

STATEMENT OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
EIGHT SESSION OF THE ITPGRFA GOVERNING BODY
International Planning Committee (IPC) for Food Sovereignty

Souad Mahmoud

1. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

Thank you, Madam Chair, for giving me the floor.

My name is Souad Mahmoud and I come from Tunisia of the Tunisian Association of Democratic Women, and I am a member of the World March of Women, I represent the IPC here for the North African and Middle East region.

We are concerned about the organization of this agenda. We believe that the Governing Body should address the issue of "digital sequencing information" under item 16.1 in accordance with resolution 13/2017, before addressing the other items on the agenda.

The value of trade of DSI contained in the PGRFA of the Multilateral System, the patents that protect them, the stock market shares of the companies that own them and the seeds obtained through the use of DSI without direct accessing physical PGRFA of the Multilateral System, are now exceeding the value of the world market of physical seeds. How can we talk about the Multilateral System, benefit sharing, conservation and sustainable use, farmers' rights, financing strategy... if we do not know which PGRFA are affected by all these topics?

In many national or regional legislations, the scope of patents claimed on DSI cover also all plants containing the same DSI, whether they are directly resulting from the patented invention or from peasant and traditional selections, then delivered to the collections of the Multilateral System. How can the Treaty continue to guarantee facilitated access to PGRFA if such access is dependent on the agreement of patent holders and the payment of licensing fees?

For this reason, we believe that the Governing Body should address the issue of DSI before addressing the other items on the agenda so as not to run the risk of postponing this discussion once again to undetermined future dates.