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INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS

GENEVA

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**Fifteenth Session
Geneva, March 18 and 19, 1980****HARMONIZATION AND COOPERATION IN THE TESTING
OF RESISTANCE TO DISEASES**Views of the Delegation of Belgium

1. In a letter dated March 3, 1980, addressed to the Vice Secretary-General of UPOV, the Delegation of Belgium presented its views on documents TC/XIV/5 and TC/XV/4 relating to harmonization and cooperation in the testing of resistance to diseases.
2. These views are reproduced in the Annex to this document.

[One Annex follows]

HARMONIZATION AND COOPERATION IN THE TESTING
OF RESISTANCE TO DISEASES

(Views of the Delegation of Belgium)

With reference to documents TC/XIV/5 and TC/XV/4 I have the pleasure to transmit to you the views of the "Station de phytopathologie de l'Etat" in Gembloux on the use of resistance to certain diseases as one of the criteria for distinguishing varieties.

The "Service de la protection des obtentions végétales" aligns itself with these views.

"The idea of using resistance to certain diseases as a distinguishing criterion for these varieties is certainly a sensible one in essence. Resistance to diseases is in effect a genetic characteristic like any other. Indeed, the phytopathologists tend often to use this characteristic to assist them in identifying a given variety which is submitted to them, whenever the context permits.

"In practice, however, and for the purpose which is envisaged by the Technical Committee of UPOV, the problem will not be so simple.

"First, there exist types of resistance of a quantitative order: the different varieties are then more or less sensitive to diseases. In this case, it is necessary to use comparative observations with a certain number of test varieties of known and graded sensibility to be able to situate the degree of resistance of the variety in question.

"Secondly, there exists another type of resistance, known as "race-specific resistance," where the variety is resistant to certain physiological races of the pathogene and not to others, the latter being specifically adapted to the genotype of the plant. The resistance manifested to non-adapted races is total for certain pairs of host-parasites but not for all. For this type of resistance it is possible to define a spectrum of sensibility of the variety to an assemblage of physiological races, subject to the availability of these races.

"Thirdly, there exist pairs of host-parasites where the two types of resistance exist side by side.

"Consequently, it appears that this criterion of resistance is of much less direct use for the identification of varieties than the morphological characteristics. One could use it as a complementary characteristic. It is also quite possible that in many cases this criterion will not be able to be used fully except by a phytopathologist who is specialized in this type of problem and who has at his disposal the appropriate strains and races."

[End of Annex
and of document]