



MARKET INFORMATION ORGANIZATION
OF THE AMERICAS
MIOA

**XIII Meeting of the Executive Committee
City of Panama, Panama**

October 7, 2008

List of Participants

Mr. Terry Long, President of MIOA and Representative from the Northern Region

Mr. Marco Moscoso, Vice-President of MIOA and Representative from the Central American and the Caribbean Region

Mr. Pedro Martinez, President Ex Oficio

Mrs. Andrea Dansa, Representative from the Southern Region

Mr. Carlos Tellez, Representative from the Andean Region (alternate)

Mr. Luis F. Palmer, USDA

Mr. Andrew Burst, FAS

Mr. Frank Lam, Technical Secretariat, IICA

Agenda
XIII Meeting of the Executive Committee
City of Panama, Panama

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

08:30 a.m.	Call to Order	Terry Long
08:35 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks – President of MIOA	Terry Long
08:40 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks – Host Country	Gonzalo Cambefort
08:50 a.m.	Presentation and Approval of the Agenda Approval and Signing of Minutes from the Previous Meeting	Terry Long
09:00 a.m.	Report from the President of MIOA	Terry Long
10:00 a.m.	BREAK	
10:15 a.m.	Update by the Technical Secretariat - Report of Activities - Progress Report “Evaluation of MIS in the Caribbean” - Financial Report - Report “CA – IDB Project”	Frank Lam
11:30 a.m.	Amendments to the Rules of Procedure	Frank Lam Luis Palmer
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH	
01:30 p.m.	Amendments to the Agenda for the VII Regular Annual Meeting	Frank Lam Marco Moscoso Luis Palmer Pedro Martinez
03:00 p.m.	BREAK	
03:15 p.m.	Progress Report by Working Groups: Legal Status of MIOA, Regional Workshops, Background of MIOA, Central American Project	Terry Long
04:45 p.m.	Summary of Discussions held during the day Definition of the Next Meeting of the Executive Committee (Place and Date)	Terry Long
05:00 p.m.	Close of Meeting	Terry Long

Minutes
Executive Committee of MIOA

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

1. Mr. Terry Long, President of MIOA, welcomed the participants and thanked the Representatives from the Institute of Agricultural Marketing (IMA) for hosting the XIII Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) of MIOA.
2. Mr. Gonzalo Cambefort, Director of IMA, thanked the participants for their presence, and underscored the importance of MIOA in the exchange of information on agricultural markets, which has an impact on the development of competitiveness in the sector.
3. Mr. Long noted the economic progress achieved by the Host Country, and thanked the country for its efforts in organizing this event.
4. Mr. Long presented the agenda and the agenda was approved by the EC. The Minutes of the XII Meeting of the EC, which was held on April in the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina, were also presented for their signature.
5. In his Report, Mr. Long noted that during this period MIOA increased its membership significantly thanks to the efforts of IICA. MIOA has seven new members from the Caribbean Region. Also, efforts continue to strengthen relations with strategic partners, as well as with IICA. However, in the future the expectation is to get a longer-term funding source through other donor agencies.
6. Another successful event was the Manager Workshop held in Costa Rica, one of the first capacity-building efforts to be implemented. The work that has been done in Central America is not only an achievement of the Organization but also of the region, with the support from the EC of MIOA. Moreover, the bilateral and multilateral interactions of the Market Information Systems (MIS) of the Americas are a result of the work performed by the Organization. The web page of MIOA, managed by the Technical Secretariat, is becoming an increasingly valuable resource.
7. Since the Organization was created, the following activities have been considered: 1) Holding a workshop for I&T experts to explore what the region can do to link the web sites. This workshop will be held next month in Ottawa, Canada. 2) The Rules of Procedure state that the official languages are Spanish and English. As the Organization has been expanding, countries such as Haiti and Canada feel more comfortable with the French language, and having a French web site costs approximately \$15,000.00. The next step could be adding Portuguese for Brazil.
8. Mr. Long informed that Mr. John Van Dyke was selected to provide consulting services to evaluate the Market Information Systems of new member countries in the Caribbean.

9. He went on to inform that FAS has contributed US\$300,000.00 to the Organization, which is quite significant because it facilitates working in future activities.
10. In the area of capacity building, the possibility of carrying out activities at the hemispheric and regional levels has been discussed, especially for those involved in the collection of information. Mr. Long pointed out that building capacity in the Market Information Systems holds significant potential for the Organization. As to the suggestions made by the participants, MIOA has made efforts to improve in the planning and organization of meetings. However, it is necessary to consider ways to improve this process vis a vis the Mexico meeting of next year.
11. It also important to secure the sustainability of MIOA by establishing partnerships with other institutions. Moreover, the Summits of the Americas may constitute an excellent promotional opportunity for the Organization.
12. Concerning the evaluation of the Market Information Systems in Latin America, Mr. Long went on to say that regional presentations will be important because they will reveal the weaknesses and strengths of the countries, and how MIOA could participate. The recent changes in energy inputs and agricultural prices are affecting everyone both positively and negatively. The information that is being shared, which is being generated by Market Information Systems is a new challenge for the Organization. Moreover, there are new opportunities to establish relations with other countries worldwide, such as India, Africa, and countries in Western Europe.
13. Mr. Terry Long opened the floor for questions from the Members of the EC.
14. Mrs. Andrea Dansa, Representative from the Southern Region, indicated that two positive elements had been identified in her region: a) that all countries benefited from the assessment, and b) that the flow of communication has improved. Consequently, efforts should be made at the regional level due to the characteristics of the regions.
15. Mr. Pedro Martinez, President Ex Oficio, added that the Organization must keep the capacity building component, and information from the countries should be received in order to guide the activities of the Organization. Moreover, he said that the promotional efforts have been positive, but more substantial efforts are required to develop the Organization. Also, the work of the EC is to plan the activities of MIOA, and look outside of the Americas.
16. Mr. Frank Lam, Technical Secretariat of MIOA, reminded the participants of the importance of the Strategic Plan of MIOA, and urged the EC to promote new activities and efforts aimed at fulfilling the objectives of the Organization, and providing more tangible benefits to the Member Countries. This should increase interest in the Organization, and promote greater commitment from the countries.

17. Mrs. Andrea Dansa added that the Regular Meeting not only provides an opportunity to communicate, but also allows Market Information Systems to improve by comparing each other. Finally, she recommended making the web page of MIOA more dynamic.
18. Mr. Carlos Tellez, Representative from the Andean Region, indicated that greater commitment must be required from the countries. This provides Market Information Systems an opportunity to interpret the variables that cause changes in prices. Moreover, it is important to increase the knowledge that is gained through MIOA in the countries.
19. Mr. Marco Moscoso, Vice-president of MIOA and Representative from the Central America and Caribbean Region, expressed that the work of the EC through the Annual Work Plan and the Strategic Plan will improve management of the Organization. In Central America, support from six ministers to the project aimed at strengthening Market Information Systems has been obtained.

BREAK

20. Mr. Terry Long referred to the existence of a Strategic Action Plan and a list of pending activities. Each year, agreement is reached as to the activities for the month of December. It is necessary to continue doing so, and this is already being considered for the next meeting. Finally, he proposed that the Annual Action Plan be discussed at the next meeting of the EC but focusing on regional activities.
21. Concerning the Summit of the Americas, Mr. Long underscored the importance of seizing this opportunity and considering activities that could be carried out to at least include in the resolutions the concept of “market information” as a key element of food security.

AGREEMENT CE-XIII-2008-01: To consider the possibility of including the concept and the importance of the role played by market information in the promotion of food security in the resolutions of the Summit of the Americas.

Party Responsible: Terry Long, Andrew Burst, and Frank Lam

22. Mr. Frank Lam presented the Report prepared by the Technical Secretariat of MIOA, and referred to the following issues: First, the consulting services to evaluate the Market Information Systems in the new Caribbean and Central American member countries of MIOA. Mr. Tellez expressed concern with regards to the outputs of the consultancy, in particular as concerns the presentation of the conceptualization of a Market Information System. Mr. Luis Palmer was of the view that it would be better to present this at the end of the evaluation process in each of the countries that request so, and to include a gender focus. Mr. Pedro Martinez reminded the participants of the possibility of translating the outputs into Spanish, and Mr. Lam responded that this will be done by MIOA subsequently since it is less expensive this way.

23. The second issue presented by Mr. Lam was renewal of the Letter of Understanding between IICA and MIOA. Mr. Long said that if there was no other option in the short term, the EC should renew the Agreement. Mr. Carlos Tellez added that a number of activities should be incorporated into the new agreement, and a Letter of Understanding, not an Addendum, should be signed.

AGREEMENT CE-XIII-2008-02: To renew the Letter of Understanding between IICA and MIOA for a term similar to the previous one. Mr. Terry Long will send a note to the Technical Secretariat indicating that MIOA is interested in renewing the Letter of Understanding.

Party Responsible: Terry Long, and Frank Lam

24. The third issue presented by Mr. Lam as part of the report prepared by the Technical Secretariat was the Market Intelligence Project for the fruit sector in Central America, where one of the subcomponents was taken from the original proposal prepared by the Central American countries with the financial support of MIOA. Mr. Carlos Tellez asked about the specific outputs of this initiative, to which Mr. Lam responded that the purpose of the project is to strengthen information collection, especially in the area of capacity building. Mr. Marco Moscoso added that this project was the result of a regional effort, and that initially the Market Information Systems in the Region were not included. They were included later thanks to IICA's intervention. Mr. Lam noted that MIOA was an important part of this initiative, and invited Member Countries to form teams to support the proposal. Mr. Martinez asked if the donor will pay for the professional services required to design the courses, and Mr. Lam responded that the countries will be responsible for the implementation.
25. Mr. Lam informed that this proposal will pose a challenge to MIOA when the outputs of this project are ready. Finally, he said that if this effort is replicable, MIOA could use it in other regions. Mr. Martinez emphasized that it is necessary to be vigilant to make sure that the objectives are met, and that MIOA keeps involved throughout the entire process. Mr. Tellez also expressed concern about property rights of these outputs.

AGREEMENT CE-XIII-2008-03: To provide technical support to the Fruit Project, in particular, subcomponent A related to Market Intelligence for the sector.

Party Responsible: Executive Committee

BREAK

26. The fourth issue presented was the agreements reached by the Executive Committee during the last three meetings. Concerns the legal status of MIOA to receive funds from the USDA, Mr. Long said that AMS will be consulted.

27. Mr. Pedro Martinez suggested that based on the information that will be provided over the next few days by each region, a more comprehensive proposal be prepared to present it in the next session.
28. The fifth issue of the Technical Secretariat was the Financial Report. The financial statement of the Organization was presented. This concluded the presentation by the Technical Secretariat.
29. Mr. Lam went on to refer to the approval of the Rules of Procedure, and informed that only 24 of the 26 countries will be voting. Nicaragua and Uruguay will not be able to attend the voting. He also described the entire voting process prepared by the Technical Secretariat. In his capacity as observer, Mr. Long asked what changes will be proposed. Mr. Lam said that the current version is available in the web page of MIOA for comparing purposes. Mr. Long went on to ask what the main changes to the Rules of Procedure were. Mr. Lam responded that although the information was not explicitly included in the document, the idea is that the day of the voting is only used for voting, since there was no more room left for discussion. He said that the main changes were: 1) Incorporation of the Technical Secretariat, and 2) Incorporation of the Caribbean Region. Finally, he indicated that the entire procedure had been planned, and no problems were expected on the day of the voting.
30. Mr. Terry Long said that the role of the President Ex Officio was still unclear. During the last election of President and Vice-president, the President Ex Officio served as a moderator in the process; however, this is not provided for in the Rules of Procedure. In the future, he recommended making it clear that in the event the President is reelected, the President Ex Officio will maintain his/her position. Mr. Lam added that the role of the President Ex Officio is to give continuity to the activities of the EC, and in the hypothetical case that the President is reelected, the new President would undertake both responsibilities: President and President Ex Officio. Mr. Palmer indicated that Rule 2.14 refers to continuity, however, Rule 2.2 states that the Executive Committee comprises six members; consequently, there is a contradiction. He suggested proposing an amendment during the next meeting, to be voted by the Assembly.
31. Mr. Moscoso recommended that when a President is reelected, the President Ex Officio remains in such position for a period of two years. In the event he/she is reelected again, the position of Ex Officio should be kept; however, he emphasized that the most important thing is to keep working as a team and continue the work. Mr. Lam indicated that the confusion is found in Rule 2.2 which refers to six members. He said that this situation could be cleared up by indicating that the Committee comprises five members. Moreover, he suggested that the Representative of the Host Country should have the right to speak but not the right to vote since he/she does not represent any region nor was he/she elected.

AGREEMENT CE-XIII-2008-04: To prepare a proposal for an amendment to the Rules of Procedure concerning the President Ex Officio, and present the proposal during the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Party Responsible: Luis Palmer, and Frank Lam

32. Mr. Frank Lam presented the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee to be discussed and amended if necessary.

BREAK

33. Mr. Terry Long said that the USDA may be limited in its efforts to support MIOA if the legal status of the Organization changes; however, the response from authorities of AMS to the consultation is pending.

34. Mr. Pedro Martinez suggested receiving the presentations of the Regions, and proposed an exercise to share the experiences in the Regions.

35. Mr. Long made a general summary of the issues discussed during the meeting of the Executive Committee. He also referred to the meeting of the Northern Region, and provided an update of the progress made in the Region. Finally, Mr. Long suggested that the new Executive Committee decide on the date and place for the next meeting.

AGREEMENT CE-XIII-2008-05: To consider as a future action preparation of a French version for the web page of MIOA, taking into account the corresponding technical and financial considerations.

Party Responsible: Executive Committee

36. Mr. Terry Long, President of MIOA, closed the meeting at 5:42 pm.

Final Note:

The new Executive Committee, elected on Thursday, October 9, comprises the following members:

Representative from the Central Region:	Mrs. Erika Ruano
Representative from the Andean Region:	Mr. Carlos Tellez, Vice-president Elect
Representative from the Caribbean Region:	Mr. Aziz Mohammed
Representative from the Northern Region:	Mr. Terry Long, President Elect
Representative from the Southern Region:	Mr. Jorge Esquivel

-----LAST LINE-----

Terry Long, MIOA President and Regional Representative: North

Adriana Senior, MIOA Vicepresidente and Regional Representative: Andean

Pedro Martínez, Ex Oficio President

Jorge Esquivel, Regional Representative: South

Erika Ruano, Regional Representative: Central

Aziz Mohammed, Regional Representative: Caribbean

Date: January 28, 2009