

TEHRAN DECLARATION

We, the members of the Contact Group of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations representing all regions of the world, have met in Tehran, from 26 to 31 August 2000, at the generous invitation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with funding support from the Governments of Japan and Sweden.

In our week-long meeting, we have made important advances in the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The rapid completion and adoption of the International Undertaking will be the cornerstone of an international strategy for the conservation and sustainable utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, for the benefit of present and future generations. This is crucial for the attainment of the goal that the Governments of the World set themselves at the World Food Summit, of halving the number of the hungry in the world by the year 2015.

We wish to express our solidarity with the people of Iran who are facing a severe and continuing drought. This is not only a threat to the development of their country, but puts at risk the rich inheritance of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture which the farmers of Iran — one of the great centres of crop genetic diversity — have developed, maintained, and contributed to the world, over thousands of years.

The generous gesture of the Islamic Republic of Iran in hosting the meeting, the excellent facilities, and the hospitable working atmosphere, have made this meeting one of the most crucial in our work so far, and allowed us to achieve a number of key compromises and critical breakthroughs, including in regard to: the multilateral system of facilitated access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; including the sharing of the benefits from the use of these resources; intellectual property rights; the contribution of the private sector to benefit-sharing; as well as the financial strategy.

We are confident that we can now bring our task to a successful completion, in accordance with the request of the Thirtieth Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization, for presentation to the Hundred and Nineteenth Session of the FAO Council in November this year. We commit ourselves to establishing, through the revised International Undertaking, a rational framework through which the international community can ensure the conservation and rationale use of the world's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

We wish to thank the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran most warmly, and to recognize the Government of Iran's far-sighted commitment to promoting international cooperation in the management of genetic resources and the environment, in the service of international food security.

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
31 August 2000