

3rd Governing Body of the International Treaty on PGRFA, 2 June 2009

This statement represents the view of the undersigned farmers, Indigenous Peoples and civil society organisations

Just pay!

Without a functioning secretariat, able to fulfil the agreed work programme, the Treaty will not survive. Therefore it is the duty of all parties to ensure the implementation of the Treaty with contributions to the Core Administration Budget at least in phase with the UN scale. This principle has to be agreed by the Governing Body in this session. Sadly the European Union has not finalised any position on this issue and has remained silent. Due to the FAO reform process it will be even more important in the future for the contracting parties to guarantee a solid basis for the Core Budget.

The following Contracting Parties of the Treaty and OECD Member Countries have not paid any Contribution to the Core Administration Budget 2008-2009

Belgium,	Germany	United Kingdom	Portugal	Sweden
Denmark	France	Greece	Iceland	Turkey
	Hungary	Czech Republic	Poland	

It is our duty to monitor the contributions to the Core Administration Budget and to point our very disappointed finger at the ones who have not paid. We would be happy to delete all the mentioned countries from this list in the course of this week, once they have announced their contribution.

A similar funding problem also exists for the Benefit-Sharing Fund. The 500,000 \$ assigned to the first project cycle is not a serious contribution to deal with the problems we are facing. It is already possible to foresee that with the existing benefit-sharing mechanism the fund will remain almost empty in the future. We are far from an "equitable share" for the benefit of small-scale farmers "in all countries, especially in developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, who conserve and sustainably utilize plant genetic resources for food and agriculture" Furthermore these funds should be granted directly to farmers and Indigenous Peoples who manage their seed collectively, not primarily to Universities and Research Centres, as has been the case in the 1st round of approved grants under the treaty.

The solution for the lack of funding is inserted in the Treaty itself. Art. 13.2 d) (ii) says: that „[...] the Governing Body [...] may also assess within a period of five years from the entry into force of this Treaty [i.e. before 2009], whether the mandatory payment requirement in the MTA shall apply also in cases where such commercialized products are available without restriction to others for further research and breeding.

There is a risk that during this meeting of the Governing Body that the assessment and the introduction of a mandatory payment requirement for all commercialized products be postponed until the cows come home. Access for the seed companies is already granted, the equitable sharing can't wait. Right now the companies have to share their benefits. To fundraise for once-off donations for the benefit-sharing fund is not a sustainable alternative (and a donation is not the same thing as benefit-sharing).

We should not waste the whole Governing Body meeting speaking about money - let's move forward to the core issues such as sustainable use and farmers rights.

Alliance Femme et Environment (Tunisia), Asociación ANDES (Peru), Berne Declaration (Switzerland), CENESTA - Center for Sustainable Development (Iran), Community-based Biodiversity management South Asia Programme, Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation Network, Community Technology Development Trust (Zimbabwe), ETC Group, Local Initiatives for Biodiversity Research and Development (Nepal), MJK - Movimiento de la Juventud Kuna (Panama), Friends of the Earth International, Parakuiyo Pastoralists Indigenous community Development Organisation - PAICODEO (Tanzania), Rete Semi Rurali (Italy), Reseau Semences Paysannes (France), SEARICE (Philippines), UBINIG (Bangladesh), USC Canada, Via Campesina,