

## **Statement of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)**

**STATEMENT TO WORKING GROUP 2: Agenda Item 14: Approval of  
draft agreements between the Governing Body and the IARCs and other  
relevant international institutions.**

M Chairman, Distinguished Delegates. On behalf of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, I thank you for providing me this opportunity to address the Governing Body.

First of all, I want to say that we are extremely pleased to finally be here at the First Meeting of the Governing Body. There were times during the past 10 years of negotiations when this meeting seemed very far off indeed. During the most difficult moments, it seemed possible the day might never arrive. All members of the global community -- those that have and those that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Treaty -- should be congratulated for having made it to this point.

In its Article 15, the Treaty recognizes the importance of the ex situ collections of PGRFA held in trust by the Future Harvest Centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

The Treaty is also critically important for the Alliance of Future Harvest Centres because it provides a basis for building trust and goodwill among those actors who must work in harmony for the world to be able to make full use of PGRFA to increase food

security and reduce poverty, to boost the nutritional value of the diets of the poor and to reduce the vulnerability of poor people in rural areas to external shocks.

The Parties to the Treaty also called on the Centres to sign agreements with the Governing body to place the collections they hold in trust in order to place these collections in the framework of the Treaty.

M Chairman, the Future Harvest Centres of the CGIAR are committed to working within the framework of priorities created by the International Treaty. To that end, I am pleased to confirm that all eleven Future Harvest Centres with ex situ collections of PGRFA have approved the current text of the Agreement between the Centres and the Governing Body, as anticipated by Article 15 of the Treaty. We are planning a signing ceremony with representatives of all of the Centres to be held at FAO in Rome during the latter part of this year.

We also look forward to the adoption this week of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement, one that will make it as simple as possible to access and distribute materials within the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit Sharing created by the Treaty.

The Centres' commitment to the Treaty does not end with how the ex situ collections of PGRFA are administered. One might say that this is only the beginning of our commitment. The Centres, both individually and through SGRP, will work hard to advance the goals of conservation, sustainable use, farmers' rights, transparent access and exchange of information, technology transfer, and

capacity building as highlighted in articles 5, 6, 9, and 13 of the Treaty. At the end of the day, the multilateral system of access and benefit sharing which has preoccupied us all during the past few years must be seen as operating in service of these higher goals, and not as an end in itself. The Alliance of the Centres looks forward to working within the framework and spirit of the Treaty to advancing those goals.

Once again, M Chairman, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak