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## **REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROPOSAL FOR A PERMANENT PROCEDURE TO SELECT THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**PREPARED BY: THE CHAIR OF THE SMALL DRAFTING GROUP**

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### **PURPOSE**

To seek the Commission' agreement to a revised proposal for a permanent procedure to select the IOTC Executive Secretary based on Annex 1 of this paper.

### **BACKGROUND**

At its annual session in 2021, the Commission adopted a procedure for the recruitment of the IOTC Executive Secretary (IOTC-2021-S24-R, Appendix 5).

Acknowledging that the IOTC Executive Secretary is appointed by the Director General FAO (IOTC Agreement VIII.1) and the recruitment procedure must be consistent with the FAO's Basic Texts, the Commission requested the Chairperson to forward the adopted procedure to the Independent Chairperson of the Council for his concurrence before it is submitted to the FAO Council for approval. The Commission also requested that, if required, the IOTC Chairperson and the Chairperson of the Small Drafting Group would liaise between the FAO and the Commission's Heads of Delegations on any further amendments that might be proposed from FAO's consideration of the procedure.

Following the Commission meeting, the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) identified three outstanding issues in the newly adopted process. These were discussed at a meeting of the ICC, the FAO Legal Council, the IOTC Chairperson, the Chairperson of the small drafting group and the Executive Secretary, on 9 February 2021. A follow up letter (Annex 2) from the IOTC Vice-Chairperson was sent to the ICC on 2 March listed three issues that remained to be resolved, namely:

1. Reference checks: The degree of information to be provided to IOTC Members.
2. External panel members: Whether an external panel member is required or not.
3. IOTC Representatives: the number of IOTC representatives on the interview shortlist panel and the Interview Panel

The ICC's response to the letter is attached Annex 3. In summary, while FAO Management has indicated that it is willing to regard all other text as settled, it was unable to provide more flexibility of the matters of reference checks and external panel members as these matters are intrinsically linked to the Director General FAO's obligations to the FAO. However, FAO Management has agreed to three IOTC Member representatives being on the selection panel.

A revised proposal for a permanent procedure to select the IOTC Executive Secretary is provided in Annex 1, with the latest amendments to the procedure adopted by the Commission in November 2020 shown in yellow.

It is expected that, if the below revised procedure is adopted by the Commission at S25, then it will be duly approved by the FAO Council later in the year.

### **TIMING**

If the Commission adopts the above process, it will be forwarded to the FAO Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters then on to the FAO Council, at its end of year (2021) meeting, for final approval. Once approved, the recruitment of the next Executive Secretary can commence.

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Commission:

1. **NOTE** paper IOTC-2021-S25-03) outlining a possible revised procedure for the recruitment of the IOTC Executive Secretary.
2. **NOTE** the clarifications and additional information on the proposed procedure provided by the Independent Chairperson of Council in response to questions posed by the IOTC Chairperson.
3. **ADOPT** the revised procedure at Annex 1 of this paper to replace Annex II of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Rules of Procedure.

**Annex 1****PROPOSED PERMANENT PROCEDURE TO SELECT THE IOTC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY****Procedure for the selection and appointment of the IOTC Executive Secretary**

- 1) Within 30 days following a request from the IOTC Chairperson to commence a recruitment process, a Vacancy Announcement will be drafted by FAO technical departments in consultation with the IOTC Chairperson, with support of the Office for Human Resources (CSH).
- 2) The Vacancy Announcement will be issued and posted for at least 46 days unless the IOTC requests longer. The FAO will publish the Vacancy Announcement on the FAO website and the IOTC will publish it on its website and by Circular, and share the advertisement with other RFMOs and relevant organisations.
- 3) A first review and screening of candidates is undertaken by CSH based on the minimum criteria and qualifications set out in the Vacancy Announcement.
- 4) A second review will be undertaken by the offices of the relevant Deputy Director-General and the relevant Director (D2) and three representatives of the Members of the IOTC to establish a shortlist of candidates for interview<sup>1</sup>. The interview shortlist must contain at least seven candidates including at least one female candidate. If there is no female candidate in the shortlist, the Panel Report must contain a justification. If the interview shortlist does not contain seven candidates, the Report must contain a justification.
- 5) An Interview Panel will be established, and composed of:
  - a) The relevant Deputy Director-General or Director (D2);
  - b) Two Senior FAO officers;
  - c) Three representatives of the Members of the IOTC<sup>2</sup>; and
  - d) one external member, to be selected by the Interview Panel from among three candidates proposed by CSH;
  - e) One representative of CSH. The role of the CSH representative is to offer administrative support to the panel. He/She will not be involved in interviewing or assessing the candidates.
- 6) Interviews of shortlisted candidates will be conducted by the Interview Panel which will prepare a report. The Panel Report will identify a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 qualified candidates. If there is no female candidate selected at this stage, the Panel Report must contain a justification.
- 7) Both the shortlist of candidates for interview as well as the three to five candidates submitted to the Director-General will be compiled with due regard to gender and geographic balance in line with the policy of the Organization. If this balance is not achieved, the Panel Report must contain a justification.
- 8) The Panel Report will be submitted for consideration by the Director-General.
- 9) Reference checks will be undertaken by CSH. A summary of the reference checks will be provided to the three representatives of the IOTC who will keep the information confidential.
- 10) The Director-General will identify one proposed candidate for appointment, whose name and curriculum vitae will be referred to the IOTC for approval in accordance with the provisions of the IOTC Agreement. The name and curriculum vitae will be transmitted to the IOTC Chairperson, who will keep the information confidential, within ten weeks of the closure of the Vacancy Announcement.
- 11) Upon approval of the Body, an offer will be issued to the candidate. Should there be non-approval, the Director-General will propose to the Body another candidate recommended for appointment.
- 12) Upon acceptance, the Director-General will appoint the candidate.

<sup>1</sup>The representatives of the IOTC Commission shall be the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission unless otherwise decided by the IOTC Commission.

<sup>2</sup>As above.

## Annex 2



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Indian Ocean Tuna Commission  
Commission des Thons de l'Océan Indien

2 March 2021

IOTC REF: IOTC2021-31

Mr Khalid Mehboob  
Independent Chairperson of the Council  
FAO ROME

### Further discussions on the selection and appointment of the IOTC Executive Secretary

Dear Mr Mehboob

I am writing in relation to the ongoing discussions between the FAO and the IOTC concerning the selection procedure for the IOTC Executive Secretary. Ms Susan Imende has stepped down from the position of Chairperson of the IOTC, and I am fulfilling this role until the IOTC appoints a new Chairperson.

I have consulted with the Chair of the Small Drafting Group and the IOTC Executive Secretary on this matter. I would like to thank the FAO for its letter of 11 November 2020 and subsequent discussions on 9 February 2020 which have been useful in determining the current state of negotiations.

I appreciate that this is a complex matter and have observed that both parties have worked constructively and in good faith to find a balanced approach to the recruitment procedure for the IOTC Executive Secretary. I believe that both the FAO and the IOTC have made compromises towards this aim.

In the spirit of moving forward, I have reviewed the procedure adopted by the IOTC at its November 2020 meeting (Appendix 5 of IOTC-2020-S24-R[E]), as well as your most recent letter in detail. I understand that the procedure in its current form is not acceptable to the FAO. However, I believe we are close on many of the substantive elements such as the arrangements for the development and posting of the vacancy announcement, preliminary review and screening of candidates and the DG approval processes.

Based on my understanding, there are three remaining issues to resolve:

1. Reference checks: The degree of information to be provided to IOTC Members.
2. External panel members: Whether an external panel member is required or not.
3. IOTC Representatives: the number of IOTC representatives on the interview shortlist panel and the Interview Panel.

I have attached the IOTC-adopted process to this letter (see below). This represents the current position of the IOTC Members. In an effort to narrow, and ultimately conclude, our negotiations, I have taken the opportunity to bracket and highlight the text which relates to the three outstanding matters above. I believe that any text not in brackets is now settled between the IOTC and FAO, and no further discussion is required on these elements. I would appreciate urgent advice if this is not the case.

I understand that the three outstanding issues were discussed at length during the 9 February 2020 meeting. I trust that there is now a clear understanding of the issues on the IOTC side, and that the FAO can take these into full account.

#### The external panel member and reference checks

I understand that, based on these discussions, while there is no direct inconsistency with the FAO Basic Texts, the FAO is concerned that the IOTC's suggestions as contained in the IOTC-adopted procedure may pose legal risks and prevent the effective discharge of the Organization and/or the Director-General's duties under those Basic Texts. If this is the case, as requested on 9 February 2020, I request that the FAO share its legal position in writing as quickly as possible to facilitate additional consultations with IOTC Members.

In considering its position, I would be grateful if the FAO could advise:

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*Re. the external panel member*

Whether the proposal of the ICC Chairperson made on 7 October 2020 remains an option, noting that the letter of 11 November 2020 appears to withdraw this possibility. The proposal made on 7 October 2020 stated that the external member of the Interview Panel would only be included should the Interview Panel itself feel the need for this external Member. In this case, the Interview Panel would request FAO Human Resource Division to suggest two or three names, and the Panel would then pick one of these candidates to serve as the external Member on the Panel.

*Re. reference checks*

Whether there is any obstacle, legal or otherwise, to:

- the disclosure of any specific content of a reference check to the IOTC Members participating in the Panel, or to IOTC Members more broadly;
- the disclosure of the names of referees that provide a reference check for the candidates submitted to the Director General to the IOTC Members participating in the Panel, or to IOTC Members more broadly;
- the Director-General providing a written statement to the IOTC advising that reference checks have been undertaken in conformity with FAO process and that they either support (or do not support) the claims made by the applicant and the conclusions of the Panel.

**IOTC Representatives**

I am not aware of any legal obstacles to appointing three IOTC Member representatives on the interview shortlist panel and the Interview Panel. In proposing this, the IOTC was conscious of the need to balance an even number of FAO Officers and IOTC Members. We considered this had been achieved as the adopted process provides for the relevant DDG or Director and two Senior FAO officers, totalling three FAO officers on the Panel, in addition to the representative from CSH.


I consider that this is a reasonable number of representatives on a panel. Moreover, I know that it is usual in RFMO recruitment processes for all Contracting Parties to participate in the selection and interview process, and so large interview panels are arguably the norm for these recruitment exercises. However, I would be grateful for your advice on the specific issues with this proposal so that we can also resolve this difference.

**Next steps**

As noted above, it is important that we receive your advice on the three outstanding matters so that we can consult with our Membership and can bring the legal risks, such that they exist, to their attention. If it is possible to resolve these matters quickly, the IOTC can explore an intersessional process to adopt a new process. If it is not possible to resolve this quickly, consistent with the Council's decision, we will provide both proposed processes and explain the points of difference.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to discuss these matters.

Yours sincerely



Ms Jung-re Riley Kim  
IOTC Vice-Chairperson



## Annex 3

منظمة  
الأغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Organisation des  
Nations Unies pour  
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сельскохозяйственная  
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Naciones Unidas para la  
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الرئيس المستقل للمجلس

理事会独立主席

Independent Chairperson of the Council

Président indépendant du Conseil

Независимый Председатель Совета

Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Rome, 27 March 2021

Dear Ms Jung-re Riley Kim,

I refer to your letter dated 2 March 2021, concerning the ongoing discussions between the FAO and the IOTC concerning the selection procedure for the IOTC Executive Secretary.

I have carefully considered the procedures adopted by the IOTC at its November 2020 meeting (Appendix 5 of IOTC-2020-S24-R[E]), as well as the proposal annexed to your 2 March 2021 letter. I have shared your letter and its annex with FAO Management.

You have identified three matters in respect of which agreement has not been reached related to reference checks, external panel members and the number of IOTC representatives on the panel.

At the outset, I observe that, in considering these matters, it is essential to keep in mind that the IOTC Secretary is a staff member of FAO who exercises authority delegated by the Director-General, and that the Director-General – as the legal representative of the Organization and the IOTC – is responsible for the management of all legal, financial, reputational and other risks that may arise from IOTC's operations. The Director-General is also responsible, and accountable, for compliance with the rules of the Organization.

#### External panel members

As previously communicated in my letter of 25 November 2020, the external panel member “ensures the transparency of the process by offering an external, independent perspective by a technical expert. This external member would not be connected to the FAO or the IOTC in any way to ensure impartiality and would provide the requisite technical expertise and independence in the Interview Panel. The inclusion of this external member responds to the call from Members to ensure integrity and professionalism in the working processes of the Organization, including selection procedures”. Indeed, it would be inappropriate to somehow downgrade FAO recruitment procedures for the selection process for the Secretary of an Article XIV Body, a position which both FAO Management and the IOTC regard as a senior function.

Furthermore, and as I have previously underlined, the IOTC representatives on the panel will be involved in the selection of the external panelist. For this reason, the reservations in this regard are not clear to me. I take this opportunity to recall that the option I had presented of making the

Ms Jung-re Riley Kim  
Vice-Chairperson  
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

presence of an external panelist a matter to be decided by the panel was withdrawn when I received confirmation that it is standard good practice to have an external panelist and that this practice was part of FAO's recruitment procedures. The withdrawal of this option was conveyed by me on several occasions.

Once again, I advise that the established practice of including an external panel member must be understood in light of the obligations of the Director-General under the Basic Texts of the Organization. It serves as a mechanism that supports the effective discharge of these obligations.

Under Article VIII, paragraph 3, of the FAO Constitution

*"In appointing the staff, the Director-General shall, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and of technical competence, pay due regard to the importance of selecting personnel recruited on as wide a geographical basis as is possible".* This mandatory requirement applies to all staff, including those appointed to serve Article XIV Bodies. An external panelist helps identify those candidates having the required standards of efficiency and technical competence.

Moreover, the external panelist provides an impartial assessment of the capacity of a candidate to adhere to the requirements under the Basic Texts, including in exercising authority that would be delegated to that individual by the Director-General. Thus, for example, Rule XXXVIII of the General Rules of the Organization sets out the functions of the Director-General and, includes the following:

*"1. The Director-General shall have full powers and authority to direct the work of the Organization, subject to the general supervision of the Conference and of the Council and in accordance with these Rules and the Financial Regulations. The Director-General is the executive officer of the Organization, and as such shall service the Conference and Council, carry out their decisions, and act on behalf of the Organization in all its transactions.*

*2. In particular, the Director-General shall, in accordance with these Rules and the Financial Regulations, and provided that he reports to the Council or Conference as appropriate on all matters involving policy issues:*

*(a) be responsible for the internal administration of the Organization and for the appointment and discipline of the staff;*

...

*(e) carry out the duties with regard to conventions and agreements laid down in these Rules".*

The IOTC Agreement is one of the "conventions and agreements" referred to in that context.

More specifically, the Appendix to the *Principles and Procedures which should govern Conventions and Agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the Constitution, and Commissions and Committees established under Article VI of the Constitution* ("the Appendix", Section O of the Basic Texts) further clarifies the responsibilities of the Director-General to the FAO Governing Bodies as well as the governing bodies of Article XIV treaties. Under paragraph 33 of the Appendix, it is specified that:

*"Bearing in mind the obligations of the Organization, the following principles shall be observed and appropriate provisions shall be inserted in the text of conventions and agreements:*

*i. contributions for cooperative projects and autonomous budgets shall be remitted to the Organization. The Organization shall establish in each case a trust or special fund into which these contributions shall be paid and these funds shall be administered by the Organization in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Organization".*

Consequently, Article XIII, paragraph 7 of the IOTC Agreement establishes that *“Contributions and donations and other forms of assistance received shall be placed in a Trust Fund administered by the Director-General in conformity with the Financial Regulations of FAO.”*

Furthermore, paragraph 30 of the Appendix establishes reporting obligations upon the Director-General to the FAO Governing Bodies and the IOTC:

*“commissions, committees and other bodies established under Article VI or Article XIV of the Constitution, as well as their subsidiary bodies, shall transmit their reports and recommendations to the Director-General, those of the subsidiary bodies to be transmitted through the parent body. In the case of bodies referred to in paragraph 33(c) [bodies with autonomous budgets, such as the IOTC], provision may also be made in the relevant texts to the effect that recommendations or decisions not having financial, policy or programme implications for the Organization, may be transmitted directly to the members of the body concerned for their consideration and action.*

The Director-General shall:

- (a) take these reports into account when preparing the Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization;*
- (b) bring to the attention of the Conference through the Council any recommendations adopted by these bodies which have policy implications or which affect the programme or finances of the Organization;*
- (c) include in his annual statement to the Conference an analysis of the work done by these bodies.”*

The Director-General is also legally obliged to circulate these reports *“to all members of the bodies concerned and to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization for their information”*.

Article V(2)(f) of the IOTC Agreement is consistent with these provisions, requiring the Commission *“to transmit to the Director-General of FAO (hereinafter referred to as the “Director-General”) reports on its activities, programme, accounts and autonomous budget and on such other matters as may be appropriate for action by the Council or the Conference of FAO”*.

The Director-General thus has wide-ranging accountability to the Governing Bodies of FAO with respect to the IOTC, and must be confident that the Secretary is selected through a process which has the appropriate level of impartial, technical guidance. That objective is supported by the external panelist.

The obligations of the Director-General with respect to trust funds serve as a further illustration of why FAO Management has a particular interest in securing an appropriate, transparent and objective selection process, including an external panelist. For example, the Financial Regulations establish requirements applicable to all funds held and administered by FAO, including those of IOTC. These are onerous obligations. Thus, for example, Regulation X on Internal Control establishes:

*“10.1 The Director-General shall:*

- (a) Establish detailed financial rules and procedures in order to ensure:
 
  - i. effective financial administration and the exercise of economy; and*
  - ii. effective custody of the physical assets of the Organization.**
- (b) Except where advance or progress payments are specifically provided for in the contract, as may be required by normal commercial practice and the interests of the Organization, ensure that all payments are made on the basis of supporting vouchers and other documents which show that services or goods have been received and have not previously been paid for.*



*(c) Designate the officers, and other persons as appropriate, who may receive moneys, incur commitments or obligations and make payments on behalf of the Organization.*

*(d) Maintain an internal financial control and internal audit which shall provide an effective current examination and/or review of financial transactions in order to ensure:*

- i. the regularity of the receipt, custody, and disbursement of all funds and other resources of the Organization;*
- ii. the conformity of commitments or obligations and expenditures with the appropriations or other financial provisions voted by the Conference, or with the purposes, rules and provisions relating to the fund concerned; and*
- iii. the economical use of the resources of the Organization.*

*10.2 Commitments or obligations shall not be incurred and payments shall not be made unless an appropriate authorization has been made in writing under the authority of the Director-General."*

The Director-General is accountable for adherence to these provisions of the Basic Texts, and for compliance with them by those he authorises to act on his behalf, including the Secretary of the IOTC.

In light of these responsibilities of the Director-General, and his accountability to the FAO Members, including those who are Members of the IOTC, FAO Management has confirmed its firm position that an external panel member is essential to ensuring the integrity of the selection process. FAO Management is, therefore, firm that the following must be reintroduced under paragraph 5: *"One external member to be selected by the interview panel from among three candidates proposed by CSH"*.

#### **Reference checks**

I recall the explanations that I had provided in my letter of 25 November 2020 concerning reference checks, including my view that *"it is appropriate to retain this process as an administrative function undertaken by the Office of Human Resources under conditions of strict confidentiality as it concerns questions of personal performance and integrity"*. I reiterate that reference checks are designed to confirm the integrity and honesty of a candidate who has already been assessed as suitable by the interview panel.

In that context, I advise that there are strict rules concerning the handling of such information by FAO. Under the Organization's Administrative Manual, letters or statements of reference, including email or oral reference checks (which are recorded in notes to file) are classified as "restricted, privileged" material. Only the Director-General, the Deputy Directors-General, the Director of CSH, personnel officers (in connection with their responsibility for maintaining personnel files) and the Office of the Inspector-General are authorised to access this material. No other units or individuals can access this information under FAO rules. Members of selection panels do not have access to the outcome of reference checks.

Furthermore, in January 2021, in light of directions of the FAO Council, FAO promulgated its Personal Data Protection Principles which:

- "(i) set standards for the protection of personal data in line with best practices across the UN System and internationally;*
- (ii) facilitate the accountable processing of personal data within the Organization; and*
- (iii) ensure respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, in particular the right to privacy"*.

This covers *"any information that identifies the individual, or can be used to directly or indirectly identify the individual"* and is applicable to third parties as well as FAO employees.

Given the legal risks that arise in connection with personal data, the Principles specify that *“The processing of personal data must only be undertaken when it is relevant, limited and adequate to what is necessary in relation to the specified purposes of the personal data processing”*.

FAO Management has observed that the Director-General would not consider a candidate for appointment to a senior position such as the Secretary of the IOTC if the reference checks for that individual did not confirm that the individual was suitable for the position. Bearing that in mind, and having considered the possible options that you have presented, FAO Management has reverted with a proposal that, when the Director-General refers a proposed candidate to the IOTC for appointment, the referral can reflect that reference checks have been conducted.

Thus, paragraphs 9 and 10 would read

*“9) Reference checks will be undertaken by CSH.*

*10) The Director-General will identify one proposed candidate for appointment, whose name and curriculum vitae will be referred to the IOTC for approval in accordance with the provisions of the IOTC Agreement. The name and curriculum vitae, and a written statement that reference checks have been conducted, will be transmitted to the IOTC Chairperson, who will keep the information confidential, within ten weeks of the closure of the Vacancy Announcement.”*

#### **IOTC Representatives**

With respect to the number of IOTC Representatives in the selection process, as previously communicated to the IOTC, FAO Management’s primary concern is the balance of the Panel. I believe, therefore, that your indication in your letter that *“the IOTC was conscious of the need to balance an even number of FAO Officers and IOTC Members”* is constructive. I am also mindful of the need to ensure that the panel does not become so large as to be inefficient.

In this regard, there appears to be some confusion as the text that has been typically referred to by FAO Management is my proposal which provides for one Deputy Director-General or Director plus one Senior FAO Officer, i.e., two FAO representatives, and two representatives of IOTC.

Nevertheless, I have consulted FAO Management concerning your proposal. On the understanding that there would be one Deputy Director-General or Director plus two Senior FAO Officers in the interview panel, i.e., three FAO representatives, your proposal for three IOTC representatives could be accepted, i.e., relevant text would read as follows:

*“4) A second review will be undertaken by the offices of the relevant Deputy Director-General and the relevant Director (D2) and three representatives of the Members of the IOTC to establish a shortlist of candidates for interview. The interview shortlist must contain at least seven candidates including at least one female candidate. If there is no female candidate in the shortlist, the Panel Report must contain a justification. If the interview shortlist does not contain seven candidates, the Report must contain a justification.*

*5) An Interview Panel will be established, and composed of:*

- a) The relevant Deputy Director-General or Director (D2);*
- b) Two Senior FAO officers;*
- c) Three representatives of the Members of the IOTC ;*
- d) One external member, to be selected by the Interview Panel from among three candidates proposed by CSH; and*

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*e) One representative of CSH. The role of the CSH representative is to offer administrative support to the panel. He/She will not be involved in interviewing or assessing the candidates."*

Finally, I note that you have indicated that, in respect of the annex to your letter, that you "believe that any text not in brackets is now settled between the IOTC and FAO, and no further discussion is required on these elements" and request "urgent advice if this is not the case".

Following careful consideration, and provided that IOTC Members endorse the position presented in your letter and that they will not propose further changes to the proposal except for text specifically relating to three issues addressed in this letter (reference checks, external panel members and the number of IOTC representatives on the panel), FAO Management has indicated that it is willing to regard the text which is not bracketed in the annex to your letter as settled.

FAO Management has underlined to me its strong view that the current FAO Administration has made many compromises with a view to facilitating a mutually satisfactory and timely solution to this matter, and that it is not in a position to continue to consider further modifications. They have also asked me to convey their hope that the legal obligations that inform its position are fully appreciated.

I trust that the contents of this letter will enable progress to be made in this regard. I share your view that both FAO Management and the IOTC have worked constructively and in good faith to find a balanced approach to the recruitment procedure for the IOTC Executive Secretary and that they have also both made compromises towards this aim. I would, nevertheless, invite the IOTC to give full regard to the indications from FAO Management and underline, once again, the views of FAO Management that there is no further scope for movement on their part, in light of the flexibility they have shown to date.

I look forward to hearing from you in this connection, and am mindful that the cycle of Governing Body meetings will shortly commence. I would hope to be able to report positive progress on this matter to them.

Yours sincerely,



Khalid Mehboob  
Independent Chairperson of the Council