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21 December 2001

NOTIFICATION

Madam / Sir,

**Informal Consultation
on the impact of genetic use restriction technologies on
indigenous and local communities and Farmers' Rights**

At its fifth meeting, held in May 2000, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in paragraph 29 of decision V/5, to discuss with those organizations with relevant expertise and representatives of indigenous and local communities the potential impacts of the application of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) on those communities and on Farmers' Rights, and to prepare a report to be considered by the Conference of the Parties. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be held in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 8 to 19 April 2002. GURTs will be considered under agenda item 16 of the meeting: "Thematic programme of work – progress report on implementation: agricultural biological diversity".

The Conference of the Parties requested that the discussions on potential impacts of GURTs take into account the revision of the International Undertaking Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to keep, use, exchange and sell seed or propagating material. On 3 November 2001, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was adopted as a legally binding instrument.

I have the honor to inform you that, pursuant to decision V/5 of the Conference of the Parties, an informal consultation will be held on **3 February 2002**, prior to the second meeting of the Ad hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions of the Convention, at the International Civil Aviation Organization, in Montreal. The results of the consultation will be reported to the above mentioned meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j), which will take place in the same location, from 4 to 8 February 2002. More information on the Article 8(j) meeting is available on the Secretariat website at <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/traditional/wg8j-02.asp>

To: Indigenous and local communities, non-governmental organizations, industry and scientific and academic institutions, as well as intergovernmental organizations.



The consultation is open to the participation of indigenous and local communities, non-governmental organizations, industry and scientific and academic institutions, as well as intergovernmental organizations. The following are the background documents for the consultation:

- “Consequences of the use of the new technology for the control of plant genetic expression for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/4/9/Rev.1)
[[<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-04/official/sbstta-04-09-rev1-en.doc>]
- “Potential Impacts of Genetic Use restriction Technologies (GURTs) on Agricultural Biodiversity and Agricultural Production Systems” (by FAO)
<http://www.fao.org/waicent/FaoInfo/Agricult/AGP/AGPS/pgr/itwg/docsp1.htm>
- “The International Treaty for Food and Agriculture” (by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture)
<ftp://ext-ftp.fao.org/waicent/pub/cgrfa8/iu/ITPGRRe.pdf>
- “Decision COP V/5 on agricultural biological diversity”
<http://www.biodiv.org/decisions/default.asp?lg=0&m=cop-05>

In view of the interest of your Organization in the issues to be addressed by this meeting, I have the honour of inviting your organization to nominate a representative to attend the meeting. Participants in the Informal Consultation on GURTs will be selected from among those participants attending the meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j). Therefore, I would be grateful if you could inform the Secretariat, at your earliest convenience but preferably no later than **4 January 2002**, of the name and contact address of your designated representative(s) to the Working Group on Article 8(j) who could also attend the Informal Consultation.

A pre-registration form and a general information note for participants are also enclosed. These documents are also available on the Secretariat’s website at <http://www.biodiv.org>.

Accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary