the work programme is only a part of the overall expenditure. Though almost all proposed activities were carried out, yet the expenditure under the head was 39.33 per cent of total budgeted figure for the year 2015.



2.6.6 The Secretary General drew the attention of the Executive Committee to statements 'A' to 'E' in the agenda item showing head-wise budget and actual expenditure on various items. He informed various percentages of actual expenditure to budgeted amount. Expenditure incurred during the year, except few items was within the annual allocated budget and drew the attention of the Executive Committee for kind perusal on the table given in the agenda item showing over expenditure against the available budgeted amount.

2.6.7 The Executive Committee was further informed by the Secretary General that accounts for the period ended January-August 2016 have been compiled by the Secretariat and are ready. As on 1st January 2016, AARDO started with a total amount of US\$ 1,216,060.

2.6.8 An amount of US\$ 2,095 has been recorded as loss on conversion of currencies which is an accounting entry and has arisen due to valuation of Indian Rupees and Euro in US dollar as on 31st August 2016.

2.6.9 The total income during the period January-August 2016 was US\$ 600,697, including an amount of US\$ 66,667 towards surplus & saving from the previous years. The total expenditure incurred during the same period was US\$ 642,899. The Secretary General drew the attention of the Executive Committee to statements 'A' to 'E' in the agenda item showing head-wise budget and actual expenditure on various items.

2.6.10 The Secretary General also updated about the provisional income and expenditure for the year 2016 and various percentage of actual income and expenditure to budgeted amount for the year 2016.

2.6.11 The total amount available with the Organization as on 31st August 2016 was US\$ 1,104,125.

2.6.12 The Secretary General explained the auditors' report for the year 2015, including the comments of the Secretariat on the observation of the auditor for the said period.

2.6.13 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for his comprehensive presentation and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.6.14 The distinguished delegate from India pointed out that expenditure on work programme during the year 2016 was only about 23% which needed to be corrected. It was clarified by the Secretary General that during the year AARDO has accomplished its activities in collaboration with other organizations and host country governments. AARDO has signed many Memoranda of Understanding with many international and regional organizations and organized many activities in collaboration with them thereby saving a lot of funds. Therefore, such expenditure has not been reflected in the work programme.

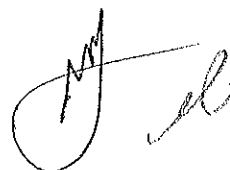
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2.6.15 The distinguished delegate from Nigeria appreciated the esteemed Government of India for providing additional technical contribution to AARDO for the triennium for the benefit of member countries, besides hosting the AARDO Secretariat. He urged the Government of India to consider providing accommodation for the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General in order to reduce personnel expenses. He also congratulated the management of AARDO for efficiently running the operations of the Organization. The distinguished delegate from India remarked that India, besides paying membership contribution of US \$141,000, also provided additional technical contribution of US \$200,000 per year and has also signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AARDO for extending the additional technical contribution for the triennium 2015-2017. In addition, the esteemed Government of India has also provided building for AARDO Secretariat.

2.6.16 The distinguished delegate from Malaysia mentioned that for the training programme at the Institute of Rural Advancement (INFRA), Malaysia, the budget allocated was not fully utilized. The number of participants was only 16 against the entitlement of 25 participants. She felt that there was a need to engage more people to participate. In response, the Secretary General clarified that due to some technical problems, the number of participants was less. However, subsequent to his meeting with the Hon'ble Minister for Rural and Regional Development, Government of Malaysia, the problem has been resolved. For the programme in 2017, the number of participants would be 25. Earlier, under an agreement between the esteemed Government of Malaysia and AARDO, Malaysia was offering 61 slots to AARDO for the benefit of member countries. However, the number was reduced to 25 slots. The Secretary General informed that during his meeting with the Hon'ble Minister, he requested him to reconsider the issue and the Hon'ble Minister assured to work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Malaysia.

2.6.17 The Secretary General thanked the distinguished delegate from Nigeria for raising the issue of permanent residence for the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General. He informed that the issue was discussed with the esteemed Government of India. However, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India informed that the esteemed Ministry of Urban Development has expressed its inability to provide land in Delhi. He still requests the esteemed Government of India to consider providing accommodation in the future.

2.6.18 The 68th Session of the Executive Committee approved the review of income and expenditure for the year 2015 (audited); income and expenditure for the period January – June 2016 (unaudited); and auditors' report for the year 2015 along with the comments of the Secretariat on the observations in the auditors' report, as contained in the Agenda Item and recommended that the same be placed before the AARDO Conference.



7. Member Relations (September 2015 – August 2016)

- I. Review of Member Relations including visits effected by Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General**
- II. Membership of the Republic of Namibia**
- III. Collaboration with International/Regional Organizations**
- IV. Reactivating membership of the Republic of the Philippines-Proposal
(Agenda Item 7)**

I. Review of Member Relations Including Visits Effected By Secretary General/Assistant Secretary General

2.7.1 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed the Committee that during the period under review, the esteemed Government of the Republic of Namibia applied for the membership of AARDO. The AARDO Secretariat has already initiated the process of admitting Namibia into the folds of AARDO as its distinguished member. With the admission of Namibia, the membership of AARDO would rise to 32 - 16 from Africa, 15 from Asia and one associate member.

2.7.2 AARDO employs different approaches such as correspondence, personal contacts, utilising its presence at the workshops, seminars, international forums, to invite and encourage prospective member countries in the African-Asian region to come into its folds. In line with this policy, during the period under review, AARDO invited the esteemed Governments of the Republic of Angola, State of Kuwait, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Turkey, Republic of Uzbekistan and Uganda to favourably consider joining the Organization as its members.

2.7.3 He further informed that during his visit to Sudan from 30 January to 3 February 2016, in connection with the organization of the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, he had called on the Hon'ble President, Ahfad University for Women (AUW), Omdurman and discussed matters of common interest. During discussions, the Hon'ble President expressed his University's willingness to join AARDO as its Associate Member. The AARDO Secretariat has since formally invited the esteemed University to join the Organization as associate member. A response from the University is awaited.

2.7.4 Further, the Regional Office of AARDO for the Far East, Republic of Korea distributed publication on "Fifty Years of Cooperation for Rural Transformation 1962-2012" to seven embassies of the prospective member countries located in Seoul as well as to the Under Secretary of Department of Agrarian Reforms, The Philippines and the Vice-Rector of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Indonesia to enable them to know more about the activities of AARDO.

2.7.5 In order to keep the prospective member country governments abreast with AARDO's activities, the AARDO Secretariat continued sending them AARDO publications like Newsletter, Annual Report, African-Asian Journal of Rural Development and other informative literature during the period under report. Further, the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General paid courtesy calls on the heads of diplomatic missions of prospective member countries in New Delhi in order to persuade them to impress upon their governments to join AARDO as its members.



2.7.6 Referring to his meeting with the Director General, Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP), Dhaka, Bangladesh on 23 August 2016 at AARDO Secretariat, the Secretary General informed that AARDO, CIRDAP and Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) would jointly organize a Round Table on Agricultural Insurance in February 2017.

2.7.7 H.E. the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives, Government of the Republic of Mauritius, paid a visit to AARDO Secretariat on 21 January 2016 for discussions on matters of mutual interest. The discussions focused on exploring ways and means for forging possible collaboration between the esteemed Ministry and AARDO. Some of the areas the Hon'ble Minister mentioned for possible collaboration with and support from AARDO included cooperatives other than sugarcane, dairy development and small and medium enterprises.

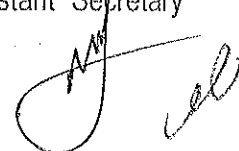
2.7.8 A high level delegation headed by H.E. the Governor of the El Gadarif State, Republic of the Sudan paid a visit to the AARDO Secretariat on 18 March 2016 and discussed El Gadarif State's future cooperation with AARDO. H.E. the Minister of Agriculture & Forestry and H.E. the Minister of Finance & Economy, El Gadarif State accompanied the Hon'ble Governor on the visit. His Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan to India was also present in the meeting. The discussions covered a wide range of subjects like establishment of AARDO's model village in the State, transfer of technology to the State, capacity building at grass roots, role of small and medium industries in State's economy, development of fishery sector, signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the University of El Gadarif and AARDO, etc.

2.7.9 A delegation from the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA), New Delhi, comprising its Chairman and the Director General called on the Secretary General on 7th April 2016 to hold discussions on forging collaboration and cooperation between the two organizations. The ICFA delegation again paid a visit to AARDO Secretariat and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Secretary General on 1st July 2016 for carrying out collaborative activities.

2.7.10 A 3-member delegation headed by the Secretary General, International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), New Delhi, called on the Secretary General on 13 August 2015 to explore the possibility of having cooperation and collaboration between ICID and AARDO. The Secretary General, ICID again paid a visit to AARDO Secretariat on 09 December 2015 and signed an MoU with the Secretary General.

2.7.11 The Secretary General also briefly explained the outcome of his visits to Republic of China (Taiwan), Egypt, Malaysia, The Philippines, Sudan and within India and those of the Assistant Secretary General's to Bangladesh, Pakistan and Turkey during the period under review.

2.7.12 The Secretary General further informed that the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee, while approving the Provisional Agenda of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee, urged the AARDO Secretariat to arrange for an item to be included in the agenda in respect of missions/visits effected by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary



General, the reason for same, cost incurred and benefits to AARDO. The Hon'ble President further mentioned that the Secretariat should submit a budget for consideration by the Executive Committee along with a proposed list of missions/visits.

2.7.13 He mentioned that the 18th General Session of AARDO Conference held in Mauritius on 6-9 April 2015, had already approved the technical work programme as well as budget estimates of the Organization for the triennium 2015-2017 and the visits undertaken by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General were based on the approval. In addition, the AARDO Secretariat received invitations from member countries, collaborating partners and development agencies, and the expenses on such visits were booked under different heads of budget of the triennium 2015-2017.

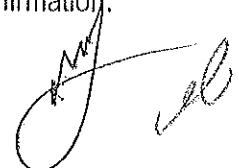
2.7.14 He also drew kind attention of the Executive Committee to the statement containing write up on the visits of the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General and the expenditure incurred during the period September 2015 – August 2016. He thereafter explained salient features of his and Assistant Secretary General's visits to countries, including the purpose expected benefits and total expenditure incurred thereon. He further informed that he and the Assistant Secretary General, in most of the cases have been travelling by economy class as against their entitlement of first/business class in an effort to maintain economy in expenditure.

II. Membership of the Republic of Namibia

2.7.15 The Secretary General informed that the esteemed Government of the Republic of Namibia has sent to the AARDO Secretariat on 11 July 2016 its Membership Application for Full Membership of AARDO with effect from 1st July 2016. He thereafter explained in details the relevant provisions pertaining to membership of AARDO, as enshrined under Article II "MEMBERSHIP" of AARDO's Constitution.

2.7.16 He further informed that since Namibia is a member of the United Nations, it is eligible for admission as a full member of AARDO in line with AARDO Constitution. Subsequently, in accordance with Clause 4 (b) of Article II of the Constitution of AARDO, the Secretariat on 27 July 2016 circulated among the member countries the request by the esteemed Government of Namibia for full membership of AARDO. They were requested to respond latest by 07 October 2016. It was further informed that in case no response is received by 07 October 2016, it would be presumed that admission of Namibia as a full member of AARDO is acceptable to the member country government. The Secretariat has received acceptance from the governments of Burkina Faso, R.O China (Taiwan), Republic of India, Republic of Iraq, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Republic of Mauritius, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Arab Republic of Egypt and Republic of Zambia till date.

2.7.17 Therefore, the Secretary General has admitted Namibia as a full member of AARDO with effect from 1st July 2016 in relation to Article 4(b) of the Constitution. Namibia's annual membership contribution has been fixed at the lowest scale of contribution i.e. US \$ 12,000. The admission of Namibia as a full member of AARDO will be reported to the 19th General Session of AARDO Conference scheduled to be held in Malaysia in 2018 for formal confirmation.



III. Collaboration with International/ Regional/National Organizations

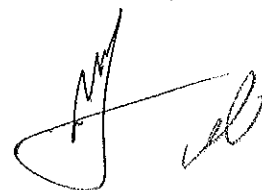
2.7.18 The Secretary General informed the Committee that one of the main functions of AARDO, as enshrined in its Constitution, is to collaborate with the appropriate international and regional organizations, including UN agencies, the national bodies, governmental or non-governmental, both in the developed and developing countries, for purposes of taking action to accelerate agriculture and rural development in the member countries. AARDO collaborated with the following international/regional/national organisations during the period September 2015- August 2016:

2.7.19 Subsequent to the signing of MoU by AARDO with the International Sericultural Commission (ISC), Bengaluru on 1st September 2015 for carrying out collaborative activities, they jointly organised an International Workshop-cum-Exposure Visit on "Potential of Sericulture and Silk Industry for Employment and Income Generation in AARDO Member Countries", in Mysore, India during 11-16 April 2016 for the benefit of AARDO member countries.

2.7.20 Following the signing of the MoU between AARDO and the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), New Delhi on 09 December 2015 for organising collaborative activities, the latter invited nominees from AARDO for a Training Programme for African Professionals on "On-Farm Water Use and Management", in Cairo, Egypt during 17-27 April 2016. The programme was attended by four young professionals from as many member countries. They were also given the opportunity to attend the 4th African Regional Conference on Irrigation and Drainage (ARCID) held in Aswan City, Egypt during 26-28 April 2016. Full expenses on the participation of AARDO-sponsored nominees were met by ICID.

2.7.21 The Secretary General also briefly explained the efforts by AARDO to forge collaboration with D-8 Organisation for Economic Cooperation (D-8), Istanbul, Turkey; Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) Dhaka, Bangladesh; etc.

2.7.22 He informed that during his visit to Republic of the Sudan from 30 January to 3 February 2016 in connection with the organisation of the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, he had met the Director General, The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and explored the possibility of collaborative activities. During the course of the discussions, the Bank agreed, in principle, to support a project to the tune of US \$200,000 in Gambia. Subsequently, the Secretary General held a meeting with H.E. the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Gambia to India, New Delhi and discussed the proposal for implementation of a project in Gambia with the support of BADEA. H.E. the Ambassador informed the Secretary General that he would approach his Government for a positive response in the matter. A response is awaited.



IV. Reactivating Membership of The Republic of the Philippines - Proposal

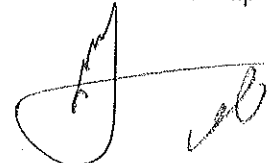
2.7.23 Referring to the decision of the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, the Secretary General informed that H.E. the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mauritius to India, and Hon'ble Chairman of the Liaison Committee and he called on Her Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines in New Delhi on 20 May 2016 and explained the activities of AARDO and the various benefits the Philippines could derive by rejoining the Organization. As regards settlement of arrears amounting to US \$179,820 they suggested that the esteemed Government of the Philippines could organize some technical activities to adjust a part of the arrears and pay the balance in installments. However, the final decision in this connection rests with the Executive Committee and the AARDO Conference.

2.7.24 He further informed that Her Excellency, while appreciating the activities of AARDO, mentioned that her Embassy would take up the issue of the Philippines rejoining the Organization with the different authorities in the country. Due to change in the Government, Her Excellency assured that she would take up the matter with the new Government.

2.7.25 In the meantime, the Hon'ble Undersecretary, Department of Agrarian Reforms (DAR), Government of the Philippines, in a communication dated 27 July 2016 to the Far East Regional Office of AARDO (FERO), Republic of Korea informed that he had attended a meeting organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Government of the Philippines, on the position of the Philippines Government to rejoin AARDO. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the DAR. The meeting, *inter alia*, decided that

- The Philippines Government would rejoin AARDO and remit its outstanding balance. With reference to the outstanding balance with AARDO, the meeting decided that DFA would review its International Commitment Fund (ICF) and determine whether the available savings may suffice to pay the outstanding balance.
- It was discussed to explore the possibility of requesting AARDO to increase write off percentage to 50% considering the current austerity measures of the current Administration.
- It was agreed that DAR would now be the focal agency to represent the Philippines Government in AARDO in view of its mandate of rural development,
- The matter of DAR rejoining AARDO will be discussed during the NCI meeting scheduled to be held on 1st August 2016.

2.7.26 Subsequently, the Hon'ble Undersecretary, DAR, in an e-mail communication of 6 September 2016 forwarded to FERO the National Convergence Initiative (NCI) Resolution on "Endorsing the Renewal of Membership of the Government of the Philippines (GOP) to AARDO and designating the DAR as the lead agency to represent the GOP to AARDO". Once the Resolution is signed by the competent authorities, it would be forwarded to the DFA, which will then officially transmit the Philippines Government's position to renew its membership in AARDO, including the indication of payment of their arrears.



2.7.27 The Secretary General informed that while welcoming the Resolution which clearly signified the esteemed Government of the Philippines' willingness to re-join AARDO, the Secretary General vide his letters dated 15 September 2016 and 31 October 2016 informed the Hon'ble Undersecretary that the matter relating to increasing the write off to 50 per cent of outstanding balance, would be placed before the 68th Session of the Executive Committee, The Hon'ble Undersecretary was urged to forward a formal proposal from his esteemed Government for the write off.

2.7.28 The Secretary General briefly touched upon the significant role the Philippines had played in the formation of AARDO as well as its participation in the organizational activities of AARDO. He urged the Executive Committee to favourably consider recommending increase in the write off from 30% to 50% to the 19th General Session of AARDO Conference as the rejoining of the Philippines in AARDO would be mutually beneficial.

2.7.29 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.7.30 The distinguished delegate from Republic of China (Taiwan) informed that his delegation wishes to warmly welcome the Republic of Namibia into the folds of AARDO. He was joined by the distinguished delegate from Nigeria in welcoming Namibia into AARDO family.

2.7.31 The distinguished delegate from Oman informed that his Government has sent a communication to AARDO Secretariat welcoming Namibia in the Organization. However, Oman's name does not figure in the agenda item containing list of countries which have given consent to the membership of Namibia.

2.7.32 The distinguished delegate from Nigeria remarked that AARDO is a very active Organization and the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General may travel in business or first class. This would also help projecting a good image of the Organization. Referring to the visit of the Assistant Secretary General to Turkey to attend the workshop on "Exchange of Information on Rural Tourism Policies between D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) and the Agricultural and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI), he remarked that rural tourism is one of the effective ways to tackle poverty. He advised AARDO to continue its collaboration with D-8. He believed that AARDO would tap the field of rural tourism and develop capacity of D-8 as well as of AARDO. Rural Tourism is a good income earner.

2.7.33 The distinguished delegate from Bangladesh stated that he fully agrees with the distinguished delegate from Nigeria that the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General should travel in business or first class. Secondly, Rural Tourism is good for alleviating poverty



2.7.34 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon appreciated the steps taken by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General for the benefit of AARDO during the period under review. She remarked that travel status is not significant and based on the distance to be travelled, the travel class could be determined.

2.7.35 The Hon'ble President informed that the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary are entitled first class and business class respectively. However, they travel by economy class by personal choice in the interest of the Organization.

2.7.36 The distinguished delegate from Sudan thanked the Secretary General for bringing the Philippines back into the folds of AARDO. He urged the Committee to recommend the increase in the write off from 30% to 50% to the 19th AARDO Conference.

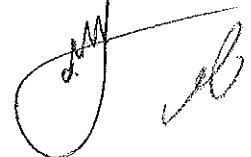
2.7.37 The distinguished delegate from India mentioned that the Philippines had played a significant role in the formation of AARDO and had been the President and the Vice-President of AARDO in the past. He, therefore, felt that the proposal to increase the write off of arrears from 30% to 50% may be supported by the Executive Committee. The distinguished delegate from Bangladesh while supporting the proposal to increase the write off of arrears from 30% to 50% keeping in view the pioneering role the country had played in the past in the activities of AARDO, wished to know the reasons for the withdrawal.

2.7.38 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon pointed out that the issue of the rejoining of the Philippines in the Organization had been discussed at many forums. About the increase in the write off from 30% to 50%, she wondered whether the country has any poverty. Further, she cautioned that the writing off of the arrears may not become a precedent for other countries which are in arrears.

2.7.39 The distinguished delegate from Zambia wished to know if there were any rules or precedent in the past as far as waiving off of the arrears was concerned.

2.7.40 The Secretary General informed that the Government of Philippines did not give any reason, but informed unofficially that due to financial reasons withdrew from some International Organizations. He was informed that the 53rd Session of the Executive Committee held in Damascus, Syria in September 2005 formed a Sub-Committee to propose future policy for the recovery of arrears, including the case of the Republic of Iraq and its report may be placed before the 55th Session of the Executive Committee. The Sub-Committee met at the AARDO Secretariat in March 2006 and discussed in details the issue of settlement of arrears. It placed the countries in the following three categories with separate policy:

- Category I: Countries which have suffered civil strife, social unrest, economic sanctions and wars but have the potential to settle the arrears in the future;
- Category II: Countries which have suffered civil strife, social unrest, economic sanctions and war for a long period but do not have the potential to settle their outstanding arrears in full; and
- Category III: Countries where there are no apparent reasons for non-payment of arrears. Efforts should be made to persuade them to pay their outstanding arrears.



The Sub-Committee arrived at the following range of percentages for the writing off of arrears:

- From 30% to 50% for countries falling under categories I and II taking into consideration the economic potential of each country;
- For countries falling under category III, it would be negotiable individually.
- The maximum period for the recovery of the outstanding arrears should be of two trienniums starting from 2006-2008, or the period could be negotiated between the Secretary General and the country concerned within this prescribed period.
- Country governments could consider organizing some technical activities and paying airfare and the expenses so incurred will be partially adjusted against their arrears.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committee were approved by the 16th General Session of AARDO Conference held in New Delhi in 2009.

2.7.41 There being no other comments, the Executive Committee:

- i. **Approved the Review of Member Relations for the period September 2015 to August 2016, including the visits effected by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General.**
- ii. **Took note of the admission of Namibia in AARDO and recommended the same to the 19th General Session of AARDO Conference for formal confirmation.**
- iii. **Approved the collaborative activities undertaken by AARDO with international, regional and national organizations during the period under review.**
- iv. **Accepted the request of the esteemed Government of the Republic of the Philippines (subject to receipt of formal request from the Government) to increase the waiving off of the percentage of arrears from 30% to 50% and decided to recommend the same to the 19th AARDO Conference.**

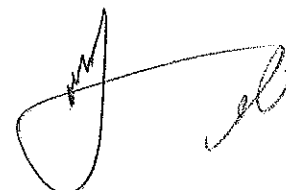
8. Service and Administrative Matters

- I. **Terms and Conditions of the service contract of the Assistant Secretary General, AARDO**
- II. **Revision of salary and allowances of locally recruited AARDO staff
Budget Estimates for the Triennium 2015-2017**

(Agenda Item 7)

- I. **Terms and Conditions of the service contract of the Assistant Secretary General, AARDO**

2.8.1 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed that Dr. Manoj Nardeosingh, the nominee from the Republic of Mauritius, was appointed by the 64th Session of the Executive Committee held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 21-24 October 2013 as Assistant Secretary General, on the terms and conditions approved by the 60th Session of the Executive



Committee held at Muscat, Sultanate of Oman during 17-19 October 2010, and with the amendments pertaining to the residential accommodation as per the decision of the 63rd Session of the Executive Committee, held at Lusaka, Republic of Zambia during 02-05 October 2012. The tenure of the incumbent Assistant Secretary General is up to 13 February 2018.

2.8.2 He further informed that the general terms and conditions of service and the requirements regarding age, qualification, experience, etc., for the post of new Assistant Secretary General are based on the terms and conditions of service of incumbent Assistant Secretary General approved by the 60th Session of the Executive Committee and subsequent amendments by the 63rd Session of the Executive Committee. The salary and allowances of the Secretary General were revised by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee held in Khartoum, Sudan during 21-23 February 2016. The terms and conditions as contained in the agenda item will incorporate all these amendments.

2.8.3 After approval of the terms and conditions, all member countries would be requested to nominate suitable candidates fulfilling the requirements regarding age, qualifications, experience, etc., for the post.

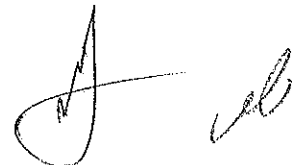
2.8.4 The Secretary General informed that as proposed by the esteemed Government of Malaysia, the next (69th) Session of the Executive Committee will be held sometime in the first quarter of the year 2018 in Malaysia. However, the tenure of the incumbent Assistant Secretary General is up to 13 February 2018. Therefore, it is proposed to hold a Special Session of the Executive Committee sometime in New Delhi in October 2017 to finalize the appointment of the new Assistant Secretary General. He also explained the sequence of events (time frame) leading to the appointment of the Assistant Secretary General.

2.8.5 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for his presentation of the agenda item and invited observations and comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.8.6 The Executive Committee approved the followings:

- i. **Terms and conditions of service of the new Assistant Secretary General including revision of salary and allowances approved by the 67th Session of the Executive Committee.**
- ii. **The requirements regarding age, qualifications, experience, etc., as contained in the agenda item.**
- iii. **Authorised the Secretary General to invite suitable nominations from all the member countries.**
- iv. **Approved the sequence of events (time frame) leading to the appointment of the Assistant Secretary General as placed at Annexure III.**
- v. **Holding of the Special Session of the Executive Committee sometime in October 2017 in New Delhi to elect the Assistant Secretary General.**

*Eligible
Feb 2017*



II. Revision of salary and allowances of locally recruited AARDO staff
Budget Estimates for the Triennium 2015-2017 (Revised)

2.8.7 Giving a background of the agenda item, the Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that the existing pay scales of the locally recruited employees in the AARDO Secretariat were approved by the 57th Session of the Executive Committee held in New Delhi during 04-05 January 2009. The scales came into effect from 1st July 2008.

2.8.8 The revision of salary and allowances was discussed at the 66th Session of the Executive Committee held in the Republic of Mauritius on 09 April 2015 and the Special Session of the Executive Committee held in New Delhi on 1st July 2015.

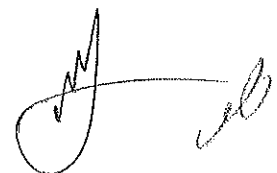
2.8.9 The 67th Session of the Executive Committee held in Sudan during 21-23 February 2016 revised the salary and allowances of the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General effective from 03 September 2015. It directed the AARDO Secretariat to place an agenda item on the revision of the salary and allowances of the locally recruited AARDO Secretariat staff before the 68th Session of the Executive Committee, in light of the implementation of the Report of the 7th Pay Commission by the esteemed Government of India for its employees.

2.8.10 The Secretary General further informed the Executive Committee that the esteemed Government of India has already implemented the report of the 7th Pay Commission by revising salary of its employees with effect from 1st January 2016.

2.8.11 The existing salary and allowances in the AARDO secretariat to locally recruited staff include Basic Pay, Grade Pay, Contributory Provident Fund (CPF), Dearness Allowance (DA), House Rent Allowance (HRA), Medical Reimbursement/Allowance, Transport Allowance (Tpt.), Gratuity, Insurance, Education Grant, Home Leave Travel Concession (LTC), Earned Leave (Leave Encashment), etc.

2.8.12 Based on the 7th Pay Commission Report of the esteemed Government of India for its employees, the salary and allowances of the locally recruited Secretariat staff have been worked out as under to be made effective from 1st January 2016:

- a. The provisions proposed under 'Emoluments' in the current budget are for existing personnel along with provision for future increments, etc.
- b. The estimates for the emoluments have been worked out based on the existing filled posts;
- c. Provision for bonus has been made during the year 2017;
- d. The estimates for the 'others' have been worked out on the presumption that all posts will remain filled up during the remaining period of the triennium 2016-2017, depending upon the recruitment for the staff;
- e. Provision has been made for the payment of dearness allowance under the head 'emoluments'.



2.8.13 He also explained the pay fixation in the new pay structure by adopting the fitment of each employee in the new pay matrix by multiplying basic pay on the date of implementation (1st January 2016) by a factor of 2.57.

2.8.14 Citing an example, he informed that individual impact of the pay revision on a Senior Employee in the Secretariat works out to 28.71% and for all local staff it is 27.39%.

2.8.15 The Secretary General informed the Executive Committee that the budget estimates for the triennium 2015-2017 have already been approved by the 18th AARDO Conference, held in Mauritius in April 2015 at deficit of US\$ 282,260 which was 7% to the budgeted income. The estimates included provision for the emoluments which have been worked out on the basis of the then filled posts i.e. two international posts and 36 local staff posts.

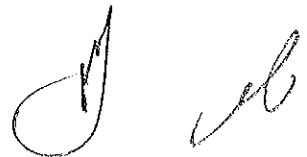
2.8.16 He further informed that three local staff relinquished their posts during the first half of 2016. Also the salary of Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General has been revised with effect from 03rd September 2015.

2.8.17 The proposed increase in the salary and allowances during the triennium 2015-2017 is US\$ 201,308. After inclusion of the pay revision and number of staff as proposed in the agenda item, the revised budgeted deficit for the triennium 2015-2017 would be US \$544,994 (13% of total budgeted income) against the current deficit for triennium 2015-2017 i.e. US \$282,260 994 (7% of total budgeted income).

2.8.18 The Secretary General further informed the Executive Committee that as per Staff Rule 9.2.2 the members of the staff employed in the AARDO Secretariat would be entitled, on relinquishing their respective posts, to receive gratuity for continuous satisfactory service rendered to the Organization. Accordingly at the close of each year, the approximate amount of liability of AARDO for the payment of Gratuity has been assessed and transferred to Gratuity Fund of AARDO. Gratuity is payable to all staff in the Secretariat for service rendered for more than one (1) year on the last pay drawn. Accordingly, an additional fund of US\$ 188,200 is required to top up the current gratuity fund in respect of the Secretariat local staff.

2.8.19 The distinguished delegate from India informed that the Government of India has implemented the report of 7th Pay Commission but set up a 'Committee on Allowances' to examine the allowances except Dearness Allowance. He suggested that AARDO may also adopt the pay revision except allowances which are under review by the Government of India.

2.8.20 The distinguished delegate from Nigeria remarked that in order to retain competent and suitable staff in AARDO, minimum duration of service may be five year to become eligible for gratuity. The proposal was further supported by the distinguished delegates from Sudan and Zambia.



2.8.21 After detailed deliberations, the Committee decided the following:

- a. To implement the revised pay scales for locally recruited employees in AARDO Secretariat with effect from 01 January 2017 as contained in the Agenda Item. Contributory Provident Fund, Dearness Allowance and Earned Leave will be governed with revised pay scales. However, the existing Medical Allowance/Reimbursement and Group Insurance will continue without any change;
- b. To await the implementation of allowances, namely, House Rent Allowance, Transport Allowance and Education Grant by the Government of India before the Executive Committee takes a decision; and
- c. Liaison Committee shall examine the issue relating to the Gratuity and report its findings to the next session of Executive Committee.

9. Ratification of Mutual Collaboration and Assistance Agreements (MCAA)
(Agenda Item 8)

2.9.1 Introducing the agenda item, the Secretary General informed the Committee that AARDO signed two Memoranda of Understanding with the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), New Delhi on 9 December 2015 and with the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA), New Delhi on 1st July 2016 for carrying out collaborative activities. He requested the Executive Committee to ratify these MOUs.

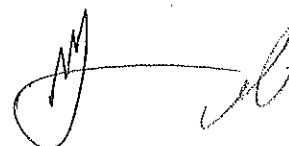
2.9.2 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for the presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.9.3 The distinguished delegate from Lebanon remarked that it would facilitate matters if the copies of the original Memoranda of Understanding depicting signatures and stamps are placed before the Executive Committee for ratification. The Hon'ble President stated that he agreed to the suggestion.

2.9.4 The Executive Committee ratified the Memoranda of Understanding signed by AARDO with the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), New Delhi on 9 December 2015 and with the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA), New Delhi on 1st July 2016 for carrying out collaborative activities.

10. Executive Committee: 69th Session – Date(s) *(Agenda Item 10)*

2.10.1 The Secretary General informed the Committee that as per relevant Rules of the Rules of Procedure of AARDO, the Executive Committee was required to meet at least three times in between two consecutive General Sessions of the AARDO Conference. Therefore, the next Session of the Executive Committee, i.e. the 69th would be due to be held some time during 2017.



2.10.2 He further informed that the 18th General Session of AARDO Conference, held in Mauritius on 6-9 April 2015, had accepted the offer of the esteemed Government of Malaysia to host the next (19th) AARDO Conference in 2017. However, the distinguished delegate from Malaysia at the 67th Session of the Executive Committee, held in Khartoum, Sudan on 21-23 February 2016, while thanking the 18th AARDO Conference for kindly accepting his Government's offer to host its 19th Session in 2017, had indicated that his country would hold the sessions of AARDO Conference and the Executive Committee in the beginning of 2018 due to other international commitments in 2017.

2.10.3 Thus, in accordance with the relevant Rule of Rules of Procedure of AARDO, the 69th Session of the Executive Committee will be held before the beginning of the Conference at its venue and the 70th Session of the Executive Committee will be held immediately after the close of the Conference in Malaysia. The exact dates of holding the Conference and Executive Committee meetings would be finalized by the Secretary General in consultation with the host government at the appropriate time.

2.10.4 The Hon'ble President thanked the Secretary General for presentation of the agenda item and invited comments from the distinguished delegates.

2.10.5 The distinguished delegate from Malaysia reconfirmed Malaysia as the host of the 19th AARDO Conference. Malaysia looks forward to working with AARDO for the smooth conduct of the Conference.

11. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair *(Agenda Item 11)*

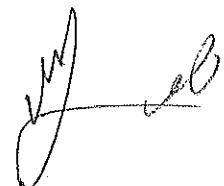
2.11.1 No item came up for discussion under the agenda item.

12. Approval of the Summary Report *(Agenda Item 12)*

2.12.1 The draft of the Summary Report incorporating the main points of deliberations, conclusions and decisions of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee prepared by the AARDO Secretariat was circulated among the distinguished delegates of the Committee. After consideration of the draft summary report by the Committee, necessary corrections and alterations, as suggested by the distinguished delegates, were made in the draft, which was **adopted by the Session.**

Closing Remarks

2.12.2 The Hon'ble President in his closing remarks stated that the proceedings of the 68th Session of the Executive Committee were held in a very cordial and friendly environment. The Executive Committee was able to take the decisions with consensus. He thanked all the distinguished delegates for their cooperation. He expressed his profound thanks to the esteemed Government of Bangladesh for according distinguished delegates a warm welcome and all courtesies. He thanked the Vice-Presidents of Executive Committee from Africa and Asia for their useful contributions.



2.12.3 The Hon'ble President extended his thanks to the Secretary General and the Secretariat staff for their efforts. He thanked all those who worked behind the scene in making the meeting a success.

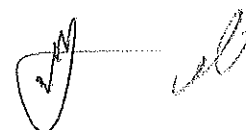
2.12.4 Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh mentioned that it was a privilege for Bangladesh to host the Session of the Executive Committee. Bangladesh would be happy to host AARDO Conference or the Executive Committee meeting if an opportunity is provided to it.

2.12.5 He expressed his thanks to the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee for very ably guiding the deliberations of the Session. He also thanked the Secretary General and the AARDO Secretariat staff for their hard work. He concluded his remarks by wishing the distinguished delegates a safe journey back home.

2.12.6 His Excellency Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin, Secretary General, in his remarks, on behalf of the distinguished members of the Executive Committee, on behalf of the AARDO Secretariat and on his own behalf, conveyed his profound thanks to the esteemed Government of Bangladesh for hosting the 68th Session of the Executive Committee and for making excellent arrangements and extending nice hospitality and courtesies to all. He was grateful to His Excellency Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Minister, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh, for very kindly sparing invaluable time despite his busy schedule to inaugurate meeting on 19 January 2017. He extended his thankfulness to H.E. Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman Ranga, MP, State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh for sparing invaluable time to grace the inaugural function as Special Guest.

2.12.7 He extended his heartfelt thanks to Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (National Development Unit), Government of Mauritius, and Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee of AARDO for very ably presiding over the Session. The Secretary General was also thankful to the Hon'ble Vice Presidents of the Executive Committee from Africa and Asia for their whole-hearted cooperation. He thanked all the distinguished delegates for taking pains to come all the way to attend the meeting in Dhaka. He also thanked H.E. the High Commissioner for Mauritius to India, and Hon'ble Chairman of the Liaison Committee of AARDO, and H.E. the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Sudan to India for attending the meeting. The discussions were very pragmatic, objective and showed the dedication of the distinguished delegates to the welfare of the rural poor.

2.12.8 The Secretary General profusely thanked Dr. Prosanta Kumar Roy, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh for overseeing all the arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of the meeting. The Secretary General was also thankful to Mr. Anand Chandra Biswas, Additional Secretary (Planning & Development), Rural Development and Cooperative Division, Ministry of LGRD & Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh for attending the meeting. He thanked Mr. M.A. Matin, Director General, Rural Development Academy, Bogra for being livewire throughout the session and for looking after the minute details of all the arrangements.



2.12.9 He was also thankful to the distinguished delegates from the Far East Regional Office of AARDO, Republic of Korea for attending the meeting as Observer.

2.12.10 He stated that the field visit to Panjankhara village, Manikgonj Sadar in Manikgonj District on 21 January 2017 was a unique experience for the distinguished delegates and interaction with the rural people was very informative and interesting. The visit to the village to study the functioning of the project "One House One Farm" was very enlightening and useful. He extended his thanks to the organisers for making excellent arrangements for the field visit.

2.12.11 The Secretary General highly appreciated the hard work and efforts put in by the officials of the different ministries and departments of the Government of Bangladesh for the success of the meeting. He was thankful to the Hotel Management for ensuring the smooth conduct of the meeting and making comfortable distinguished delegates' stay at the hotel.

2.12.12 He remarked that it is a matter of gratification that the Organization is moving ahead to achieve its noble objectives as enshrined in its Constitution. He expressed the hope that with the generous support of the member countries, AARDO would continue scaling newer heights in the years to come.

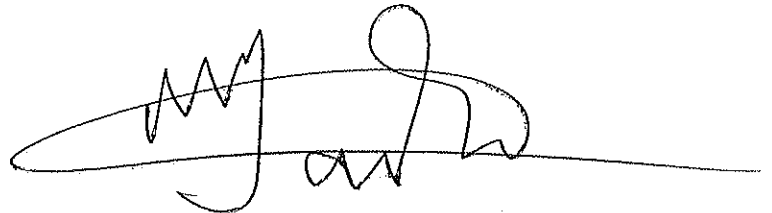
2.12.13 The Secretary General was grateful to the media – both press and electronic – for giving wide coverage to AARDO and the Executive Committee meeting.

2.12.14 The Secretary General concluded his remarks by wishing the distinguished delegates a safe journey back home.

2.12.15 There being no further business to transact, the Hon'ble President of the Executive Committee declared the 68th Session of the Executive Committee as closed at 7.00 PM.



Eng. Wassfi Hassan El-Sreihin
Secretary General
AARDO



Mr. Oomaduth Jadoo
Permanent Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
(National Development Unit)
Government of the Republic of Mauritius, and
Hon'ble President of the Executive
Committee of AARDO

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B. OBSERVER

XII. REGIONAL OFFICE OF AARDO FOR THE FAR EAST (FERO), R O Korea

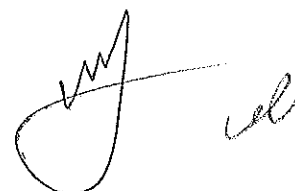
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Approved Agenda

1. **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda**
2. **Adoption of Reports**
 - Liaison Committee : 66th Session (26 August 2015)
 - : 67th Session (22 March 2016)
3. **Follow-up Action on Decisions/Recommendations**
 - I. Executive Committee : 67th Session (21-23 February 2016)
 - II. Liaison Committee : 67th Session (22 March 2016)
 - : 68th Session (24 August 2016)
4. **Review of Activities (September 2015 – August 2016)**
 - I. HRD Activities
 - II. Development Pilot Projects
 - III. Regional Offices
5. **Review of Membership Contribution (September 2015 – August 2016)**
 - I. Review of Membership Contribution
 - II. Scale of Membership Contribution for Full and Associate Eligible Countries/Organizations-A Proposal
 - III. Raising of Additional Funds through Special Services
6. **Income and Expenditure - Review**
 - I. For the year 2015 (audited) and January-August 2016 (unaudited)
 - II. Auditor's Report for the year 2015
 - III. Comments of the AARDO Secretariat on the audit observations
7. **Member Relations (September 2015 – August 2016)**
 - I. Review of Member Relations including visits effected by Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General
 - II. Membership of the Republic of Namibia
 - III. Collaboration with International/Regional Organizations
 - IV. Reactivating membership of the Republic of the Philippines-Proposal



8. **Service and Administrative Matters**
 - I. Terms and Conditions of the service contract of the Assistant Secretary General, AARDO
 - II. Revision of salary and allowances of locally recruited AARDO staff
Budget Estimates for the Triennium 2015-2017 (Revised)
9. **Ratification of Mutual Collaboration and Assistance Agreements (MCAA)**
10. **Executive Committee: 69th Session - Date(s)**
11. **Any other matter with the permission of the Chair**
12. **Summary Report - Approval**

Two handwritten signatures in black ink are located to the right of the list items. The first signature is on the left, and the second, larger signature is on the right.

Sequence of events (time frame) leading to the appointment of Assistant Secretary General, AARDO

1. Approval of the terms and conditions by the 68th Session of the Executive Committee on
↓ **19-21 January 2017**
2. Letters inviting nominations from full members to be issued by AARDO on or before
↓ **28 February 2017**
3. Receipt of nominations in the AARDO Secretariat on or before
↓ **< 30 May 2017**
4. Compilation of the nominations in the AARDO Secretariat on or before
↓ **< 15 July 2017**
5. Issue of formal notice for the Special Session of the Executive Committee on or before
↓ **01 August 2017**
6. Circulation of agenda for the Special Session of the Executive Committee on or before
↓ **<01 September 2017**
7. Meeting of Special Session of the Executive Committee to elect the new Assistant Secretary General on or before
↓ **< 15 October 2017**
8. Issue of offer by the AARDO Secretariat on or before
↓ **< 30 October 2017**
9. Assuming the office of the Assistant Secretary General by the new incumbent on
↓ **<14 February 2018**

