



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
**ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Kent Nnadozie
Secretary, International Treaty
EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY

OPENING CEREMONY
11 November 2019, 10:00 am
FAO/Rome, Italy

Thank you, Chair.

Your Excellency, Minister Teresa Bellanova,

Your Excellency, Minister Narendra Singh Tomar,

Deputy Director-General, Madame Semedo,

Assistant Director-General, Rene Castro,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I would like to start by extending my sincere gratitude to Your Excellencies, Minister Teresa Bellanova, Minister Narendra Tomar for making out the time to join us this morning. It is a testimony of the importance and gravity of the issues before us, and why we are here today. It is also a clear indication of the commitment of your respective governments to the International Treaty and what it stands for. I would also thank the FAO management for the very significant support that it has continued to provide to me, the Secretariat and our work.
- Distinguished delegates, as we start this Eighth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty, let us do so in the spirit of solidarity and common good that laid the foundation for the establishment of the Treaty.
- The fact is that we have achieved a lot in just 15 years since the International Treaty entered into force. Indeed, we have come a long way. And now we need to look forward towards the future and make decisions that will help us move forward in order to stay current and relevant.

- The world is facing massive challenges arising from a range of issues including, increasing hunger, changing climate, precarious environmental conditions, and changes in the global policy and political landscape. However, there are also significant opportunities to address them arising from scientific advances and the political space that institutions like the Treaty provide for international cooperation and decision making.
- The International Treaty is well positioned to contribute to addressing many of the existing and emerging challenges, and optimizing the opportunities that have arisen from the new developments.
- In order to do so, we look to this Governing Body to guide the International Treaty towards a more inclusive and stable path – by continuing to enhance the list of crops covered by Annex 1 and by providing a reliable base of financial resources to allow the International Treaty to function effectively and to remain a leader in the governance of agricultural biodiversity.
- The challenge facing us now is to maintain the momentum built over the past 15 years and continue making meaningful contributions towards global food security, sustainable agriculture and the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- We just need to keep in mind our common interests, our undeniable interdependence and arrive at mutually beneficial compromises for the common good of all.
- A number of the issues before of us this week are particularly challenging. But – if we move forward together in this spirit of interdependency and cooperation that underpins our International Treaty – then I am confident that we can resolve any differences, and together emerge as a more dynamic, stronger whole.

Thank you.

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