

**Intervention by Civil Society Organisations to the Plenary of the  
7<sup>th</sup> GOVERNING BODY (GB7) of the International Seed Treaty (IT PGRFA)**

**Nori Ignacio, SEARICE**

**Intervention on Agenda 17.4: Relations with CGIAR**

Thank you Chair

I am from SEARICE and I am speaking on behalf of the CSOs present in this meeting.

Two things Mr. Chair... First, with regards to the reporting procedure of the CGIAR to the Treaty, the Governing Body requires full reporting from the CGIAR in relation to its management of in-trust accessions. And that of necessity includes COMPLETE information concerning patents and other Intellectual property claims and licenses taken out by CG Centres as well as any related policy changes or amendments made by an individual Centre or the CG system as a whole. We understand the CG's concern about proprietary business information. And while we respect the need for sound business practices this cannot supersede the right of this Governing Body to have full access to information to be assured that the policies and practices of the CG systems do not compromise the goals of the Treaty or the obligations of the Governing Body.

Second, we are especially concerned that IRRI has submitted a number of patent applications covering traits or genetic sequences of materials held in trust under Annex 1. As DivSeek told us today, in 2 years this technology moves ahead. A patent is for 20 years! If IRRI gets a license on DSI to a company today, it cannot guarantee how the technology could impact the legal interpretation of the license even 2 years from now.

We believe that this represents a policy change, which must be first approved by the Governing Body and by FAO under the terms of the Treaty and the agreement with FAO established in 1994. Given this agreement, it is not for an individual Centre or the CG system as a whole to decide what is a minor or a substantive policy change or what it regards as to be adequate consultation.

We believe that IRRI's patent application violates its obligations to the Treaty and we ask the Governing Body to take 2 initiatives. First, to require full information on IRRI's policy change and full detail on its patent application for consideration by the Governing Body. And secondly, to suspend any further patent application until the Governing Body gives its consent.

Thank you Mr. Chair