NOTIFICATION

Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing
Geneva (Switzerland), 8 – 11 December, 2014

Participation of Observers

Dear Madam/Sir,

I have the pleasure to make an announcement regarding the participation of Observers in the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Enhance the Functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing (Working Group).

The Terms of Reference of the Working Group, which are contained in Resolution 2/2013, stipulate that Contracting Parties which have no representatives on the Working Group may participate, upon request to the Secretariat, in the work of the Working Group in an observer capacity. In addition, the two representatives from the following stakeholder groups are invited as observers: civil society organizations; the seed industry; farmers’ organizations; and the CGIAR Centres.

At its first meeting, the Working Group invited a number of silent observers to follow the meeting. These silent observers had made a request in advance to attend the meeting to the Secretariat. The Working Group decided that silent observers had no speaking rights unless at the invitation of the Co-Chairs. All requests from Contracting Parties or stakeholder groups to have additional observers present beyond the number of representatives invited according to the Resolution are to be considered as silent observers.

The Working Group decided also that arrangements for participation of observers at its subsequent meetings should be similar to those followed for the first meeting. It distinguished the following categories for processing future requests: Contracting Party Observers, Stakeholder groups, and silent observers, including non-Contracting Parties, Intergovernmental organizations, and the academic sector.

The Secretariat will need to receive the requests of those wishing to participate in the second meeting of the Working Group in an observer capacity no later than 1 December 2014, in order to ensure that the appropriate arrangements can be made, including in relation to registration to enter into the UN Palais des Nations. Such requests should be addressed to PGRFA-Treaty@fao.org
Observers from Contracting Parties should copy the National Focal Point or the permanent representation of the country to FAO. Should further issues arise or further potential clarifications become necessary regarding the participation of Contracting Parties as Observers, the Secretary will take the liberty to approach the permanent representations in Rome.

The Governing Body has not envisaged funding to support the participation of Observers to the Working Group.

For any query or request for further information, please contact the Secretariat of the International Treaty at:

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Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Dr Shakeel Bhatti
Secretary
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