

**WIPO-UPOV SYMPOSIUM  
ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS  
IN PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY**

**CLOSING REMARKS**

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Ladies and gentlemen,  
Friends and colleagues,

As we are approaching 5.00 p.m. we must bring this Symposium to a close.

I would like to say a few general remarks. They must be general as my understanding of the issues though greatly improved is still inadequate. Fortunately there is no right to reply, so no one can criticize me, in public!

We face big challenges and questions in this increasingly interdependent globalized world, and those challenges will increase. They relate to very important and key public policy issues.

To come up with the appropriate answers to these questions and challenges, we need new knowledge, and thus we need to invest in new knowledge. In this regard effective intellectual property protection is of the essence. We have heard today of some experiences, national and regional, as well as some success stories in developing countries. But we have been reminded that much needs to be done.

The two systems, one of patents and the other of plant variety protection, have evolved over time and will continue to evolve. This takes place in and made possible by a flexible framework contained in Article 27.3(b) of the TRIPS Agreement. We have also been made aware that, in the end, there is no perfect or a best system; there are different realities and cultures to which the systems have to adapt.

These are extremely complex issues in terms of public policy choices such as private rights, investment incentives, incentives to improve varieties, questions of sustainable development, implementation problems of both a legal and institutional nature and good governance.

The two systems have co-existed out of necessity. This relationship of co-existence needs to improve over time in the light of some grey areas which will have to be settled and defined by legislators or by regulators or by the Courts, depending on the particular national system in which you are operating. At the end of the day we have an evolving world, we have big challenges that we have to convert into big

opportunities. We need, I believe, more work - more and better data and analyses, not only of a legal nature, but also from the point of view of sound economics.

I shall leave my remarks to that and, on behalf of Dr. Kamil Idris, in his capacity as Director General of WIPO and Secretary-General of UPOV, I would like to thank you all, to thank the participants that have congregated here and the speakers who have contributed to a decisive extent to enlighten discussions on the subject. From an organizational point of view, a particular thanks to those who, without being particularly mentioned, have put their efforts into this Symposium, to the interpreters for their efficient work. Finally, I would like to thank, on behalf of you all, WIPO and UPOV for organizing this event. This has attracted a large number of participants, over 200 including speakers and Secretariat.

I would like to remind you that the presentations will be posted immediately in the WIPO and UPOV Websites. The transcriptions of the discussion will be posted in the near future and participants will receive an electronic notification to this effect.

I would like to thank you all once again and bring this Symposium to a close. For those of you who come from far away, I wish you a safe journey back home.