

DELHI DECLARATION ON WHEAT STEM RUST Ug99

WE, the participants representing agricultural research, plant protection, seed and extension sectors of our governments, the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative, ICARDA, and CIMMYT have met in Delhi from November 6, 2008 to November 8, 2008 at this International Conference convened by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Government of India with the support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to seek ways of preventing and responding to the global threat of wheat rust, and, in this context, to address the challenges of affected livelihoods, higher food prices and reduced food security.

1. We recognize the role of agriculture in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and in particular of overcoming hunger and malnutrition (MDG-1) and in sustainable management of natural resources (MDG-7) through regional and international cooperation (MDG-8). We reaffirm our commitment to contribute to global food security through the prevention and management of emerging wheat rust diseases and the enhancement of wheat productivity.
2. We acknowledge the challenges of wheat stem rust Ug99, and current situation of the spread of the disease that poses a serious threat to food security, especially in the developing countries.
3. We are convinced that the international community needs to take urgent and coordinated action to prevent and control the disease. National actions supported by the international community are required in the short, medium- and long-term, to prevent a major global food crisis. There is an urgent need for coordinated action and support by both public and private sources to implement a global programme of emergency crisis prevention and control.
4. We acknowledge and appreciate the Ug99 declaration (November 5, 2008, New Delhi, India) made during the extra-ordinary meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries (**Annexure I**);
5. We note that the scientific community has reached consensus and has begun to address the challenge as evidenced by the deliberations of Ug99 Workshop held at Shimla, India (3-4 November 2008), Ug99 Workshop during the Eleventh International Wheat Genetics Symposium, Brisbane, Australia (24-29 August 2008), at the International Centre for Agriculture in Dry Areas (ICARDA), Aleppo, Syria (March 11-12, 2008) and the Nairobi Summit (September 2005).

In adopting this Declaration, we pledge to strongly support wheat stem rust prevention and control as a matter of national policy and international cooperation, and renew our commitment to fighting the spread of the disease in a coordinated manner, and commit ourselves to the following measures:

6. We call upon the international community and the donors and the regional and international Organizations to increase their assistance to all international and national initiatives to combat the disease through the national and international initiatives such as FAO Wheat Rust Disease Global Programme and the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative.

7. The priority action is to prevent rust epidemics through improved preparedness and policy support at national level and to develop contingency plans. Countries affected by the disease or at direct risk should be supported to conduct surveillance, make appropriate interventions and impact assessments and put in place national, regional and international coordination mechanisms.
8. Encourage the exchange of information and establish a global early warning system to support decision-making for the implementation of preventive measures and control operations, while simultaneously enhancing effectiveness of national surveillance systems for wheat rust disease monitoring and pathotyping
9. Strengthen national and international capacities of research programmes for the development of resistant wheat varieties utilizing modern tools and techniques to enhance resistance durability and diversity.
10. Recognizing that national variety protection and release mechanisms exist, accelerate the release, multiplication and distribution of quality seed of rust resistant varieties.
11. Promote partnership of public sector, private sector and farmers for seed multiplication and work closely with farmer communities to improve adoption and wheat production management.
12. We recognize that research support and infrastructure is an important input that needs to be created/strengthened in participating countries for forming networks and collaborations for scientific research on Ug99 disease and mitigation of its effects.
13. We, the participants representing agricultural research, plant protection, seed and extension sectors agree to request our governments/organizations to commit to this declaration.

In particular:

- a) The relevant agencies should have resources to expand and enhance their assistance and support to the prevention and control of the wheat stem rust.
- b) The appropriate regional organisations should enhance their cooperation with a view to effectively cope with the spread of the disease.
- c) All efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations to fight the disease should be synergized to deal with the continuum from immediate to longer term assistance.
- d) All relevant organizations and cooperating countries should be prepared to assist countries, on their request, to put in place policies and measures to help farmers, particularly small-scale producers.

We firmly resolve to closely collaborate and to commit the necessary resources to fight the spread of the wheat stem rust and its potential devastating effects both on developed and developing countries. We also urge the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to explore the possibility of informing FAO Member Countries of the outcomes of the

Delhi Conference in order to promote urgent collaborative action and support to mitigate the threat to food security caused by wheat rusts.

This Declaration was adopted at the International Conference on Wheat Stem Rust Ug99: A Threat to Food Security.

New Delhi, 8 November 2008