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**SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA CLUB
STRATEGY AND POLICY GROUP**

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**INTERIM ACTIVITY REPORT (1 JANUARY - 31 OCTOBER 2013) OF THE SWAC/OECD
SECRETARIAT**

**Meeting of the Strategy and Policy Group (SPG) of the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC)
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire - 29 November 2013**

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English, French

Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC)
Activity and Budget Implementation Report
1 January - 31 October 2013

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Preliminary Note

This interim activity report covers the period from 1 January 2013 to 15 October 2013. In accordance with article 3.1 of the Mandate, it is submitted to the Strategy and Policy Group (SPG) for examination and approval.

An updated version to 1 January 2013 – 31 December 2013 will be shared with members in the first quarter of 2014 along with a finalised 2013 financial statement.

I. Introduction

The beginning of 2013 was an occasion for the Secretariat to reflect on the impact of Sahel and West Africa Club's (SWAC) work and how to best go about recording it. The first results of this work were presented to the SPG in June 2013. Members agreed that the programming of the SWAC's activities needs to move beyond a listing of activities to a reporting of results and impact. Members expressed their wish for a more integrated and strategic programming process, while underlining the need to remain unencumbered and pragmatic.

Following from this, in the first trimester of 2014, the Secretariat will submit to Members a scoping paper that will outline strategic options for 2015-2016. This document will include a general presentation of the West African context in which the SWAC operates, detailing what will be its contributions to the region's overarching objectives. For each strategic orientation, a method of work, expected final outputs and outcomes will be specified.

In the area of food security and resilience, 2013 was dedicated to a concerted effort in communications and outreach. This included recording the recent evolutions of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA, from its French name Réseau de prévention des crises alimentaires) in a completely revamped website, a new corporate brochure, and other communications products. The RPCA website was also restructured to host a dedicated site of AGIR, in representation of the Alliance's existence within RPCA. Finally, the Secretariat produced a comprehensive information kit on AGIR that was subsequently disseminated in all of the region's countries and to international partners.

This outreach campaign supported the continued implementation of AGIR at a pivotal time. In April, stakeholders adopted the Regional Roadmap, and Alliance technical and financial partners established a platform lead by the European Union (EU) (AGIR Senior Experts Group: SEG-AGIR). In April, Commissioner Andris Pielbags announced that the EU would commit EUR 1.5 billion to AGIR in EDF 11. Following this, the Secretariat supported the launch of the Inclusive National Dialogue Process (INPC) while pursuing its work on the implementation of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management.

Another big thematic dossier of 2013 concerns the future of the Saharo-Sahelian areas. A multi-disciplinary team that will produce an Atlas of these areas in 2014 has been set up by the Secretariat. The analytical lense that is applied is that of the macro-region that captures Central, North and West Africa. The work seeks to demonstrate that the Saharo-Sahelian areas should be considered as the centre of this macro-region, rather than as West Africa's outskirts, and that this understanding is pivotal to the implementation of the so-called Sahel strategies. The SWAC Forum 2013 in Abidjan will propose that solutions be sought and implemented at the scale and dimension at which the challenges manifest themselves (trans-border, trans-national, regional, trans-regional), while simultaneously articulating security and development concerns.

The regional organisations that adhere to the SWAC are clearly convinced of this need. This is why the ECOWAS Commission seized the SWAC to support the formulation of the West Africa Regional Coherence and Action Programme for Stability and Development in the Saharo-Sahelian Areas at the June meeting of the SWAC Strategy and Policy Group (SPG).

On the same topic, the Secretariat co-organised, with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and in collaboration with the Swiss Development Co-operation, European Union (EU), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the *Regional Symposium on Pastoralism* in N'Djamena, Chad, in May. The Symposium sent a firm message and presented robust arguments to those responsible for the so-called Sahel strategies: pastoralism is one of the inevitable elements of a long-term stabilisation and development of the Saharo-Sahelian areas. We are happy to note that the N'Djamena Declaration inspired the World Bank to commit to funding an ambitious regional programme to be implemented within AGIR, with the support of CILSS, and under the political leadership of ECOWAS and UEMOA.

The Sahara-Sahel dossier, combining reflection and policy support, will undoubtedly be an active ingredient of the SWAC's next biannual PWB.

In line with the SPG's request, the Secretariat pursued the dissemination of the findings of WAF-I on the topic of settlement, market and food security. These activities contribute to a difficult but necessary evolution of the general analysis and theory of strategies for food crisis prevention and the fight against hunger. They too often do not take market dynamics sufficiently into account, although two thirds of food transits through markets, whose growth is closely linked to the phenomenon of urbanisation.

Finally, during 2013, the President of the SWAC, his Special representative and the Secretariat engaged with a wide range of Members and Partner countries and organisations in bilateral meetings (among others, the AFD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxemburg, Swiss Development Co-operation, USAID, World Bank, CILSS, Canadian International Development Agency, OECD delegations of Germany and Canada, the EU...). A mission also to Abidjan took place in October 2013 to meet with the authorities of Cote d'Ivoire to prepare for the Sahel and West Africa Week. These meetings and missions served to contribute to policy and programme processes of Members and Partners and to consolidate the SWAC's partnerships.

II. Regional governance of food and nutritional security

2.1. Strengthening the RPCA and applying the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management

In 2013 the Secretariat continued its work alongside ECOWAS and UEMOA to position RPCA as a leading body in international policy dialogue and co-ordination in the area of food and nutritional security in West Africa.

Among the statutory meetings of RPCA, the restricted meeting in April 2013, at OECD headquarters, offered the opportunity to food security actors in the Sahel and West Africa region to assess the food and nutritional situation, to bring the current major challenges to the attention of national and international decision makers, and to propose response actions. Harvests have been generally good in the Sahel and West Africa. However, RPCA members highlighted the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and the alarming outlook in the

northern parts of Mali and in neighbouring countries, resulting from the on-going crisis. In addition to the northern regions of Mali, certain areas of Burkina Faso (Seno) and Niger (Tillabéri and Téra) require emergency action. The final communiqué of the meeting summarised the main findings and recommendations to the region's States and their regional organisations, civil society and technical and financial partners.

The 29th Annual Meeting of RPCA will take place in Abidjan, 25-27 November, during the Sahel and West Africa Week. Its central theme is "Performance indicators and methodological tools for measuring resilience". Under the patronage of the ECOWAS and the UEMOA Commissions, and with their full participation in the preparation of the event, the Annual Meeting will assess the preliminary prospects of the 2013-14 agro-pastoral campaign, examine the evolution of food markets and their impact on food and nutritional security of the most vulnerable households. Based on the outcome of the discussions, recommendations that anticipate and counter eventual food and nutritional crises will be proposed to political decision makers.

The 29th Annual Meeting will also be the occasion to take stock of the application of the Charter for Food Crisis Prevention and Management. In particular the meeting will allow for a review of the implementation of the Harmonised Framework, the different phases of the process and their funding, as well as sustainability strategies for their in-country implementation. The meeting also aims to validate a matrix of indicators for the first external evaluation of the Charter's application in 2014. The terms of reference for the evaluation will be presented at the RPCA Restricted Meeting in April 2014, and the final evaluation will be discussed and validated at the 30th Annual Meeting in 2014.

Finally, in order to support the implementation of the regional strategy of food security stocks, the Meeting will inform and discuss the outcome of the ECOWAS Specialised Ministerial Technical Committee (CTS-CEDEAO) that took place on 27 September in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, at which the Committee adopted the feasibility study for the regional strategy. An operations manual for the implementation of the regional food stock strategy will be prepared based on the results of the study.

2.2. Supporting regional organisations in global initiatives and debates – implementation of AGIR

The Global Alliance for Resilience (AGIR) was launched at the 2012 edition of the Sahel and West Africa Week in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. In 2013, SWAC has worked alongside regional organisations and international partners to ensure an adequate definition of working methodologies and a prompt launch of activities at country level.

The Secretariat led the facilitation and co-ordination of a participative and inclusive process culminating in the adoption of the Regional Roadmap by all stakeholders in April 2013, just five months after the launch of the Initiative. This result is based on the co-ordination of the work of a restricted working group for the finalisation of the Roadmap in February-March 2013, and the facilitation of the second meeting of the AGIR Senior Experts' Group (SEG-AGIR) on 9 April 2013 in Paris at which the Regional Roadmap was officially adopted.

The Secretariat has strengthened regional capacity with regard to the implementation of AGIR and a prompt launch of activities. The Alliance is based on a principle of subsidiarity whereby the Regional Roadmap is translated at country-level into National Resilience Priorities (NRP-AGIR), in the framework of existing policies and programmes, through an Inclusive National Dialogue Process (INPC). NPR-AGIR will be matched with funding and implementation proposals. The implementation of the INPC requires a strong political commitment as well as

capacity building at country and regional level. The Secretariat has played a central role in this process on several levels:

- The Secretariat has accompanied the creation of a Technical Unit (CT-AGIR) at CILSS that will support the formulation of country level NRP-AGIR. In particular, the Secretariat formulated terms of reference for the team and its members, and supported and participated in the recruitment process. The selection process will be finalised by end of the year.
- The Secretariat has contributed to the launch of country-level activities, including: i) elaboration of methodological documents for the Dialogue Process; ii) facilitation of the regional workshop for the launch of the Dialogue Processes 28-29 August 2013 in Cotonou, Benin, where participating countries and other Initiative stakeholders approved the proposed working methodologies. Following the regional workshop, Burkina Faso and Togo signed up to launch country-level activities. The results will be shared at the SEG-AGIR meeting, during the 29th Annual Meeting of RPCA on 27 November 2013.

III. West African Futures

3.1. Informing the debate on overall prospects

The West African Futures activity embodies the think-tank function of the SWAC, by which the Secretariat provides independent and forward-looking analysis, enriching the debate and better informing decision-makers about future challenges and avenues for action. In 2013-2014, the Secretariat is conducting a prospective analysis on the Saharo-Sahelian areas.

Forty years ago, drought put the Sahel in the spotlight of international attention. Emergency aid flowed in and made emerge the need to better understand the region to prevent future crises. Today, the Saharo-Sahelian region has yet again regained global attention, due to the insecurity plaguing the area. The Sahel is perceived as a threat to the region's States and against international security. The crisis in Mali in 2012-2013 and frequently recurring manifestations of terrorist activity epitomise these risks and challenges. Long-term and multi-dimensional development solutions must be sought, built on collaboration and dialogue between North, West, and Central Africa.

In order to tackle these policy and operational challenges, the Secretariat is currently producing an Atlas that will document the trends and projections of the area from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The Atlas is composed of annotated maps and graphs and thematic chapters presenting an analysis of relations between North and West Africa. In particular it aims to explore: How do the Saharo-Sahelian areas currently influence co-operation between North and West Africa, and how could this potential be further developed?; How does co-operation between North and West Africa influence the stability and development of the Saharo-Sahelian areas, and how can deeper co-operation contribute to the stabilisation and development of these areas?

The following focus areas have been defined:

- History, and bi-/multilateral political relations
- Political crises, conflict and insecurity
- Economic co-operation between North & West Africa
- Trade
- Trans-Saharan transport infrastructure
- Borders, cross-border co-operation & free movement
- Migrations
- Petrol, gas and mining

2013 has been dedicated to the definition of the scope and methodology of the study, as well as the establishment of a multi-disciplinary team of researchers from Africa, Europe and North America (selected via call for papers) whose work is led and supervised by the Secretariat. A first working group meeting, that defined project scope and individual contributions, was held in April 2013.

The first results and maps of WAF II will be presented during the *SWAC Forum: the Future of the Saharo-Sahelian Areas from a Trans-regional Perspective* on 28 November, during the 2013 Sahel and West Africa Week. The final report will be published within the SWAC/OECD “West African Studies” series in 2014. Progress of the Atlas can be followed on its dedicated page on the SWAC website: www.oecd.org/swac/westafricanfutures/poass.htm.

3.2. Offering strategic options on the role of pastoral livestock in the development and security of West Africa

As part of the reflection on the future of the Saharo-Sahelian areas, the Secretariat has led a reflection on the role of pastoralism in the stabilisation and development of the region, in collaboration with international partners.

The Secretariat organised the international symposium *A sustainable contribution to the development and security of the Saharo-Sahelian areas* 27-29 May in N’Djamena, Chad, with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the Government of Chad, and in collaboration with the European Union, IFAD and the IUCN. The Symposium ended with a Ministerial round-table chaired by HE Joseph Djimrangar Dadnadji, Prime Minister of Chad, culminating in the Declaration of N’Djamena. The event was attended by over 200 participants including political decision-makers of the zone, experts, representatives of pastors’ organisations, civil society and private sector, and financial and technical partners.

Event participants reiterated that the future of the Saharo-Sahelian areas cannot be envisaged without considering pastoralism as an active ingredient of stability and development. The Declaration of N’Djamena pronounced at the Final Ministerial round-table called on the region’s States and their international partners to i) make pastoralism a central element of short-, medium-, and long-term stability and development strategies for the Saharo-Sahelian areas; ii) define and implement voluntarist and coherent policies in favour of improved governance, strengthened resilience, and economic and social viability of the Saharo-Sahelian areas. The Symposium identified concrete ways forward both for reflection and action for improved governance, strengthened resilience and pastoral livestock.

Finally, the Declaration of N’Djamena called for a closer co-operation between political and economic entities (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, CEEAC-CEMAC, UMA), and invited the Sahel and West Africa Club to continue to lead and provide content for a reflection on the future of the Saharo-Sahelian areas and to foment dialogue between West, North and Central Africa.

Since the Symposium, the Declaration of N’Djamena and the contributions of the SWAC in identifying pastoralism as a central strategy for the stability and development of the area have acted as catalyst for increased political attention and financial commitments by governments and international partners in this area. The launch of the World Bank programme on pastoralism at the “Beating the Odds, building resilience in the Sahel: Pastoralism in the 21st Century” Conference in Nouakchott, Mauritania on 29 October is an illustration of this.

The summary report of the Symposium can be consulted [here](#) (in French only).

3.3. West Africa Regional Coherence and Action Programme for Stability and Development in the Saharo-Sahelian Areas

The heightened regional and international attention to the Sahel, motivated by the evolution of the security situation, has been accompanied by a proliferation of institutional strategies to guide engagement with and investment in the region. At the June 2013 meeting of the SWAC SPG, following a request by ECOWAS, SWAC asked the Secretariat to accompany Members in the elaboration of a West African regional strategic framework.

The Secretariat has since June 2013 worked to feed the formulation of a political proposal led by ECOWAS and CILSS. The document is based on i) the recognition of the regional dimension of the trends and challenges that underlie the current situation; ii) the articulation of both development and security initiatives in a much more integrated manner; and iii) the need to create an overarching framework of coherence and synergy involving all stakeholders and their initiatives.

The first draft of Regional Coherence and Action Programme was presented by ECOWAS to regional governments and international partners on 9 October, in Washington D.C., USA. The discussions and feedback of this meeting fed into a second more operational version of the PACR focusing on three priority strategy areas: i) resilience (pastoralism and irrigation; ii) infrastructure; and iii) education.

Next steps will include member country consultations by ECOWAS around the Regional Coherence and Action Programme, the necessary engagement of North Africa in the implementation of policies and programmes, and finally the implementation of the Regional Coherence and Action Programme.

IV. Policy dialogue and strategic outreach

4.1. Promotion of West African Futures: Settlement, Market and Food Security (WAF-I)

West African Futures: Settlement, Market and Food Security was published as an OECD report in April 2013. Through 2013, the Secretariat has been active in sharing and discussing the results of the report in conferences and bi-lateral meetings with Members and Partners, aiming to introduce key findings at international conferences and debates, to share data and methodology with on-going foresight programmes on the future of food security in West Africa and, finally, to inform policy and development programme formulation.

Table 1

Highlights of WAF-I presentations in 2013

29-31 January Accra, Ghana	ECOWAS/USAID conference "Food across borders" Panel participation and data used by various presenters.
11-12 April Washington D.C, USA	USAID/FEWSNET bi-lateral meetings Report presentation and scoping possible follow-up and application to food security early warning mechanisms.
15 April Washington D.C, USA	World Bank bi-lateral meetings Report presentation and scoping possibility of collaborating on data integration into regional food consumption profiles.
19 June Paris, France	Agrimonde Terra Foresight on land use and food (in)security (CIRAD) The Secretariat is member of the working group on farming structures.
16 July Paris, France	"Journées du réseau" French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Presentation of report within a session on "Food security and agricultural price volatility".
31 July-1 August Dakar, Senegal	6 th Annual meeting of West African Woman's Association "Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security: The role of woman in West Africa" Presentation of report.
12 September Berne, Switzerland	DDC, SWISSAID, HELVETAS bi-lateral meetings Report presentation and discussion.

The results of WAF-I are also fully available online in an inter-active format. Since April the Statistical, mapping and regional analysis tool (SMART) can be consulted on the West Africa Gateway (www.westafricagateway.org); this interactive tool allows users to map, graph and compare all data produced within the WAF-I programme. The tool is equipped with an easy data and map download function that facilitates access and further use of the data outside SMART. A major up-date of data included in SMART is planned in January 2014.

In line recommendations made by SWAC Members and in seeking synergies within the SWAC PWB, the Secretariat has actively promoted the inclusion of settlement and market dimensions in food security and resilience policies, as part of the dissemination of WAF-I. To date, these policies mostly focus on rural environments and aspects of production increases, whereby the role of cities and markets in agricultural development is not sufficiently integrated. As a result of the Secretariat's efforts, WAF analyses and findings are incorporated in the AGIR Regional Roadmap. To further support the sharing of the analyses, possible next steps include the organisation of seminars in certain countries implementing AGIR.

The WAF-I programme highlighted the crucial importance of urbanisation and settlement data for policy analysis and formulation, and found that this data is often lacking or incomplete. To start addressing this knowledge gap, the Secretariat commissioned an update of the 2008 AFRICAPOLIS I study "West African Urbanisation dynamics", funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The new study provides urban population estimates for 2010 (vs. 2000 in 2008 study) for all 17 countries covered by SWAC. The study identifies and geolocalises 2965 agglomeration (vs. 1582 in 2008), of which 1366 in Nigeria, providing a previously unavailable extensive database on Nigerian urbanisation. The work benefited notably from newly available population census data in 13 out of the 17 countries and the highly improved quality and coverage of satellite imagery. Discussions on integrating Africapolis data in food security early warning and other spatial population measurement tools have already started, notably with USAID/FEWSNET. The data will be available on SMART in January 2014.

The Secretariat remains at Members' and Partners' disposal for further discussions and presentations of the results of WAF-I as necessary and relevant to policy and programme priorities.

4.2. RPCA communication strategy and promotion of Charter

The positioning of RPCA as a leading international body has been accompanied by the consolidation of communications and outreach activities and products. A new visual identity and logo for RPCA was agreed among members, and several brochures and communication products (RPCA, Charter, Menu of instruments for action) were devised and distributed in-country and to regional and international organisations (dissemination of 2,000 copies in 2013). The bilingual (English-French) RPCA website has also been updated and modernised (www.food-security.net).

Similarly, the Secretariat also supported the launch of AGIR with the production and dissemination of communication products (dissemination of 6,000 kits in 2013). The Secretariat also created the AGIR website, hosted on the RPCA website (www.food-security.net/agir).

4.3. NewsBrief

The NewsBrief is a weekly synthesis of current events and policy developments from the region, aiming to keep SWAC members and the general public informed about evolutions that may be underreported in the general media. Special focus is given to news regarding the regional organisations (ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS) and other SWAC members' activities, and regional food security initiatives. The publications section alerts readers to noteworthy studies and scholarly articles regarding the region.

The NewsBrief is produced by a team of West African journalists and policy analysts, allowing for a variety of stories and perspectives. It is available to readers for free in English and French and in three formats: an online version published on the West Africa Gateway, a printable PDF version and an email version. The email format has approximately 2,500 subscribers across six continents. Nearly all of the countries within the Sahel and West Africa region are represented among the NewsBrief subscribers.

Map 1

Top locations of NewsBrief readers



SWAC also strengthened its online presence with the launch of its corporate Facebook page in October 2014 (www.facebook.com/OECDswac).

V. Forums and symposiums

Main events organised by the Secretariat in the first semester of 2013 include:

- RPCA restricted meeting, 8-9 April, Paris, France (see 2.1.)
- Symposium on Pastoralism 27-29 May, N'Djamena, Chad (see 3.2.)

The Sahel and West Africa Week, a series of yearly meetings and events of SWAC and its partners will take place in 2013 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, from 25 to 29 November. The Week is organised by the Secretariat with the support of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and in co-operation with the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States, the Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Executive Secretariat of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

The Week will be principally dedicated to:

- discussing the regional food and nutrition situation during the 29th Annual meeting of the [Food Crisis Prevention Network](#), culminating in shared recommendations for action.
- sharing the preliminary results of [AGIR](#) and its implementation in participating countries, after the adoption of its Regional Roadmap in April 2013.
- convening the members of CILSS for their Annual Meeting.

- presenting operational and political arguments for the development and stability of the Saharo-Sahelian areas, based on strengthened dialogue between West and North Africa, at the SWAC Forum.
- taking stock of the implementation of the SWAC Programme of Work 2013-14, at the meeting of the Strategic and Policy Group.

Table 2

Sahel and West Africa Week: calendar of events

Monday 25 Nov	Tuesday 26 Nov	Wednesday 27 Nov	Thursday 28 Nov	Friday 29 Nov
29 th Annual Meeting of the RPCA	29 th Annual Meeting of the RPCA	AGIR Senior Experts Meeting	SWAC Forum: the Future of Saharo-Sahelian Areas from a Trans-Regional Perspective	Meeting of the SWAC Strategy and Policy Group
		<i>Side-event: UEMOA Regional Fund for Agricultural Development</i>		
		CILSS Technical and Financial Partners Committee		

The 2013 edition of the Week promises to be the highest level yet, with several Ministerial level participants confirmed. A full debriefing of the events of the Week and their conclusions and results will be included in the updated 2013 Activity Report, to be made available to Members during the first quarter of 2014.

VI. Network development and services to members

The Secretariat engaged with its Members and Partners throughout 2013 in relation to the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

The first annual Strategy and Policy Group Meeting (SPG) was held in Paris in 10 June 2013. The meeting was the opportunity to inform and discuss the implementation of the 2013-2014 PWB in the first semester of the year, approve the 2012 financial report and a revision of the 2013 budget, discuss a proposal for a results-oriented PWB framework for the SWAC and consider requests from Members for new areas of work as a result of an evolving international and regional policy context. The Summary record of the SGP meeting can be found under reference [SWAC/GOP/M\(2013\)1](#).

Moreover, the Secretariat, the President and his Special representative held a number of bilateral meetings, among others, with the Agence Française de Développement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxemburg, Swiss Development Co-operation, USAID, World Bank, CILSS, Canadian International Development Agency, OECD delegations of Germany and Canada, the European Union.

During 2013, the President of the SWAC, his Special representative and the Secretariat fielded a mission to Abidjan in October to meet with the authorities of Côte d'Ivoire to prepare for the Sahel and West Africa Week. Meetings were held with the Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Charles Koffi Diby, the Minister of Agriculture Mamadou Coulibaly, as well as representatives of partner countries in Abidjan. Furthermore, the President's Special representative travelled to Canada to meet with high representatives of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in order to explore the evolution and perspectives of Canada vis-à-vis the Club.

The Secretariat will engage with Members to define a calendar of relevant missions and presentations for 2014.