

ii) Long-term nett costs

Tuvalu expressed their appreciation for the clear presentation made by the Secretariat of the details and implications of the long-term nett costs of the remuneration exercise. Tuvalu also supported the recommendations proposed and commended the recommendations to Council.

The Council accepted that the long-term nett costs of the new remuneration structure were considered negligible by comparison with the current structure.

iii) SOPAC provisional salary scales for 2001

Council accepted the SOPAC provisional salary scales for 2001 noting that professional salaries as expressed in Fiji dollars fluctuate with the SDR/FJD conversion rate.

iv) Impact of new remuneration structure salaries on the 2001 budget

The Council accepted the budget implications of implementing the new remuneration system on 1 January 2001 which are within limits for the Secretariat to manage as far as salaries were concerned.

v) Other benefits of the new remuneration system

Fiji requested clarification on the implications in the budget of the provision of benefits under the new remuneration package and whether there were any major increases in the budget.

352. The Secretariat indicated that there were no major impacts to the budget except for two items as noted (small increases in housing and superannuation).

353. Tuvalu expressed their support for the recommendation and for changes to the Staff Regulations to be reported to Council next year.

354. The Council endorsed the application of the benefits as listed in the Working Group Report and would adjust its Secretariat regulations accordingly.

355. Australia asked whether the decisions made by Council could be overturned by the FOC and asked whether it would be necessary to hold a Special Session to discuss any substantial changes made by the FOC.

356. The Secretariat indicated that FOC had taken the lead on this issue and that the Governing Council has been proactive in their involvement in this process. It was suggested that any decisions made by Council could be commended to FOC. The Secretariat further advised that FOC deliberations on this matter would focus on implementation for the Fo-

rum Secretariat as the CROP-wide decisions were made by FOC in December last year and individual governing bodies were now responsible for implementation in the organisations involved.

357. Tonga indicated concern in commending the report to FOC as it may appear to pre-empt the decision of FOC.

358. The Chair noted that this exercise has taken an extended period and several CROP organisations have been involved.

359. Fiji suggested that a recommendation be agreed upon that recognises the good work that has been undertaken and commending it to FOC and other CROP governing bodies involved for their decision.

360. Council agreed to all recommendations of the CROP Working Group Report for implementation on 1 January 2001 and commended it to FOC and other CROP governing bodies involved.

10.4 The SPC-SOPAC Relationship : A Planning Sequence for Integration

361. The Director introduced the subject and paper AS29/10.4 and its supplement. He reminded Council of their decision from last year and of the basic underlying principles which motivated him and the Director-General of SPC to make submissions to their respective governing bodies regarding the merger. He drew Council's attention to the action that was required of them after considering the final Consultants' report (AS29/10.4 Suppl. 1).

362. After a full discussion with Consultants during which many issues were raised, Council thanked the Consultants for their comprehensive report and briefing. Council agreed that more time was needed to consider this issue of SPC-SOPAC integration Study because most members had only very recently received the final report. Council further agreed that the issue be considered at its next annual session thereby allowing for full consideration in capitals. Council asked the Secretariat to convey this deferral decision to the SPC Secretariat.

363. Subject to SPC/CRGA similar decision, Council also agreed that SOPAC and SPC secretariats work together over the next year to ensure that member countries' concerns, particularly those raised with the Consultants, are more fully explored and addressed.

364. A full record of the discussion of Council under this agenda item is in Appendix 8 of this Proceedings volume.