The CGIAR at Twenty: Relevance Reaffirmed

CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON
INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture
and
CGIAR Twentieth Anniversary Commemoration
International Centers Week
October 31, 1991
Washington, D.C.
Sir John Crawford Memorial Lectures

1985 Robert S. McNamara, United States
1986 Bukar Shaib, Nigeria
1987 Amartya Sen, India
1988 Helen Hughes, Australia
1989 Jacques Diouf, Senegal
1990 M. S. Swaminathan, India
1991 CGIAR Twentieth Anniversary Commemoration

The Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture has been sponsored by the Australian government since 1985 in honor of the distinguished Australian civil servant, educator and agriculturalist who was one of the founders of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Sir John (1910-1984) was the first chairman of the CGIAR's Technical Advisory Committee.

In 1991, the Crawford Memorial event was a public symposium commemorating 20 years of the CGIAR. Speakers were Mr. Wilfried P. Thalwitz, fifth chairman of the CGIAR and the World Bank's Senior Vice President for Policy, Research and External Affairs; Mr. Robert W. Herdt, Director, Division for Agricultural Sciences, the Rockefeller Foundation; and Mr. E. Walter Coward Jr., Director, Rural Poverty and Resources Program, the Ford Foundation. Mr. Derek E. Tribe, Executive Director of Australia's Crawford Fund for International Agricultural Research, presided.

The symposium was held on Thursday, October 31, 1991 during International Centers Week (ICW91), the main annual meeting of the CGIAR.
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I find myself tonight in a rather unusual situation. To me has fallen the privilege of introducing to you the three individuals who are to share this John Crawford Memorial occasion with us, and lead our commemoration of the twentieth birthday of the CGIAR. However, these gentlemen are already close colleagues of yours, and one of them is your chairman, so they really need no introduction at all.

On the other hand, you may be forgiven for wondering who I am. My name is Derek Tribe, and I come from Australia. I can't help recalling that I first addressed a meeting of the CGIAR in Washington some 19 years ago. My chairman on that occasion was Sir John Crawford, chairman of the TAC (Technical Advisory Committee). Tonight, I stand before you as the Executive Director of the Crawford Fund for International Agricultural Research, the Australian national support organization for international agricultural research.
The Crawford Fund is supported by government, but is funded mainly by the private sector. The Fund does several things, including operating a program which provides short periods of “hands-on” practical training for young people from developing countries who are working in agricultural research and development.

But the main purpose of the Fund — and I quote from its constitution — is “to make more widely known the benefits that accrue, both internationally and to Australia, from international agricultural research, and to encourage greater support for this research from Australian governmental and non-governmental organizations.”

We launched a major public awareness campaign in Australia three months ago, and one of the earliest results was announced by George Rothschild at the ICW91 pledging session this morning: a 40 percent increase from last year in Australia’s contribution to the CGIAR. I am optimistic that we can do even better in future.

We have obtained support from Australia’s NGOs (non-governmental organizations), a spokesperson for whom announced only last week that—and I quote again—“the case for an increased share of Australia’s overseas aid budget to be allocated to international agricultural research is a convincing one.” He went on to affirm that “committing aid funds to agricultural research is a wise and invaluable investment.”

Of course, you do not need to be reminded of this. But, to a surprising extent, it is still true that the remarkable achievements of the CGIAR network of centers are still a closely guarded secret as far as most politicians and the community-at-large are concerned.

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1Head of Australia’s delegation at International Centers Week.
Anniversary Retrospective

We meet here this evening to do three things. We should certainly remind ourselves of the outstanding achievements of our first 20 years, and we should certainly reaffirm our readiness to meet whatever challenges lie ahead in the next 20 years. But, also, I think it is appropriate that we should first recall—with gratitude—the wisdom, the energy, and the success of our founding fathers.

Sir John Crawford was certainly one of those who helped to give shape and substance to the whole system. W. David Hopper, fourth chairman of the CGIAR has written of Sir John: "Millions of people are being fed because he had the vision to focus national and international efforts on a development strategy that could be implemented with success, and because he threw his powers and talents into ensuring its implementation. We cannot hope to fill his shoes—they are much too large—but we can hope to extend, at least a bit, what he began."

We should also remember the other eminent individuals from the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization), the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and the World Bank—the cosponsors of the system—whose vision and support were all of critical importance. They, I suppose, could fairly be described as the "midwives" whose skill and experience brought the CGIAR baby into existence—and their successors have since brought it along steadily to adulthood.

I am thinking of pioneers such as Addeke Boerma of the FAO, Paul Hoffman of the UNDP, and Robert McNamara of the Bank. I think it should also be mentioned that the services of the first chairman of CGIAR, Dick DeMuth, were instrumental in creating the unique
Then there are those among the cosponsors and other founders who set up TAC which has served the CGIAR system so effectively and continues to do so. I think, of course, of names like Sir John, the first chairman of the TAC, and of Peter Oram and his colleagues, all of whom played such an important role in those early formative years.

We should at the same time remember the parents who were responsible for our original conception—the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. I warmly recall the thrill it gave me 19 years ago to meet those really great men whose enthusiasm and idealism started it all—men like George Harrar and Sterling Workman of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Forest Hill, Lowell Hardin and David Bell of the Ford Foundation. We are delighted to have David in the audience with us this evening.

And finally, there are the scientists who so ably led the research on which the Green Revolution was built—individuals who laid the traditions of service to the hungry and the poor to which we all aspire today—scientists, led by Ed Welhausen of CIMMYT and Bob Chandler of IRRI, and the great Norman Borlaug.

Now, it gives me great pleasure to welcome at this birthday celebration the current representatives of our parent foundations. First, I am going to call upon Bob Herdt to say a few words on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. He will be followed by Walter Coward of the Ford Foundation.

Our third speaker tonight is a man who joined the Bank as a Young Professional in 1963, and after almost 30 years of outstanding service, particularly to Indone-
sia, West Africa and more recently to the CGIAR, is still regarded by all who know him as a "young professional." He has served us with good-humored, firm and wise leadership, and we can look forward with pleasure to hearing Mr. Wilfried Thalwitz, the current chairman\(^2\) of the CGIAR.

Nurturing a Legacy

Robert W. Herdt

The CGIAR tonight recognizes 20 years of operation, but the roots of the organization, and indeed four of the centers, reach back more than 30 years to 1959, when the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations jointly established IRRI and a few years thereafter, CIMMYT, IITA and CIAT.

The foundations were motivated by the same basic forces that motivate your support for the CGIAR centers today: the desire to ensure a better life for the poor in developing countries.

They recognized, just as you recognize, that giving food to hungry people might be necessary in emergencies, but that more productive agricultural systems, to generate both higher incomes and more food, would be needed to prevent dependency and achieve better lives over the long run.

\(^2\)Following a realignment of duties at the World Bank, Mr. Thalwitz relinquished CGIAR chairmanship at the end of ICW91. He was succeeded by Mr. Visvanathan Rajagopalan, the Bank's Vice President for Sector and Operations Policy.
The struggle is not over, but progress has been made, and progress continues to be made. Let me give you just one example. You know that semidwarf wheat varieties from CIMMYT were introduced into Pakistan in the Green Revolution years of 1967-70. And you know that by 1971, they had spread to 70 percent of Pakistan’s irrigated wheat area.

However, after 1971, not only was that adoption sustained, but it was also increased so that today over 98 percent of Pakistan’s irrigated wheat area is planted to semidwarf wheats.

And did you know that while only 20 percent of the rainfed wheat area in Pakistan was planted with such varieties in 1980, today over 85 percent of the rainfed wheat area in Pakistan is planted with such varieties? Those varieties, the result of CIMMYT collaboration with agricultural researchers from Pakistan and other countries, provide 10 to 15 percent higher wheat production to farmers, and more food to consumers at lower prices.

**Cooperative Effort**

The parentage of those first semidwarf varieties can be traced to wheats from Japan which were taken to the United States, and later to Mexico.

The research which made possible the first semidwarf varieties was started in Mexico in the late 1940s. These were the varieties that farmers in Pakistan began to adopt in 1967. And the research that led to the invention of the rainfed varieties that spread during the 1980s was started 15 years earlier.

This little story illustrates several aspects of the CGIAR system which we celebrate tonight. It is an in-
ternational system—an international cooperative effort which has long transcended national interests, and those of special groups or regions.

The Green Revolution and its contributions have been sustained and continue. Agricultural research is an investment. Its return occurs sometime after it is made. The world’s ability to be complacent about food in many developing countries today is a direct result of earlier investments in agricultural research.

We are the inheritors of this legacy. We must guard and nurture this legacy.

We all know that many challenges face agriculture, the CGIAR, and the world. This group has much to offer if it stays the course. I am confident that it will.

Recommitment to Basic Values

E. Walter Coward Jr.

It is a very great pleasure to share in the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the CGIAR system. I recognize that I am at the end of a long queue of former foundation colleagues who have made important contributions to the many activities that we are able to celebrate this evening.

In fact, all of us are, in some ways, beneficiaries of the wise decisions and hard work that our predecessors in the foundations, other organizations and governments have contributed to this enterprise.
Some of you are with us tonight, and for that I am delighted. One can only wish that it might have been possible for even more of our colleagues to have been part of this event.

Commemoration and celebration offer us the opportunity to reflect on our past actions, and also an opportunity to reaffirm our goals and commitments to those continuing tasks that lie ahead.

I can assure you that the Ford Foundation remains committed to the goals of the system which, we believe, continue to reflect the basic values of the foundation—values such as concern for the disadvantaged, attention to social inequities and care for the natural environment.

**Past and Future**

Many of you have been part of the process this week as we have struggled to identify priorities and directions for the system for the next decade. From time to time there may be the tendency to think that the founders may have faced a far simpler set of problems. In some senses, I suppose, that is accurate. However, it seems to me that it is also very useful to reflect on the conditions that confronted those who dealt with these problems in that earlier era.

We must recognize that they were faced with *at least* the following: very desperate levels of poverty in many parts of the world—such desperate levels of poverty that many people were facing hunger on a daily basis; high levels of political tension and superpower confrontation that affected our decisions about even the smallest matters. Most importantly, they faced a situation in which there were few models and only very limited evidence concerning the contributions that were possible from a system of international research such as we now have.
Any detailed examination of the system of the CGIAR will reveal several realities, and we have been busy this week examining those. I think most thoughtful people would agree that our system is an imperfect one; that our accomplishments are incomplete, and our resources limited—perhaps even insufficient—for what needs to be done.

Nonetheless, it seems to me that there is much to celebrate tonight, and my point is celebration, not the opposite!

I am sure that each of you has your own personal list of what one might wish to stop and celebrate at this point. If you will allow me, I would like to share with you three or four points which I personally believe are worthy of our celebration.

**Increased Knowledge**

First, it seems to me we can celebrate the fact that the CGIAR system has very much contributed to the expansion of human knowledge. We now have available to us, and to the world in fact, information and techniques that lead to productive and sustainable uses of our plant, animal and natural resources. And it may be that this increased stock of human knowledge will be among the most important legacies that will come from the CGIAR experience.

The second legacy that I would underscore tonight is one that Mr. Tribe and Mr. Herdt have already noted, that there has been a significant improvement in human welfare. Of course, as in any model-building or quantitative exercise, it is difficult to sort out the particular contributions that CGIAR activities have made to human
welfare, in the context of all the other activities that have gone on. Nevertheless, it seems to me that we have reason to believe that this system has contributed to those improvements in human welfare.

Research emanating from the CGIAR centers has allowed many rural families throughout the world to increase their production for home consumption. It has further allowed them to produce a surplus for sale in the open market, to increase their employment opportunities, and in many instances, even to support and educate their children.

I think we can also stop, today, and celebrate the development of human talents. It seems to me that, again, as a result of the many activities of the CGIAR system over these two decades, scores of agricultural scientists, innumerable policymakers, large numbers of extension agents and others have learned of new crop varieties and new techniques for crop and animal protection and production.

They have learned of better ways to manage their water and their trees, and more importantly, they in turn have spread that knowledge to those with whom they work, many of whom are in rural communities. So we can, thus, also celebrate the development and the expansion of human talent.

**Institutional Capacity**

Finally, the fourth point I would make is that it seems to me that we can also celebrate, this evening, the institutional capacity that has been created as a result of the CGIAR activities. The institutional innovations that we have now come to call "centers" in a sort of
short-hand way, draw on the best scientific talent that can be found throughout the world, and bring together those men and women who are willing to dedicate a part of their own professional skills and talent and time to highly focused research objectives which are aimed at the improvement of human well-being. This is a very powerful legacy and contribution.

In sum, if we ask: Are we now better able to confront the challenges that lie ahead; challenges including huge population growth, widespread environmental stress and large absolute numbers of poor people? Are we better able to confront those challenges now because we have a CGIAR system? Obviously, I leave that answer to each of you, but I would share with you my assessment that we are.

In conclusion, I would simply like to say that much has been accomplished in these last two decades, and much remains to be done. And I want to underscore for you that the Ford Foundation is honored to be a part of this important enterprise, and in partnership with so many of you from the world community.

The CGIAR at 20:
Relevance Reaffirmed

Wilfried P. Thalwitz

It is appropriate that representatives of the foundations spoke first, commemorating both the vision of Sir John Crawford and 20 years of operations in the CGIAR. For the foundations were first in helping to create a
unique support mechanism for international agricultural research.

And I agree with Mr. Herdt, that before the inception of the CGIAR there were 10 years of preparatory activity that bore fruit on its own. At that time the objectives were clear: Get the best scientists to make the best contribution their profession was capable of making to overcome a looming food shortage; to give new tools to farmers—the poor among them in particular.

The "pile of rice" has become a cliche. I want to return to it often, however, but now as part of today's more complex growth, poverty and sustainability matrix.

Mr. Tribe mentioned the "jellyfish" structure of the organization. Let me add another image of which I learned only last night, when I was putting myself to sleep, reading a copy of the Atlantic Magazine. It was the absurd and yet meaningful image of the "banana fish."

The banana fish is a variety that seeks small entrances into underwater caves in which bananas are stored, and then gorges itself on these bananas to the extent that it can never get out again.

International Respect

I want to share with you my feeling that after 20 years of operations, the vision of our founders, the continuing vigilance of our donors, and the dedication of our centers have combined to keep the CGIAR from turning into a banana fish that finds itself captured in a cave without a hole large enough to get out.

In fact, the CGIAR has expanded its area of activity, has expanded its mandate and, yet, it has stayed reasonably lean. Moreover, its processes and modalities have
contributed to the respect that the "CGIAR model" has attained internationally.

The "CGIAR model" is one of sovereign research institutions and sovereign international donors bound with the analytical apparatus of the TAC. It is the TAC which provides options for cohesive system strategy and the operation of a consensus mechanism through which all these actors meet.

There is no chief executive officer, nor is there a supervisory board as there is with many corporations and some international institutions. But there is the commonality of purpose, and the drive for consensus that have kept the system functioning through agenda changes, ongoing expansion and, yes, through a lot of financial strain.

This CGIAR model has become useful as a yardstick for collaborative structures in other areas. I was once on a commission on energy sector management and the first yardstick I applied was how does it stack up to what the CGIAR has achieved? In many other fields disparate from energy and agricultural research—such as child vaccination—the organization and consensus mechanism of CGIAR have become a model against which effectiveness could be measured.

Well, while things were, perhaps, more clear in the past, the world today is not free from the problems that moved our founders at the creation of the CGIAR. This is a commemorative event; it is not a time for smart self-congratulation, nor indeed self-flagellation—which we are well capable of doing. It is, rather, a time for sober scrutiny of the experience, and its relevance to the tasks of today.
Investment and Impact

In this context, let me point out that whatever CGIAR has achieved, it has achieved with a rather small segment of the funds that are applied to agricultural research in the world.

The CGIAR investment in agricultural research is only a fraction of global spending. In 1991, the total annual core budget of all CGIAR centers was approximately $235 million, while total expenditure by all agencies, public and private, on agricultural research in developing countries alone was about $2.3 billion.

Global annual expenditure on agricultural research—and that now includes the industrialized countries, and what we used to call the “second world”—amounts to more than $10 billion. Our $235 million has to be measured in their effect, in the interaction between CGIAR investment and all other placements of financial resources.

As for achievements—they are far too extensive even to list—but let me give you just a few highlights.

- International centers have helped to build agricultural research capacity in many developing countries. Just one sign of this is that up to 1989, some 45,000 scientists in developing countries profited from training in the system.

- As a guardian of the global agricultural heritage, the CGIAR is a superpower. More than a third of the world’s collection of plant genetic material is maintained by CGIAR centers, and the system has helped arrange for the preservation of genetic material in some 450 non-CGIAR institutions.

- Research supported by the system has helped improve food commodities that today meet about 80
percent of the caloric and protein requirements of people in developing countries. Incremental output now feeds over one billion people.

Looking back, the World Bank has no reason to regret what was a tremendous innovation when, in the early 1970s, it decided to do what it had never done before—support agricultural research, and support it on a global scale.

Frank Meisner in his book Seeds of Change wrote that investment in agricultural research by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) “created the biggest impact the Bank has received for its development dollar, bar none”—and I believe that is true for the World Bank as well.

Now, feeding the hungry was the overriding concern at inception, as I said, and progress has been made, but the job is far from over. Development in agriculture—we have all said this—is far more complex today, but the imperative to raise productivity remains.

Need for Productivity

I think we have been lulled, particularly by the discussion in industrialized countries surrounding the GATT negotiations into overlooking the productivity issue that exists in the world today. The GATT discussions may make us believe that food is in excess supply, that it is a subject for domestic subsidization, to be pushed out with export promotion and kept out through entry restrictions.

None of the above is true for the developing world, where grain yields will have to increase by at least 2.5
percent just to maintain individual consumption levels beyond the year 2000.

The productivity issue is particularly dramatic in Africa where population growth outstrips anything we have experienced in food production growth. The CGIAR cannot, by itself, truly influence population growth trends. That, for the CGIAR, is an exogenous factor. It is an exogenous factor that population on that continent doubles in little more than 20 years. Productivity growth of barely 2 percent on this continent is catastrophic, when something like 4 percent is needed, and as I have said, we have not experienced before. The situation is perhaps not as dramatic, but the numbers are larger in other continents of the world, and the productivity issue is still central.

Of course, there are other factors that determine the ultimate effectiveness of research on the farmer's field. Apart from the trade policies of industrialized countries, we know that development policies matter. The farmer needs the incentive to implement these research results. Where the internal terms of trade were made to shift against agriculture by public policies in the 1960s and 1970s, the farmer received so negative a signal that he lost interest in the adoption of research results.

Here, the CGIAR can help, and it has decided on the legitimate objective of furthering policy advice through research by taking IFPRI into its group. It is not only a single CGIAR institution that deals with questions of policy. Almost every center I have come across is aware of the policy function, and how it interacts with the uptake of scientific research.

When we speak about research results, and when we try to measure achievements in “so many additional tons” or “so much incremental output,” we have a bit of
an attribution challenge. This is why I introduced it through the policy question.

This is not a statistician's problem alone—the answer is important for our public policy decisions and the placement of scarce resources. We have to ask ourselves: Where in the chain is the weakest link, and where is there payoff in the effort to strengthen that link?

We can bring the argument directly back to the CGIAR. What kind of research is necessary? We have made the basic decision that CGIAR-supported research should be strategic and international, but it can go beyond factors that affect the ultimate usability of what we are doing.

We could ask ourselves, should we expand to increase post-harvest technologies? We know that the development of agro-industries will influence the uptake of research results. We know that distribution systems are vital to provide incentives and effectiveness to agricultural production. Even transportation is important and, as the experience in the Soviet Union so bitterly shows, the difference in performance between private plots and collectivized entities is a factor to be taken account of when you try to quantify what has been your input when you did research.

**Drawing the Line**

Let's leave the attribution problem aside for the time being and switch to a delineation problem. I think that distribution systems are not the responsibility of the CGIAR, and public policy toward their improvement should travel through separate mechanisms and systemic changes.
There is a line beyond research and although we know there is an effective interaction, we must draw this line, for we cannot allow the specter of the banana fish to enter our own system. Inside this line of demarcation, however, there are two other concerns. One is the environmental threat, and the other is the need to equip national research organizations. Those two items I do not equate with transportation or agro-industry.

The adoption of these concerns as essential aspects of CGIAR activity has, I believe, presented us with a new and complex challenge, and it has driven us to expansion. Their relevance today requires the examination of goals and priorities among them and modalities of working within the system and of collaboration with other agencies.

A word about protection of the resource base. It is undoubtedly important and related to production, as it cannot be achieved through abstaining from a human activity: the production of food for the growing population in poor nations. Equally, it is simply not an option to risk environmental damage. The challenge which confronts us is that of addressing the issue in collaboration and in connection with the process of production itself.

The case of forestry, perhaps, is different. The world can live with some abstention—and even a lot of abstention—in the absolute reduction of extraction and logging in most moist tropical forests. The CGIAR needs to make its contribution to the growth of efforts to maintain biodiversity, watershed protection and climate change mitigation.

But on the food production side, the challenge today is how to increase output for growing populations when we know it will have some environmental impact.
Protecting the Resource Base

The CGIAR will have to let itself be measured by the contribution—and I said so in our meetings this week—to preserving the natural resource base on which future production depends, in the identical manner that it is measured by the extent to which its work helps to feed the world's hungry.

We know also that researchers have made mistakes, and implementors have made mistakes, when the production focus was not sufficiently tempered with environmental concerns. We know that at one stage, yield improvements in rice were associated with environmental degradation.

But I think the learning process, and goal shifts that have been internalized are about to succeed. And I am confident that international research will make its own contribution to pursuing the productivity goal in a benign environmental fashion.

The sometimes maligned plant breeding activity, and even the newest methodologies of biotechnology (suitably guarded with care for biosafety), will have to make their contribution to meeting the productivity objective.

Where else, when you do not want to press in on marginal land too much more; where else, when power generation for irrigation pumps and the manufacture of fertilizer have their own environmental limitations; where else, but in breeding, with a lot of environmental concerns put into the goal formulation of breeding, will you get the yield increases without creating larger environmental problems elsewhere?

I am glad we do not have a separate center for environmental protection in the CGIAR. Somebody would
call it the International Institution for Research into Environmental Protection (IIREP). I am glad we don't have such an institution. I assure you it would be easy to finance.

But I am not facetious here. I do believe that the measure of environmental commitment and success lies in the total permeation of all other activities by the imperative of resource conservation—whether it is commodity research, whether it is farming research or assistance to national agricultural research systems (NARS) in developing countries.

I know that the agenda of some centers has a greater affinity with the environment and a greater recognition of its interaction with agriculture. However, the resetting of priorities with the advent of resource conservation as a goal now cuts across all activities in the CGIAR. The ecoregional concept is nothing but a facilitator for the implementation of that preservation concept.

**Working in Partnership**

Let me say a word about national research organizations. They are the most important part on the conveyor belt between strategic international research and ultimately, the farmer. If that belt breaks, the entire system becomes inefficient, does not work, and the CGIAR obviously has a task to help keep that belt moving. That task is based on and accomplished through research alliances. That is the phrase I have heard repeatedly at CGIAR meetings. In specific terms, what it really means is working in partnership to achieve common goals.

But I do not think that the CGIAR should usurp the functions of NARS simply by geographical dispersion of center activity: do not go beyond networking and partnership on common goals. I also do not think that the
CGIAR has the slightest chance of effecting a buildup of the NARS by a substantial switch in funding. Even if you think of $250 million available for all of the activities of the CGIAR, the imperative of strengthening the NARS is an objective in itself that needs its own financing sources.

Taking $15 million out of the budget of CGIAR is peanuts for the NARS: it is paled by a single loan, the loan for the NARS in Mexico. Financial transfers alone are inadequate. To keep the transmission belt working we need to be working in close and productive collaboration with the NARS—but not with technical assistance financed through the medium of CGIAR budgets.

There is also a surprising case—and it may be controversial—for an exit strategy on the NARS. Some national systems may be getting so strong that they provide results of strategic and international significance to the world. That is the case for devolution from CGIAR centers to NARS.

The CGIAR system was created to fill a gap which existed 30 and 20 years ago, and in many ways it still exists. But it has no monopoly on international strategic research. If particular agencies in national research systems progress toward delivering comparable results, there is nothing wrong with a devolution, and a withdrawal of the CGIAR and the removal of funding through the particular CGIAR budgets to make room for more urgent activities that remain underfunded.

That is not to say that such successful agencies should not be supported by loans and grants, but it is a separate mechanism that is needed when the CGIAR devolution takes place, in this honorable recognition of the successes of people outside the CGIAR system.
Looking to the Future

Sir John Crawford would have appreciated the depth and the analytical excellence of the discussions that are going on at International Centers Week. He would understood, too, the dissonance that sometimes characterizes the debate. Sometimes I despair of how we ever get it all together, but we do, no doubt because the commonality that unites us is greater than the differences.

The entire CGIAR system is vibrant and alive. It is capable of change, it is responsive to critical questions, and justly proud of its achievements. It has worked in the past, and I am confident that it will work now.

I will leave the system, and I am glad a trusted colleague of mine will take up the gavel from me, so permit me just a few departing messages to the centers.

Continue being centers of excellence. Devise your own strategic direction. You know, and I think everybody around the room knows, where the changes are required in recognition of today's agenda and modalities. I think the centers, more than we have all recognized, have anticipated many of these changes. My recommendation is to continue doing so, and if you are sometimes ahead of those that have the grand design, so be it.

I need to say a word about the TAC. It is the core of the CGIAR's analytical capacity for system options. It does not compete with the centers, and it does not compete with the consensus that must emerge when donors and cosponsoring agencies sit together to divine new directions. TAC is there to provide those options, and it is based on using the best talent that can be found. I would be glad to have them as colleagues in the Bank, and many donors would like to have them on their staff. Let's not fear them as the secret managers—let's test their options.
On donors, don't be stingy—mold the system. Mold the system and support it. Mold it in such a way that you can defend it before the political authorities back home, and before the public opinion that essentially determines the amount of maneuverability you have. Mold, you must—but there is perhaps more help needed from the system to let you do that job, and to let you do that job in a convincing fashion, demonstrating that the system is vibrant, capable of change and has adopted today's agenda.

As for cosponsors—and that includes the Bank—the system would not be what it is today, as Mr. Tribe said, without the work of the cosponsoring agencies, the wisdom and counsel of the FAO and the UNDP, and yes, their money.

Let me add an admonition to my own colleagues in the World Bank. If we know that this conveyor belt creaks in Africa; if we are sometimes not listening closely enough to the message that comes back from the field; if we know that sometimes the agenda of the centers isn't sufficiently geared with its ear on the ground, then let's adjust it. But let's not stop our support—that effort is needed.

Finally let me close on a personal note. As I talked once to my old friend and mentor, Warren Baum, he said, "Of all the jobs I have had" (and all of us temporary chairmen of the CGIAR have had a lot of jobs), "the one I enjoyed most, the one that was most rewarding, was the one of chairman of CGIAR. I don't want to leave."

Mr. Rajagopalan and guests, I want to tell you that this is the way I feel, too.

Mr. Baum is a former Vice President of the World Bank and was CGIAR chairman for 10 years.
Concluding Remarks

Derek E. Tribe

Mr. Thalwitz, on behalf of everybody, it is my pleasure to thank you for what was a thoughtful, wide-ranging and inspiring address. I am sure that having listened to you, everyone here shares with me the warm glow that comes from hearing about a job that has been well done; the excitement that comes from a challenge that remains outstanding, and the determination that comes from the conviction that in the CGIAR and its centers, we have the means of finding solutions to some of the world’s greatest problems: rural poverty and unemployment, the sustainable management of our natural resources, and of course, food security.

We are enormously in your debt, Mr. Thalwitz. We thank you not only for your address this evening, but also for your leadership during what has been an extremely challenging time for the CGIAR system. We all offer you our best wishes and every success in the responsibilities that now lie ahead.