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**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS**

GENEVA

**COUNCIL****Thirty-Eighth Ordinary Session  
Geneva, October 21, 2004**

## REPORT

*adopted by the Council*Introduction

- \*1. The Council of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) held its thirty-eighth ordinary session in Geneva on October 21, 2004, chaired by Miss Enriqueta Molina Macías (Mexico), President of the Council.
2. The list of participants is reproduced in Annex I to this document.
3. The President informed the Council that Dr. Arpad Bogsch, the former Secretary-General of UPOV, passed away on September 19, 2004. The Council paid tribute to Dr. Bogsch's important contribution to the work of UPOV during his mandate as Secretary-General from 1973 to 1997, by observing a minute of silence.
- \*4. The President extended a warm welcome to the Delegation of Singapore, a State which had become a member of UPOV on July 30, 2004, and to the Delegations of Jordan and of Uzbekistan, States which would become members of UPOV on October 24, 2004, and on November 14, 2004, respectively.

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\* An asterisk next to the paragraph number indicates that the text has been taken from the Record of the Decisions (document C/38/15).

5. The Delegations of Singapore, Jordan and Uzbekistan expressed their gratitude to the Union for the assistance provided to their countries in the procedure of accession to the UPOV Convention. The statements made by the Delegations of Singapore, Jordan and Uzbekistan are reproduced in Annexes II, III and IV, respectively.

6. The President informed the Council that the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention entered into force with respect to Austria on July 1, 2004.

#### Adoption of the Agenda

\*7. The Council adopted the draft agenda, as proposed in document C/38/1, after having deleted item 5 “Examination of the conformity of the legislation or proposed legislation of any State or organization having submitted a request under Article 34(3) of the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention”.

#### Examination of the Conformity of the Plant Breeder’s Right Bill of the Republic of Mauritius with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention

##### *Republic of Mauritius*

\*8. Discussions were based on document C/38/13.

9. The Delegation of Mauritius thanked the Council for examining the Bill. The Delegation hoped that it would receive a positive reply from the Council and looked forward to working with UPOV for the benefit of the breeding community of the Republic of Mauritius.

\*10. The Council decided to

(a) take note of the information given in document C/38/13;

(b) take a positive decision on the conformity of the Plant Breeder’s Right Bill of the Republic of Mauritius with the provisions of the 1991 Act of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, in accordance with Article 34(3) of that Act, which allows the Republic of Mauritius to deposit its instrument of accession once the Bill is enacted and in force;

(c) authorize the Secretary-General to inform the Government of Mauritius of that decision.

#### Examination of the Conformity of the Law on the Protection of Breeder’s Rights for New Plant Varieties of the Republic of Turkey with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention

##### *Republic of Turkey*

\*11. Discussions were based on document C/38/14.

12. The Delegation of Turkey welcomed the analysis of the Law on the Protection of the Breeder's Rights for New Plant Varieties which had been adopted with the aim of promoting sustainable agriculture and agricultural production, food security and the protection of genetic diversity and the environment, while protecting the rights of breeders and, in particular, their intellectual property rights. The Delegation expressed the intention of the Republic of Turkey to deposit its instrument of accession after a positive decision has been taken by the Council.

\*13. The Council decided to

(a) take note of the information given in document C/38/14;

(b) take a positive decision on the conformity of Law No. 5042 of the Republic of Turkey with the provisions of the 1991 Act of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, in accordance with Article 34(3) of that Act, which allows the Republic of Turkey to deposit its instrument of accession;

(c) authorize the Secretary-General to inform the Government of Turkey of that decision.

Report by the President on the Work of the Sixty-Seventh and Sixty-Eighth Sessions of the Consultative Committee; Adoption of Recommendations, if Any, Prepared by That Committee

14. The Council noted the report by the President and the oral intervention made by the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The intervention of the representative of the FAO is reproduced in Annex V to this document. No decision was called for under this agenda item.

Annual Report of the Secretary-General for 2003; Supplementary Report on Activities During the First Nine Months of 2004

\*15. The Council approved the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Union in 2003, given in document C/38/2, and noted the report on activities during the first nine months of 2004, given in document C/38/3.

\*16. The Council expressed appreciation to the Office of the Union for the work it had carried out, and also to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) for the assistance it provided.

Financial Situation of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants as at December 31, 2003; Report on the Auditing of the Accounts for the 2002-2003 Biennium

\*17. The Council approved the accounts for the 2002-2003 financial period and noted the report of the auditor on the accounts of the 2002-2003 biennium, contained in document C/38/4, Annex B, and expressed its gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for its cooperation in this matter.

18. The Delegation of Ukraine informed the Council that, on April 28, 2004, Ukraine paid its arrears corresponding to the period 2004-2005.

#### Report on Long-Term Financial Issues of the Union

19. The Council noted the contents of document C/38/12. The Vice Secretary-General informed the Council of the establishment of a Consultative Group on Long-term Financial Issues which had the task of examining possibilities to further consolidate, on a long-term basis, the financial situation of UPOV. The Consultative Group met in March 2004, and some ideas were developed on objective parameters which might be useful for countries when considering the number of contribution units. On that basis, a document was established and presented to the Consultative Committee which had met on October 20, 2004. It was agreed that a new document reflecting the discussion in the Consultative Committee should be prepared by the Consultative Group, for the seventieth session of the Consultative Committee in October 2005.

#### Progress of the Work of the Administrative and Legal Committee

20. The Council noted the work of the forty-ninth session of the Administrative and Legal Committee (CAJ), as described in document C/38/9.

21. The Chairperson of the CAJ informed the Council that discussions at the fiftieth session of the CAJ had focussed on: "Draft recommendations concerning information, documents or material furnished for examination purposes" and "Draft explanatory notes on Article 15(1)(i) and (2) of the UPOV Convention: Acts done privately and for non-commercial purposes and provisions on farm-saved seed".

#### Progress Report of the Work of the Technical Committee, the Technical Working Parties and the Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques, and DNA-Profiling in Particular

\*22. The Council noted the work of the Technical Committee, the Technical Working Parties and the Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques, and DNA-Profiling in Particular, as provided in documents C/38/10 and C/38/10 Add., and approved the programs of work set out in those documents.

23. The Council noted the oral report of the Vice Secretary-General on the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding by the Secretary-General of UPOV, Dr. Kamil Idris, and the President of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), Mr. Bart Kiewiet, which took place at the UPOV headquarters on October 21, 2004. The Memorandum of Understanding concerns the cooperation for the development and maintenance of a web-based UPOV Plant Variety Database and the CPVO Centralized Database of Variety Denominations.

24. The Vice Secretary-General highlighted some of the key aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding:

*(a) Database Software*

In the first instance, CPVO would provide UPOV (“the Parties”) with its proposed database model and data dictionary. In the second instance, UPOV would offer initial comments and suggestions with regard to compatibility of the software for the UPOV database. Subsequent collaboration between the Parties in any refinement to the CPVO proposal would take the form of meetings and/or exchange of correspondence as considered appropriate by the Parties. Following this process, CPVO would develop its database software. The database software that CPVO decides to use and release (the “CPVO software”) would, subject to certain conditions, be offered to UPOV free of charge. CPVO would inform UPOV of subsequent updates of the CPVO software. UPOV would advise CPVO on whether it wishes to use the CPVO software or whether it will develop its own software (the “UPOV software”). If UPOV decided to develop its own software, it would provide CPVO with its proposed database model and data dictionary in order to seek comments and suggestions with regard to compatibility of the software for the CPVO database.

*(b) Maintenance of Data*

The responsibility for providing data would be as follows:

(i) subject to the agreement of the countries and owners of other registers concerned, CPVO was to be responsible for variety denomination data for all official registers kept by authorities of the Member States of the European Union, official registers kept by authorities of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland, the European Union Common Catalogues and other relevant registers, such as the Dutch database PLANTSCOPE;

(ii) UPOV was to be responsible for variety denomination data for all official registers kept by authorities of members of the Union which were not mentioned in (i). UPOV was also to be responsible for data from international organizations (e.g. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)); and

(iii) for other data, to be agreed by the Parties on a case-by case basis.

*(c) Use of Data by UPOV and CPVO*

UPOV would retain the possibility of charging parties other than UPOV members and contributors to the database (“third party users”) for the use of any future database. The use of the CPVO database would be restricted to checking variety denominations for compliance with the requirements of the Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) system. In the first instance, use would be confined to contributors of data, comprising CPVO, national authorities and other data providers (e.g. PLANTSCOPE). However, it was possible that, in future, other parties, including breeders, would be granted use of the database. CPVO would retain the possibility of providing the database not only to contributors to the database but also to third party users, free of charge.

*(d) Access to Raw Data for Third Parties*

The UPOV policy was that raw data would be available to members of the Union and contributors of data, but would not be available to other parties. The CPVO policy was that raw data would be available to the relevant authorities of the Member States of the European Union and other organizations contributing data, but would not be available to other parties.

*(e) Creation of UPOV Codes for "New" Species in the Database*

UPOV was responsible for the creation and maintenance of UPOV codes and would develop a procedure for the introduction and maintenance of codes in a timely way.

25. The Vice Secretary-General reported that the Secretary-General of UPOV stated, during the signatory ceremony, that the Memorandum of Understanding marked a milestone in cooperation and the effective use of resources.

26. In reply to a request from the representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Vice Secretary-General said that the Memorandum of Understanding would not be published, however the Memorandum of Understanding would be available to members of the Union.

27. The representative of the European Community welcomed the initiative on cooperation between UPOV and CPVO. Signing the Memorandum of Understanding constituted an important step in the productive and fruitful cooperation between both organizations as its main objective was to avoid overlaps and duplication of work in the development of the CPVO and UPOV databases.

28. The Delegation of the United States of America expressed its gratitude for the cooperation between UPOV and CPVO and questioned whether the Memorandum of Understanding would allow for the amendment of the software in the future. The Technical Director confirmed that the Memorandum of Understanding would not restrict UPOV in the development of software and that the main objective was to share mutual developments in order to ensure the compatibility of both databases.

29. In reply to a question by the representative of the OECD, the Vice Secretary-General confirmed that the Memorandum of Understanding did not modify in any way the information currently submitted by the OECD. The representative of the European Community expressed its intention to continue to include the list of the OECD in the CPVO database.

30. The Delegation of Argentina welcomed the cooperation and encouraged the introduction of simplified means for submitting data to the UPOV database as planned.

31. The representative of the International Seed Federation (ISF) said that both ISF and the International Community of Breeders of Asexually Reproduced Ornamental and Fruit-Tree Varieties (CIOPORA), expressed their appreciation for the development of both databases and requested clarification on who would have access to the databases. In reply to that question, the Technical Director confirmed that, with regard to the UPOV Plant Variety Database, there would be no change to the availability of data through the UPOV-ROM.

Calendar of Meetings in 2005

\*32. The Council approved the calendar of meetings in 2005, as presented in document C/38/8.

Election of the New Chairpersons and the New Vice-Chairpersons

\*33. The Council elected, in each case for a term of three years ending with the forty-first ordinary session of the Council, in 2007:

(a) Mr. Krieno Fikkert (Netherlands), Chairman of the Administrative and Legal Committee;

(b) Mrs. Carmen Gianni (Argentina), Vice-Chairperson of the Administrative and Legal Committee;

(c) Ms. Julia Borys (Poland), Chairperson of the Technical Committee, and

(d) Mrs. Françoise Blouet (France), Vice-Chairperson of the Technical Committee.

\*34. The Council expressed its appreciation to the outgoing Chairpersons, Ms. Nicole Bustin (France), Chairperson of the Administrative and Legal Committee, and Mr. Michael Camlin (United Kingdom), Chairman of the Technical Committee, for the work carried out during their term.

Situation in the Legislative, Administrative and Technical Fields

\*35. The Council noted documents C/38/5, C/38/6, C/38/7 and C/38/11, and no decisions were called for under this agenda item.

36. The Delegation of Austria informed the Council of the accession procedure to the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention which started in 2001, when Austria amended its legislation on new plant varieties of 1991. The Delegation expressed its gratitude to the Vice Secretary-General of UPOV for the assistance provided in the legislative and accession procedures, which culminated with the deposit of the instrument of accession on June 1, 2004. As announced by the President, the 1991 Act entered into force on July 1, 2004. The Delegation referred to the fact that, although there was no significant increase of protected varieties at the national level, there was a considerable number of new plant varieties protected at the European Community level with consequential benefit for Austrian breeders.

37. The Delegation of the United States of America informed the Council on the situation regarding plant patents and the practice of the United States Patents and Trademark Office on the consideration of plant breeders' certificates and related sale overseas as prior art in the context of the examination of plant patent applications. There was no change in status within the United States of America other than that the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences affirmed three cases of rejection by the patent examiners. It was noted that those applicants

could appeal the decisions of the Board to the Federal Circuit. The Delegation very much doubted that the Supreme Court would take the matter up as *certiorari*. At present, a legislative change on the issue was not expected.

*38. The present report has been adopted by correspondence.*

[Annex I follows]

ANNEXE I / ANNEX I / ANLAGE I / ANEXO I

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS / LIST OF PARTICIPANTS /  
TEILNEHMERLISTE / LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

(dans l'ordre alphabétique des noms français des États/in the alphabetical order of the names in French of the States/in alphabetischer Reihenfolge der französischen Namen der Staaten/  
por orden alfabético de los nombres en francés de los Estados)

I. MEMBRES / MEMBERS / VERBANDSMITGLIEDER / MIEMBROS

ALLEMAGNE / GERMANY / DEUTSCHLAND / ALEMANIA

Michael KÖLLER, Referatsleiter Rechtsangelegenheiten, Bundessortenamt, Osterfelddamm 80,  
30627 Hannover (tel.: +49 511 9566624 fax: +49 511 563362  
e-mail: michael.koeller@bundessortenamt.de)

ARGENTINE / ARGENTINA / ARGENTINIEN

Carmen Amelia M. GIANNI (Sra.), Directora de Asuntos Jurídicos, Instituto Nacional de Semillas (INASE), Paseo Colón 922, 3 piso, of. 302, 1063 Buenos Aires (tel.: +54 11 4349 2430  
fax: +54 11 4349 2421 e-mail: cgiann@mecon.gov.ar)

Marcelo LABARTA, Director de Registro de Variedades, Instituto Nacional de Semillas (INASE), Paseo Colón 922, 3 piso, of. 347, 1063 Buenos Aires (tel.: +54 11 4349 2445  
fax: +54 11 4349 2444 e-mail: mlabar@mecon.gov.ar)

AUSTRALIE / AUSTRALIA / AUSTRALIEN

Doug WATERHOUSE, Registrar, Plant Breeder's Rights Office, Australian Government,  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), G.P.O. Box 858, Canberra,  
ACT 2601 (tel.: +61 2 6272 3888 fax: +61 2 6272 3650 e-mail: doug.waterhouse@daff.gov.au)

AUTRICHE / AUSTRIA / ÖSTERREICH

Heinz-Peter ZACH, Leiter des Referates III 9c für Saatgut und Sortenwesen, Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft, Stubenring 12, 1010 Wien  
(tel.: +43 1 711 002795 fax: +43 1 513 8722 e-mail: heinz-peter.zach@bmlfuw.gv.at)

BÉLARUS / BELARUS / BELARÚS

Aleksandr KULINKOVICH, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, 15, avenue de la Paix,  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 7482450 fax: +41 22 7482451  
e-mail: alex.kulinkovich@tut.by)

BELGIQUE / BELGIUM / BELGIEN / BÉLGICA

Camille VANSLEMBROUCK (Mme), Ingénieur, Office de la propriété intellectuelle,  
North Gate III, 5ème étage, 16, blvd. du Roi Albert II, 1000 Bruxelles (tel.: +32 2 2065158  
fax: +32 2 2065750 e-mail: camille.vanslebrouck@mineco.fgov.be)

BOLIVIE / BOLIVIA / BOLIVIEN

Jorge ROSALES KING, Director, Oficina Regional de Semillas, Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Desarrollo Rural, Casilla postal 2736, Santa Cruz de la Sierra (tel.: +591 33 523272 fax: +591 33 523056 e-mail: j.rosales@semillas.org)

Roberto GALLO ARÉBALO, Responsable Área Técnico, UC Programa Nacional de Semillas, Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Desarrollo Rural, Avda. 6 de Agosto de 2006, Ed. V Centenario, Piso 1, Casilla 4793, La Paz (tel.: +591 22 441608 fax: +591 22 441153 e-mail: r.gallo@semillas.org)

BRÉSIL / BRAZIL / BRASILIEN / BRASIL

Ariete DUARTE FOLLE (Mrs.), Commissioner, National Plant Variety Protection Service (SNPC), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply, Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco D, Anexo A, Térreo, Salas 1-12, Brasilia, D.F. 70043-900 (tel.: +55 61 2182163 fax: +55 61 2242842 e-mail: ariete@agricultura.gov.br)

Roberto SANTOS, Agronomist, National Plant Variety Protection Service (SNPC), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply, Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco D, Anexo A, Térreo, Salas 1, CEP 70043-900 Brasilia, D.F. (tel.: +55 61 218 2842 fax: +55 61 224 2842 e-mail: robertolorena@agricultura.gov.br)

BULGARIE / BULGARIA / BULGARIEN

Panajot DIMITROV, Head, Chemistry, Biotechnology, Plant Varieties and Animal Breeds Department, Patent Office, 52B, Dr. G.M. Dimitrov Blvd., 1040 Sofia (tel.: +359 2 9701466 fax: +359 2 8708325 e-mail: pdimitrov@bpo.bg)

CANADA / KANADA / CANADÁ

Valerie SISSON (Ms.), Commissioner, Plant Breeders' Rights Office, Plant Production Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), 59 Camelot Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9 (tel.: +1 613 225 2342 fax: +1 613 228 6629 e-mail: vsisson@inspection.gc.ca)

Christine IRVING (Mrs.), Examiner, Plant Breeder's Rights Office, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Camelot Court, 59 Camelot Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9 (tel.: +1 613 2252342 ext. 4394 fax: +1 613 2286629 e-mail: cirving@inspection.gc.ca)

CHINE / CHINA

CHEN Fengxiu (Ms.), Deputy Director General, Department of Research, Education and Rural Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, 11 Nongzhanguan Nanli, 100026 Beijing (tel.: +86 10 6419 3069 fax: +86 10 6419 3082 e-mail: chenfengx9829@sina.com)

LI Dongsheng, Vice President, Office for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, State Forestry Administration, 18, Hepengli East Street, Beijing 100714 (tel.: +86 10 84238705 fax: +86 10 64213084)

ZHOU Jianren, Division Director, Office for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, State Forestry Administration, 18, Hepengli East Street, Beijing 100714 (tel.: +86 10 8423 9104 fax: +86 10 8423 8883 e-mail: webmaster@cnpvp.net)

LIN Xiangming, Deputy Division Chef, Office for Protection of New Varieties of Plant, Department of Sci-Technology and Education, Ministry of Agriculture, 11 Nongzhanguan Nanli, Beijing 100026 (tel.: +86 10 6419 3069 fax: +86 10 6419 3029 e-mail: kjschqchg@agri.gov.cn)

LI Yanmei (Mrs.), Project Administrator, Department for International Cooperation, State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO), P.O. Box 8020, 6, Xituchenglu Road, Haidian District, Beijing 100088 (tel.: +86 10 6209 3288 fax: +86 10 6201 9615 e-mail: liyanmei@sipo.gov.cn)

ZHAO Yangling (Mrs.), First Secretary, Permanent Mission, 11, chemin de Surville, 1213 Petit-Lancy, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 879 5635 fax: +41 22 879 5037 e-mail: mission.china@ties.itu.int)

DENG Hongmei (Mrs.), Advisor to the Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, 11, chemin de Surville, 1213 Petit-Lancy, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 879 5638 fax: +41 22 879 5037 e-mail: deng\_hongmei@mfa.gov.cn)

COLOMBIE / COLOMBIA / KOLUMBIEN

Ricardo VELEZ BENEDETTI, Ministro Consejero, Misión Permanente, 17-19 chemin du Champ-d'Anier, 1209 Ginebra, Suiza (tel.: +41 22 7984554 fax: +41 22 7984555 e-mail: missioncol3@hotmail.com)

ESPAGNE / SPAIN / SPANIEN / ESPAÑA

Ricardo LÓPEZ DE HARO Y WOOD, Director, Oficina Española de Variedades Vegetales (OEVV), Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (MAPA), Calle Alfonso XII, No. 62, 28014 Madrid (tel.: +34 91 347 8232 fax: +34 91 347 6703 e-mail: lopezdeharo@mapya.es)

Luis SALAICES, Jefe de Área del Registro de Variedades, Oficina Española de Variedades Vegetales (OEVV), Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (MAPA), Calle Alfonso XII, No. 62, 28014 Madrid (tel.: +34 91 347 6712 fax: +34 91 347 6703 e-mail: lsalaice@mapya.es)

ESTONIE / ESTONIA / ESTLAND

Pille ARDEL (Mrs.), Head, Variety Control Department, Plant Production Inspectorate, Vabaduse plats 4, 71020 Viljandi (tel.: +372 433 3946 fax: +372 433 4650 e-mail: pille.ardel@plant.agri.ee)

ÉTATS-UNIS D'AMÉRIQUE / UNITED STATES OF AMERICA /  
VEREINIGTE STAATEN VON AMERIKA / ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

Karen M. HAUDA (Mrs.), Patent Attorney, Office of International Relations, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Mail Stop International Relations, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 (tel.: +1 703 305 9300 ext. 129 fax: +1 703 305 8885  
e-mail: karen.hauda@uspto.gov)

Paul M. ZANKOWSKI, Commissioner, Plant Variety Protection Office, USDA National Agricultural Library (NAL), Room 400, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, MD 20705 - 2351 (tel.: +1 301 504 7475 fax: +1 301 504 5291 e-mail: paul.zankowski@usda.gov)

FÉDÉRATION DE RUSSIE / RUSSIAN FEDERATION / RUSSISCHE FÖDERATION /  
FEDERACIÓN DE RUSIA

Yuri A. ROGOVSKIY, Deputy Chairman, Chief of Methods Department, State Commission of the Russian Federation for Selection Achievements Test and Protection, Orlikov per., 1/11, Moscow 107139 (tel.: +70 095 208 6775 fax: +70 095 207 8626  
e-mail: statecommission@mtu-net.ru)

Madina O. UMAROVA (Mrs.), Expert of Methods Department, State Commission of the Russian Federation for Selection Achievements Test and Protection, Orlikov per., 1/11, Moscow 107139 (tel.: +70 095 208 6775 fax: +70 095 207 8626  
e-mail: gossort@gossort.ru)

Ilya GRIBKOV, Attaché, Permanent Mission, 15, av. de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 733 1870 fax: +41 22 734 4044 e-mail: igribkov@hotmail.com)

FINLANDE / FINLAND / FINNLAND / FINLANDIA

Arto VUORI, Director, Plant Variety Rights Office, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Hallituskatu 3 A, P.O. Box 30, 00023 Government (tel.: +358 9 160 53316  
fax: +358 9 160 52203 e-mail: arto.vuori@mmm.fi)

FRANCE / FRANKREICH / FRANCIA

Nicole BUSTIN (Mlle), Secrétaire général, Comité de la protection des obtentions végétales (CPOV), Ministère de l'agriculture et de la pêche, 11, rue Jean Nicot, 75007 Paris (tel.: +33 1 4275 9314 fax: +33 1 4275 9425 e-mail: nicole.bustin@geves.fr)

HONGRIE / HUNGARY / UNGARN / HUNGRÍA

Karoly NESZMÉLYI, General Director, National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control (NIAQC), Keleti Karoly u. 24, P.O. Box 30, 93, 1024 Budapest (tel.: +36 1 336 9102  
fax: +36 1 336 9099 e-mail: neszmelyik@ommi.hu)

Márta POSTEINER-TOLDI (Mrs.), Vice-President, Hungarian Patent Office, Garibaldi u. 2, 1054 Budapest (tel.: +36 1 311 4841 fax: +36 1 302 3822 e-mail: posteiner@hpo.hu)

Mária GORKA-HORVAI (Mrs.), Deputy-Head of Section, Agriculture and Plant Variety Protection Section, Hungarian Patent Office, Garibaldi u. 2, 1054 Budapest (tel.: +36 1 474 5915 fax: +36 1 474 5914 e-mail: gorkane@hpo.hu)

IRLANDE / IRELAND / IRLAND / IRLANDA

David McGILLOWAY, Office of the Controller of Plant Breeders' Rights, Department of Agriculture and Food, National Crop Variety Testing Centre, Backweston, Leixlip, Co. Kildare (tel.: +353 1 630 2913 fax: +353 1 628 0634 e-mail: david.mcgilloway@agriculture.gov.ie)

ISRAËL / ISRAEL

Michal SGAN-COHEN (Mrs.), Senior Deputy Legal Advisor and Registrar (Plant Breeders' Rights), Legal Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, P.O. Box 30, Bet-Dagan 50200 (tel.: +972 3 9485499 fax: +972 3 9485898 e-mail: michalsc@moag.gov.il)

JAPON / JAPAN / JAPÓN

Keiji TERAZAWA, Director, Seeds and Seedlings Division, Agricultural Production Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8950 (tel.: +81 3 3591 0524 fax: +81 3 3502 5301 e-mail: keiji\_terazawa@nm.maff.go.jp)

Jun KOIDE, Deputy Director, International Affairs, Seeds and Seedlings Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8950 (tel.: +81 3 3501 8111 ext. 3716 fax: +81 3 3502 5301 e-mail: jun\_koide@nm.maff.go.jp)

JORDANIE / JORDAN / JORDANIEN / JORDANIA

Moussa BURAYZAT, Ambassador, Permanent Mission, 37-39, rue de Vermont, 1202 Geneva 20, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 748 2000 fax: +41 22 748 2001 e-mail: mission.jordan@ties.itu.int)

Hussam AL HUSSEINI, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, 37-39, rue de Vermont, 1202 Geneva 20, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 748 2000 fax: +41 22 748 2001 e-mail: mission.jordan@ties.itu.int)

KENYA / KENIA

Evans O. SIKINYI, Manager, Plant Variety Protection Office, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), P.O. Box 49592-00100, Oloolua Ridge Karen, Nairobi (tel.: +254 20 884545 fax: +254 20 882265 e-mail: kephis@nbnet.co.ke)

LETTONIE / LATVIA / LETTLAND / LETONIA

Sergejs KATANENKO, Director, Plant Variety Testing Department, State Plant Protection Service, Lubanas iela, 49, 1073 Riga (tel.: +371 7365567 fax: +371 7365571 e-mail: sergejs.katanenko@vaad.gov.lv)

LITUANIE / LITHUANIA / LITAUEN / LITUANIA

Sigita JUCIUVIENE (Mrs.), Deputy Director, Lithuanian State Plant Varieties Testing Centre, Smelio 8, 10324 Vilnius (tel.: +370 5 2343647 fax: +370 5 2341862 e-mail: sigita.juciuviene@avtc.lt)

MEXIQUE / MEXICO / MEXIKO / MÉXICO

Enriqueta MOLINA MACÍAS (Srta.), Directora, Servicio Nacional de Inspección y Certificación de Semillas (SNICS), Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación (SAGARPA), Av. Presidente Juárez, 13, Col. El Cortijo, Tlalnepantla, Estado de México 54000 (tel.: +52 55 5384 2210 fax: +52 55 5390 1441 e-mail: enriqueta.molina@sagarpa.gob.mx)

Juan Manuel SÁNCHEZ CONTRERAS, Tercer Secretario, Misión Permanente, 16, avenue de Budé, 1202 Ginebra, Suiza (tel.: +41 22 748 0707 fax: +41 22 748 0708 e-mail: juan.sanchez@ties.itu.int)

NORVÈGE / NORWAY / NORWEGEN / NORUEGA

Haakon SØNJU, Registrar, Plant Variety Board, P.O. Box 3, 1431 Aas (tel.: +47 64 944400 fax: +47 64 944410 e-mail: haakon.sonju@mattilsynet.no)

Kåre SELVIK, Director General, Head of Plant Variety Board, Royal Ministry of Agriculture, Akersgt. 59, P.O. Box 8007 Dep., 0030 Oslo (tel.: +47 2 224 9253 fax: +47 2 224 2753 e-mail: kare.selvik@lmd.dep.no)

NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE / NEW ZEALAND / NEUSEELAND / NUEVA ZELANDIA

Christopher J. BARNABY, Assistant Commissioner of Plant Variety Rights / Examiner of Fruit and Ornamental Varieties, Plant Variety Rights Office (PVRO), Private Bag 4714, Christchurch 8001 (tel.: +64 3 962 6206 fax: +64 3 962 6202 e-mail: chris.barnaby@pvr.govt.nz)

OUZBÉKISTAN / UZBEKISTAN / USBEKISTAN / UZBEKISTÁN

Nodir GANIYEV, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, 20, route de Pré-Bois, 1215 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 799 4300 fax: +41 22 799 4302 e-mail: uzbekistan@bluewin.ch)

PANAMA / PANAMÁ

Ivan VERGARA, Consejero Legal, Misión Permanente, 94, rue de Lausanne, 1202 Ginebra, Suiza (tel.: +41 22 906 4999 fax: +41 22 906 4990 e-mail: ivan.vergara@ties.itu.ch)

PAYS-BAS / NETHERLANDS / NIEDERLANDE / PAÍSES BAJOS

Christianus M.M. VAN WINDEN, Account Manager Propagating Material, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Postbus 20401, 2500 EK The Hague (tel.: +31 70 3784281 fax: +31 70 3786156 e-mail: c.m.m.van.winden@minlnv.nl)

Krieno Adriaan FIKKERT, Secretary-General, Board for Plant Breeders' Rights, Postbus 27, 6710 BA Ede (tel.: +31 318 822580 fax: +31 318 822589 e-mail: k.a.fikkert@rkr.agro.nl)

POLOGNE / POLAND / POLEN / POLONIA

Edward S. GACEK, Director General, Research Centre for Cultivar Testing (COBORU),  
63-022 Slupia Wielka (tel.: +48 61 285 2341 fax: +48 61 285 3558 e-mail: e.gacek@coboru.pl)

Julia BORYS (Ms.), Head, DUS Testing Department, Research Centre for Cultivar  
Testing (COBORU), 63-022 Slupia Wielka (tel.: +48 61 285 2341 fax: +48 61 285 3558  
e-mail: j.borys@coboru.pl)

Alicja RUTKOWSKA-ŁOŚ (Mrs.), Head, National Listing and Plant Breeders' Rights  
Protection Office, Research Centre for Cultivar Testing (COBORU), 63-022 Slupia Wielka  
(tel.: +48 61 285 2341 fax: +48 61 285 3558 e-mail: a.rutkowska@coboru.pl)

PORTUGAL

Carlos PEREIRA GODINHO, Head, Plant Breeders' Rights and National List Office, National  
Center for Registration of Protected Varieties, General Direction for the Protection of Crops  
(DGPC), Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries (MADRP), Edificio II da  
DGPC, Tapada da Ajuda, 1349-018 Lisboa (tel.: +351 213 613 200 fax: +351 213 613 222  
e-mail: cgodinho@dgpc.min-agricultura.pt)

José S. DE CALHEIROS DA GAMA, Legal Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Case postale 160,  
1211 Geneva 7, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 9180200 fax: +41 22 918 0228  
e-mail: mission.portugal@ties.itu.int)

RÉPUBLIQUE DE CORÉE / REPUBLIC OF KOREA / REPUBLIK KOREA /  
REPÚBLICA DE COREA

AHN Hyung-Geun, Researcher, National Seed Management Office, 268-1, Pyungchon-ri,  
Sangnam-myun Milyang, Kyungsangnam-do (tel.: +82 55 3532571 fax: +82 55 352 7959  
e-mail: hgahn@seed.go.kr)

CHOI Keun-Jin, Examination Officer, National Seed Management Office (NSMO), Ministry of  
Agriculture and Forestry, 328, Jungangro Mananku, Anyangsi, Anyang City,  
Kyunggi-do 430-016 (tel.: +82 31 4670190 fax: +82 31 4670161 e-mail: kjchoi@seed.go.kr)

RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE / CZECH REPUBLIC / TSCHECHISCHE REPUBLIK /  
REPÚBLICA CHECA

Jiří SOUČEK, Head of Department, Department of Plant Variety Rights and DUS Tests, Central  
Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture (ÚKZÚZ), Za opravnou 4, 150 06 Praha 5 -  
Motol (tel.: +420 257 211755 fax: +420 257 211752 e-mail: jiri.soucek@ukzuz.cz)

Ludmila ŠTĚRBOVÁ (Mrs.), First Secretary, Permanent Mission, 17, chemin Louis Dunant,  
1211 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 910 3780 fax: +41 22 740 3662  
e-mail: l.sterbova@centrum.cz)

ROUMANIE / ROMANIA / RUMÄNIEN / RUMANIA

Adriana PARASCHIV (Mrs.), Head, Examination Department, State Office for Inventions and Trademarks (OSIM), 5, Ion Ghica, Sector 3, P.O. Box 52, 030044 Bucharest 3  
(tel.: +40 21 3155698 fax: +40 21 3123819 e-mail: adriana.paraschiv@osim.ro)

Mihaela-Rodica CIORA (Mrs.), Counsellor, State Institute for Variety Testing and Registration, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, 61, B-Dul Marasti, Sector 1, 011464 Bucharest  
(tel.: +40 21 255 0007 fax: +40 21 222 5605 e-mail: mihaela\_ciora@gmx.net)

Carmen STEFAN (Mrs.), Legal Advisor, Legal and International Cooperation Division, State Office for Inventions and Trademarks, 5, Ion Ghica Str., Sector 3, P.O. Box 52, 030044 Bucharest 3 (tel.: +40 1 315 1966 fax: +40 1 312 3819 e-mail: office@osim.ro)

ROYAUME-UNI / UNITED KINGDOM / VEREINIGTES KÖNIGREICH / REINO UNIDO

Michael H. MILLER, Policy Administrator, Plant Variety Rights Office and Seeds Division, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), White House Lane, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0LF (tel.: +44 1223 342 375 fax: +44 1223 342 386 e-mail: michael.miller@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

SINGAPOUR / SINGAPORE / SINGAPUR

Dennis LOW, Senior Assistant Director, Legal Policy and International Affairs, Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS), #04-01 Plaza By The Park, 51 Bras Basah Road, Singapore 189554 (tel.: +65 6331 6580 fax: +65 6339 0252 e-mail: dennis\_low@ipos.gov.sg)

SLOVAQUIE / SLOVAKIA / SLOWAKEI / ESLOVAQUIA

Bronislava BÁTOROVÁ (Ms.), Senior Officer, Central Control and Testing Institute in Agriculture (ÚKZÚP), Stefánikova 88, 949 01 Nitra (tel.: +421 37 6551080 fax: +421 37 6523086 e-mail: bathorovab@stonline.sk)

SUÈDE / SWEDEN / SCHWEDEN / SUECIA

Karl Olov ÖSTER, President, National Plant Variety Board, Box 1287, 171 24 Solna (tel.: +46 8 7831260 fax: +46 8 833170 e-mail: karl.olv.oster@svn.se)

Gunnar KARLTORP, Head of Office, National Plant Variety Board, Box 1247, 171 24 Solna (tel.: +46 8 7831260 fax: +46 8 833170 e-mail: karltorp@svn.se)

SUISSE / SWITZERLAND / SCHWEIZ / SUIZA

Pierre Alex MIAUTON, Chef de Service, Certification - semences et plants, Station fédérale de recherches en production végétale de Changins, Agroscope, Case postale 254, 1260 Nyon 1 (tel.: +41 22 3634668 fax: +41 22 3634690 e-mail: pierre.miauton@rac.admin.ch)

Manuela BRAND (Frau), Leiterin Sortenschutz, Hauptabteilung Forschung und Beratung, Eidgenössisches Volkswirtschaftsdepartment, Bundesamt für Landwirtschaft, Mattenhofstrasse 5, 3003 Bern (tel.: +41 31 3222524 fax: +41 31 3222634 e-mail: manuela.brand@blw.admin.ch)

TRINITÉ-ET-TOBAGO / TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO / TRINIDAD UND TOBAGO /  
TRINIDAD Y TABAGO

Richard ACHING, Senior Examiner (Technical), Intellectual Property Office, Ministry of Legal Affairs, 72-74 South Quay, Port of Spain (tel.: +1-868 6259972 fax: +1-868 6241221 e-mail: richard.aching@ipo.gov.tt)

TUNISIE / TUNISIA / TUNESIEN / TÚNEZ

Mares HAMDI, Directeur général, Conseiller des services publics, Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'environnement et des ressources hydrauliques, 30, rue Alain Savary, 1002 Tunis (tel.: +216 71 842317 fax: +216 71 784419 e-mail: mares.hamdi@iresa.agrinet.tn)

UKRAINE / UCRANIA

Svitlana TKACHYK (Mrs.), Deputy Director, Ukrainian Institute for Plant Variety Examination, 15, Heneral Rodimtseva str., 03041 Kyiv (tel.: +380 44 257 3456 fax: +380 44 257 9963 e-mail: sops@sops.gov.ua)

Oksana V. ZHMURKO (Mrs.), Head, Department of International Cooperation, Scientific and Informational Provision, Ukrainian Institute for Plant Variety Examination, 15, Heneral Rodimtseva str., 03041 Kyiv (tel.: +380 44 257 3456 fax: +380 44 257 9963 e-mail: zhmurko@sops.gov.ua)

URUGUAY

Gustavo E. BLANCO DEMARCO, Asesor, Ministerio de Ganadería, Agricultura y Pesca, Constituyente 1476, Piso 3, 11200 Montevideo (tel.: +598 2 412 6308 fax: +598 2 412 6331 e-mail: gblanco@mgap.gub.uy)

Mariela IBARRA DUTRA (Sra.), Instituto Nacional de Semillas (INASE), C. Bertolotti S/No y Ruta 8, km 29, 90 000 Canelones (tel.: +598 2 288 70 99 fax: +598 2 288 70 77 e-mail: inasemid@adinet.com.uy)

II. OBSERVATEURS / OBSERVERS / BEOBACHTER / OBSERVADORES

ALBANIE / ALBANIA / ALBANIEN

Petrit TOPI, Director, National Institute for Seed and Seedlings, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Rr. Siri Kodra, Tirana (tel./fax: +355 4 362 419 e-mail: petrítottopi@yahoo.com)

Fetah ELEZI, Head, Department for Varieties Testing, National Institute for Seed and Seedlings, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Rr. Siri Kodra, Tirana (tel.: +355 4 230 324 fax: +355 4 362 419 e-mail: fetahlezi@yahoo.com)

ARABIE SAOUDITE / SAUDI ARABIA / SAUDI-ARABIEN / ARABIA SAUDITA

Abdulaziz AL JOWAED, Head of Section, Seed Control, National Center of Agricultural Research, P.O. Box 17285, Riyadh 11484 (tel.: +966 1 4576 780 Ext. 2277 fax: +966 1 458 4797)

ÉGYPTE / EGYPT / ÄGYPTEN / EGIPTO

Abdelazeem El-Tantawi BADAWI, President, Agricultural Research Center (ARC), Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, 9, Gamaa Street, 12619 Giza (tel.: +20 2 5736570  
fax: +20 2 5736570 e-mail: badawi\_a\_tantawi@dns.claes.sci.eg)

Essam Kamel ABOU-ZEID, Head, Central Administration for Seed Testing and Certification (CASC), P.O. Box 147, Giza, 12211 Cairo (tel.: +20 2 572 0839  
fax: +20 2 572 5998 e-mail: casc@casc.gov.eg)

Gamal Eissa ATTYA, Head, Plant Variety Protection Office, Central Administration for Seed Testing and Certification (CASC), P.O. Box 147, Giza, 12211 Cairo (tel.: +20 2 572 8962  
fax: +20 2 572 5998 e-mail: gamal\_attya@hotmail.com)

Ahmed ABDEL-LATIF, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, 49, avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 731 2638 fax: +41 22 738 4415  
e-mail: abdelatif@yahoo.com)

IRAQ / IRAK

Mukdad H. M. SALMAN, Chargé d'Affaires, Permanent Mission, 28a, chemin du Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 918 0980 fax: +41 22 733 0326  
e-mail: mission.iraq@ties.itu.int)

Nawfal T. AL-BASRI, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, 28a, chemin du Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 918 0980 fax: +41 22 733 0326  
e-mail: mission.iraq@ties.itu.int)

MALAISIE / MALAYSIA / MALASIA

Mohd Husin YUNUS, Director, Accreditation Division, Department of Agriculture, Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50632 Kuala Lumpur Lumpur (tel.: +603 2 617 5264 fax: +603 2 689 3005  
e-mail: hussin@doa.moa.my)

Cheah LEE SHEN, Assistant Director, Vegetable and Field Crop Division, Department of Agriculture, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wisma Tani, Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50632 Kuala Lumpur (tel.: +603 2 617 5352 fax: +603 2 689 3005 e-mail: cheahls@doa.moa.my)

Wan A. Yusri WAN ABDUL RASHID, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Case postale 1834, 1215 Geneva 15, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 710 7506 fax: +41 22 710 7501  
e-mail: wayusri@kln.gov.my)

MAURICE / MAURITIUS / MAURICIO

Maghespren CHINAPPEN, Principal Research & Development Officer, Division of Plant Pathology & Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Technology and Natural Resources, Reduit (tel.: +230 464 48 72 fax: +230 465 95 91 e-mail: plpath@intnet.mu)

OMAN / OMÁN

Zakariya AL-SA'DI, First Secretary, Permanent Mission, 3a, chemin de Roilbot, 1292 Chambésy, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 7589660 fax: +41 22 7589666  
e-mail: mission.oman@ties.itu.int)

PÉROU / PERU / PERÚ

Alejandro NEYRA, Segundo Secretario, Misión Permanente, 31, avenue Louis Casai,  
1206 Ginebra, Suiza (tel.: +41 22 791 7724 fax: +41 22 791 7729  
e-mail: alejandro.neyra@ties.itu.int)

SERBIE-ET-MONTÉNÉGRO / SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO /  
SERBIEN UND MONTENEGRO / SERBIA Y MONTENEGRO

Ivana MILOVANOVIĆ (Mrs.), Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, 5, chemin Thury,  
1206 Geneva, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 839 3344 fax: +41 22 839 3359  
e-mail: ivana.milovanovic@ties.itu.int)

THAÏLANDE / THAILAND / TAILANDIA

Chutima RATANASATIEN, Senior Agricultural Scientist, Plant Varieties Protection Division,  
Department of Agriculture, Phaholyothin Road, Ladyao, Chatuchak, 10900 Bangkok  
(tel.: +66 2 940 5628 fax: +66 2 579 0548 e-mail: chutima\_ratanasatien@yahoo.com)

TURQUIE / TURKEY / TÜRKİE / TURQUÍA

Kamil YILMAZ, Director, Variety Registration and Seed Certification Centre, Ministry of  
Agriculture and Rural Affairs, P.O. Box 107, 06172 Yenimahalle – Ankara  
(tel.: +90 312 315 8874 fax: +90 312 315 0901 e-mail: kamil\_yilmaz@ankara.tagem.gov.tr)

Hakan KIVANÇ, Counsellor, Permanent Mission, P.O.Box 271, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland  
(tel.: +41 22 918 5080 fax: +41 22 734 0859 e-mail: mission.turkey@ties.itu.int)

Suleyman KARAHAN, Director, Cereals and Food Legumes Division, General Directorate of  
Agricultural Research, P.O. Box 78, Ankara (tel.: +90 312 343 5675 fax: +90 312 315 2698  
e-mail: karahan1956@yahoo.com)

III. ORGANISATIONS / ORGANIZATIONS / ORGANISATIONEN /  
ORGANIZACIONES

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE (OMPI) /  
WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION (WIPO) /  
WELTORGANISATION FÜR GEISTIGES EIGENTUM (WIPO) /  
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DE LA PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL (OMPI)

Karen LEE RATA (Mrs.), Senior Counsellor, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO),  
34, chemin des Colombettes, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  
(tel.: +41 22 338 9960 e-mail: karen.lee@wipo.int)

ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ALIMENTATION ET  
L'AGRICULTURE (FAO) / FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS (FAO) / ERNÄHRUNGS- UND LANDWIRTSCHAFTS-  
ORGANISATION DER VEREINTEN NATIONEN (FAO) / ORGANIZACIÓN DE LAS  
NACIONES UNIDAS PARA LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACIÓN (FAO)

Arturo MARTÍNEZ, Chief, Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Services, Plant Production and Protection Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Room C-720, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy (tel.: +39 06 570 56574 fax: +39 06 522 53 152 e-mail: arturo.martinez@fao.org)

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU COMMERCE (OMC) / WORLD TRADE  
ORGANIZATION (WTO) / WELTHANDELSORGANISATION (WTO) /  
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL COMERCIO (OMC)

Wolf MEIER-EWERT, Legal Officer, Intellectual Property Division, World Trade Organization (WTO), Centre William Rappard, 154, rue de Lausanne, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 739 5111 fax: +41 22 731 4206 e-mail : wolf.meier.ewert@wto.org)

COMMUNAUTÉ EUROPÉENNE / EUROPEAN COMMUNITY /  
EUROPÄISCHE GEMEINSCHAFT / COMUNIDAD EUROPEA

Jacques GENNATAS, Head of Sector, Unit E1, Plant Variety Property Rights, Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General, European Commission, 101, rue Froissart, Office: F101 05/92, 1049 Brussels, Belgium (tel.: +32 2 295 9713 fax: +32 2 296 9399 e-mail: jacques.gennatas@cec.eu.int)

Bart KIEWIET, President, Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), 3, boulevard Maréchal Foch, B.P. 2141, 49021 Angers Cedex 02, France (tel.: +33 2 4125 6412 fax: +33 2 4125 6410 e-mail: kiewiet@cpvo.eu.int)

José M. ELENA, Vice-President, Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), 3, boulevard Maréchal Foch, B.P. 62141, 49021 Angers Cedex 02, France (tel.: +33 2 4125 6413 fax: +33 2 4125 6410 e-mail: elena@cpvo.eu.int)

Oliver R. B. SLOCOCK, First Secretary, EC Delegation, 37-39, rue de Vermont, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (tel.: 022 918 2219 fax: 022 734 2236 e-mail: oliver.slock@cec.eu.int)

ORGANISATION DE COOPÉRATION ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUES  
(OCDE) / ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
(OECD) / ORGANISATION FÜR WIRTSCHAFTLICHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT UND  
ENTWICKLUNG (OECD) / ORGANIZACIÓN DE COOPERACIÓN Y DESARROLLO  
ECONÓMICOS (OCDE)

Jean-Marie DEBOIS, Chef, Codes et systèmes agricoles, Division des échanges et marchés agricoles, Direction de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des pêcheries, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France (tel.: +33 1 45249548 fax: +33 1 44306117 e-mail: jean-marie.debois@oecd.org)

AGENCE EUROPÉENNE DES SEMENCES (ESA) / EUROPEAN SEED ASSOCIATION (ESA) / EUROPÄISCHER SAATGUTVERBAND (ESA)

Garlich VON ESSEN, Secretary General, European Seed Association (ESA),  
23, rue du Luxembourg, 1000 Brussels, Belgium (tel.: +32 2 743 2860 fax: +32 2 743 2869  
e-mail: vonessen@euroseeds.org)

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA PROTECTION DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE (AIPPI) / INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (AIPPI) / INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG FÜR DEN SCHUTZ DES GEISTIGEN EIGENTUMS (AIPPI) / ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LA PROTECCIÓN DE LA PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL (AIPPI)

Sharon Claire BALDOCK (Mrs.), Patent Attorney, Boulton Wade Tennant, 70, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8BT, United Kingdom (tel.: +44 207 430 7500 fax: +44 207 430 7600  
e-mail: cbaldock@boulton.com)

ASSOCIATION DES OBTENTEURS HORTICOLES EUROPÉENS (AOHE) / ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL BREEDERS (AOHE) / ASOCIACIÓN DE OBTENTORES HORTÍCOLAS EUROPEOS (AOHE)

Alain MEILLAND, President, Meilland International, 59, chemin des Nielles, 06600 Antibes, France (tel.: +33 49 450 0325 fax: +33 49 361 8629 e-mail: meilland@wanadoo.fr)

COMMUNAUTÉ INTERNATIONALE DES OBTENTEURS DE PLANTES ORNEMENTALES ET FRUITIÈRES DE REPRODUCTION ASEXUÉE (CIOPORA) / INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF BREEDERS OF ASEXUALLY REPRODUCED ORNAMENTAL AND FRUIT-TREE VARIETIES (CIOPORA) / INTERNATIONALE GEMEINSCHAFT DER ZÜCHTER VEGETATIV VERMEHRBARER ZIER- UND OBSTPFLANZEN (CIOPORA) / COMUNIDAD INTERNACIONAL DE OBTENTORES DE VARIETADES ORNAMENTALES Y FRUTALES DE REPRODUCCIÓN ASEXUADA (CIOPORA)

Edgar KRIEGER, Executive Secretary, International Community of Breeders of Asexually Reproduced Ornamental and Fruit-Tree Varieties (CIOPORA) (Administrative Office), Düsternstrasse 3, 20355 Hamburg, Germany (tel.: +49 40 555 63 702 fax: +49 40 555 63 703  
e-mail: info@ciopora.org)

Alain MEILLAND, President, Meilland International, 59, chemin des Nielles, 06600 Antibes, France (tel.: +33 49 450 0325 fax: +33 49 361 8629 e-mail: meilland@wanadoo.fr)

COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS (CNIPA)

Sharon Claire BALDOCK (Mrs.), Patent Attorney, Boulton Wade Tennant, 70, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8BT, United Kingdom (tel.: +44 207 430 7500 fax: +44 207 430 7600  
e-mail: cbaldock@boulton.com)

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES SEMENCES (ISF) / INTERNATIONAL SEED  
FEDERATION (ISF) / INTERNATIONALER SAATGUTVERBAND (ISF) /  
FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE SEMILLAS (ISF)

Bernard LE BUANEC, Secretary General, International Seed Federation (ISF),  
7, chemin du Reposoir, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland (tel.: +41 22 365 44 20 fax: +41 22 365 44 21  
e-mail: isf@worldseed.org)

Barry GREENGRASS, Advisor, 55 Pratt Street, London NW1 OBJ, United Kingdom  
(tel.: +44 207 267 9097 e-mail: barry\_greengrass@hotmail.com)

Juan Carlos MARTÍNEZ, Coordinator, Latin-American Federation of Seed Associations  
(FELAS), Calle 72, 12-65, Oficina 406, Bogotá D.C., Colombia (tel.: +34 976 226410  
fax: +34 976 212197 e-mail: felas@felas.org)

IV. BUREAU / OFFICERS / VORSITZ / OFICINA

Enriqueta MOLINA MACÍAS (Miss), President  
Doug WATERHOUSE, Vice-President

V. BUREAU DE L'OMPI / OFFICE OF WIPO / BÜRO DER WIPO /  
OFICINA DE LA OMPI

Philippe FAVATIER, Director, Finance Division

VI. BUREAU DE L'UPOV / OFFICE OF UPOV /  
BÜRO DER UPOV / OFICINA DE LA UPOV

Rolf JÖRDENS, Vice Secretary-General  
Peter BUTTON, Technical Director  
Raimundo LAVIGNOLLE, Senior Counsellor  
Makoto TABATA, Senior Counsellor  
Yolanda HUERTA (Mrs.), Senior Legal Officer

[L'annexe II suit/  
Annex II follows/  
Anlage II folgt/  
Sigue el Anexo II]

ANNEX II

DECLARATION BY THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

Madam President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Singapore is very pleased to become a member of UPOV. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Singapore and of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, I would like to express our appreciation for the warm welcome extended by our dear friends and colleagues of the Union.

On October 23, 2003, Singapore's draft Plant Varieties Protection Bill was given a positive decision with regard to its conformity with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention by the Council of UPOV. The Plant Varieties Protection Act of Singapore was passed by the Singapore Parliament on June 15, 2004, and published in the Government Gazette on June 25, 2004. The Act came into force on July 1, 2004.

On June 30, 2004, Singapore deposited its instrument of accession to the UPOV Convention (1991 Act). On July 30, 2004, Singapore became the fifty-fifth member of UPOV.

In Singapore, the Plant Varieties Protection (PVP) regime falls under the purview and responsibility of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS). IPOS, being the national intellectual property authority in Singapore, has the appropriate legal expertise and institutional framework to administer the grant of PVP rights.

The Agri-food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) is the prescribed examination authority which carries out DUS testing in Singapore under the Plant Varieties Protection Act 2004. As of today, protection is available in Singapore for 15 genera and species.

We are grateful for the assistance and friendship extended by the Office of the Union in our accession procedure to the UPOV Convention.

I would also like to thank the experts from those members of the Union who have shared their information and experience with Singapore.

Thank you.

[Annex III follows]

ANNEX III

DECLARATION BY THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Madam President,  
Distinguished Representatives,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be here today among you, representing the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as a new member of the UPOV family.

Jordan is very pleased to become a member of UPOV and appreciates the warm welcome into the Union. Jordan looks forward to working with all members to promote the purposes and objectives of the Convention (1991 Act).

The Law for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan entered into force on August 2, 2000. On October 23, 2003, the Council of UPOV took a positive decision on the conformity of the Law for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention.

On September 24, 2004, Jordan deposited its instrument of accession to the UPOV Convention (1991 Act). On October 24, 2004, Jordan will become the fifty-sixth member of UPOV.

Plant breeders' rights in Jordan fall under the responsibility of the Technical Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture. This Committee has the appropriate legal and institutional framework for the protection of plant breeders' rights. Its staff received adequate training in Jordan and abroad in the field of plant breeders' rights.

Jordan cooperates in DUS testing with several institutions including the USAID and others for whose assistance we are very appreciative. As of today, protection is available in Jordan for twenty genera and species.

Finally, I would like to express our gratitude and recognition for the assistance we received from the Office of the Union during Jordan's accession process to the UPOV Convention.

Thank you, Madam President.

[Annex IV follows]

ANNEX IV

DECLARATION BY THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

Madam President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Management, Uzbekistan appreciates the warm welcome into the UPOV family. We are very honored to be a member of UPOV.

On October 14, 2004, Uzbekistan deposited its instrument of accession to the UPOV Convention (1991 Act). On November 14, 2004, Uzbekistan will become the fifty-seventh member of UPOV.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Selection Achievements was adopted on August 30, 2002. On October 23, 2003, the Council of UPOV took a positive decision on the conformity of the Law with the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention.

Plant breeders' rights in Uzbekistan fall under the responsibility of the State Patent Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan. That Office has the appropriate legal and institutional framework for the grant of protection of plant breeders' rights. The staff received excellent training during the Seminar on "The nature and basic principles of the protection of plant breeders' rights under the UPOV Convention", organized by UPOV in 1996, and the National Seminar on "Protection of species and plant breeders' rights in the framework of the UPOV Convention", which was held in 2002.

Uzbekistan cooperates in DUS testing with the CIS countries. As of today, protection is available in Uzbekistan for 41 genera and species.

I would like to extend our gratitude for the assistance rendered by the Office of the Union in the accession procedure of Uzbekistan to the UPOV Convention.

I would like also to convey thanks to the experts of the Union Mr. Rolf Jördens, Vice Secretary-General, Mr. V. Derbenskiy, and other authorities of members of the Union for their help and cooperation.

Thank you.

[Annex V follows]

ANNEX V

INTERVENTION BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Chairperson,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here and to be able to address you on behalf of FAO and address you on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, which entered into force on June 29, 2004. Ratification of the Treaty continues apace: when leaving Rome, 60 States and the European Union had ratified the Treaty.

Since the 1950s, FAO has provided a forum for the development of common international action on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. By the early 1980s, tensions had appeared between developed and developing countries, which began to feel that, although they were the origin of most of these resources, there was an imbalance in the sharing of the benefits of their use. To find common ground, the 1983 FAO Conference adopted a voluntary international instrument to address the conservation and sustainable utilization of these resources, and access and benefit-sharing. This was the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, the precursor of the International Treaty.

As many here are aware, a political process to negotiate an agreed interpretation of the International Undertaking was necessary to attempt to calm these tensions. This made specific reference to UPOV. By 1991, the International Undertaking had recognized three things: national sovereignty over plant genetic resources; the compatibility of plant breeders' rights, such as the UPOV system; and farmers' rights, that is, recognition of the contribution made by generations of farmers around the world, and the need to create incentives to support the continuation of farmers' contributions. The International Undertaking also provided the current framework in which the crucial *ex situ* collections of plant genetic resources, kept by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, are held in trust for the international community, and made freely available to plant breeders.

The management of agricultural biodiversity was complicated by the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992. The CBD recognizes that the authority to determine access to genetic resources rests with the national governments and is subject to national legislation. "Access", where granted, "shall be on mutually agreed terms" and "subject to prior informed consent ... unless otherwise determined". In practice, this has led to many contractual case-by case access and benefit-sharing agreements, on the model of bioprospecting for pharmaceuticals. Such procedures are of doubtful applicability in plant breeding, where a variety draws on many prior varieties, each in itself the product of prior crossings. The CBD has, in fact, itself recognized "the special nature of agricultural biodiversity, its distinctive features, and problems needing distinctive solutions", and the International Treaty is intended to provide such solutions, in harmony with the CBD.

I shall not describe the Treaty in detail here, but comment on two matters of interest to UPOV and its members: Farmers' Rights, and the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing.

For the first time in a binding international agreement, Farmer's Rights are recognized, on the basis of "the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world, particularly those in the centres of origin and crop diversity, have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources which constitute the basis of food and agriculture production throughout the world". The responsibility for realizing Farmers' Rights rests with national governments. In accordance with their needs and priorities, each government should, as appropriate, and subject to its national legislation, take measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights in various ways, among others: by protecting relevant traditional knowledge; by making provision for farmers to participate equitably in sharing benefits; and by ensuring that farmers participate in national decision-making about plant genetic resources. Let me emphasize that farmers' rights are not an intellectual property right, nor do they derive from individual exchanges of genetic material, or establish any system of protection of varieties, be they traditional or the result of modern breeding.

The Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing in the Treaty aims to facilitate access by breeders and researchers to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and to share, in a fair and equitable way, the benefits arising from their use. It covers a list of 64 crops established according to criteria of food security and interdependence. These crops provide about 80% of the food we derive from plants. Governments will bring into the Multilateral System all such resources that are under their management and control and in the public domain. The resources held by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research will also be brought in.

The Multilateral System is built around the concept that its materials should be freely usable for plant breeding. The Treaty stipulates that recipients cannot claim "intellectual property or other rights that limit the facilitated access to the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, or their genetic parts or components, in the form received from the Multilateral System". It also recognizes that access to material under development (including by farmers and other plant breeders) will be at the developer's discretion. Access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture protected by intellectual and other property rights will be subject to the relevant national and international rules. The Treaty's terms of access are fully compatible with the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Because these plant genetic resources are treated as a pooled good, there is no individual owner with whom individual contracts for access and benefit-sharing must be negotiated. As such, benefits resulting from their use do not go back to the provider, but must be shared in multilateral ways to support projects, program and activities, largely in developing countries, under the guidance of the Treaty's Governing Body.

There are specific and innovative provisions for monetary benefit-sharing. "A recipient who commercializes a product that is a plant genetic resource for food and agriculture and that incorporates material accessed from the Multilateral System, shall pay [...] an equitable share of the benefits arising from the commercialization of that product, except whenever such a product is available without restriction to others for further research and breeding, in which case the recipient who commercializes shall be encouraged to make such payment". I draw your attention to the facts that the trigger for monetary benefit-sharing is not intellectual property rights, but commercialization, in ways that prevent others using the materials for further research and breeding. The Treaty is neutral as to intellectual property rights (be they patents or PVP), but not to situations where breeding materials are not made available for further breeding, that is, where they are abstracted from the pooled good.

The Treaty is intended to be mutually supportive of all relevant international instruments. Clearly, the concept of availability without restriction to others for further research and breeding under the Multilateral System co-exists with the Breeders' Exemption under the UPOV system. In both cases, the aim of the provisions is to improve the effective use of plant genetic resources in agriculture, for sustainable agriculture and food security.

The Treaty is now at the crucial stage of the preparation of the first meeting of the Governing Body. We have recently held a successful meeting of the Expert Group on the terms of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement, which will accompany every transaction of plant genetic resources exchanged within the Multilateral System. The Governing Body must adopt the standard Material Transfer Agreement in order to implement the Multilateral System. I should like to note that the Interim Committee for the Treaty invited only three organizations to be present, because of their obvious interest in the matters under discussion: the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and UPOV. We actually had the privilege to have UPOV's Vice Secretary-General, Rolf Jördens, participating in the meeting.

We are convinced of the importance of cooperation among the Treaty, FAO, and UPOV, in a spirit of mutual respect for each organization's competences and mandate. The Interim Committee for the Treaty will hold its second meeting from November 15 to 19, 2004, and UPOV is, of course, invited to attend. We hope that UPOV will move swiftly to look for practical ways of cooperation and coordination with the Treaty, at this critical moment when a major new international instrument of direct relevance to plant breeding is establishing its work program and implementation structures.

In FAO, the Treaty has also given a new impetus to the management and development of the seed sector at the national and regional levels within the framework of the *Leipzig Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, which was adopted by 160 member countries in 1994 and now is an integral supporting component of the Treaty. A well established seed sector is vital for conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources. Currently, we are involved in a process promoting harmonization of seed rules and regulations, including through capacity-building, stakeholder dialogue and the development of information systems. It is expected that the outcomes of this process will lead to greater uniformity in seed certification standards and accreditation of activities; regional variety release and catalogues; quarantine pest lists; and an enabling environment for access to and development of seed markets and enterprises. In these tasks, too, FAO counts on deepening our cooperation with UPOV.

[End of Annex V and of document]