

## **CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT**

### **EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY (GB8) INTERNATIONAL SEED TREATY (IT PGRFA)**

#### **8 – Future of Efforts to Enhance the MLS**

**Ed Hammond (TWN)**

We fully support statements of the African Union, many African countries, and by Farmers organizations and strongly denounce the terribly unjust situation of ongoing biopiracy that results from the Treaty's inability to act on the absolutely critical issue of DSI.

We would welcome a decision by this GB to have a process to solve the question of DSI for PGRFA, in a multilateral manner that, like the Treaty itself, is in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity. This effort can include developing standard terms and conditions for access to MLS DSI and/or operating rules for specialized publicly-accessible databases.

In we see it, such an approach would not, as the EU suggested, pre-empt other efforts. Rather, it would advance the Treaty's multilateral focus in the context of the search for DSI solutions across a number of forums.

We view the successful conclusion of a Treaty process to develop a mandatory benefit sharing approach for DSI as a prerequisite to returning to a discussion on revision of the SMTA to create a subscription system without the so-called single access option. This system, in turn, must reliably generate sufficient income over a period of years to the BSF before changes to the Annex can be contemplated.

We have contributed to the Working Group on the MLS are now ready to contribute to an urgent and distinct Treaty effort focused on reaching a DSI benefit sharing solution. And, that done, when we resume work on other aspects of the MLS, we urge a loophole-free, simple approach based solely on the subscription system, which is structurally more able to handle DSI questions, and which increases user-based payments in a sustainable and predictable long-term manner.