

**The Inter-American
Institute
for Cooperation on
Agriculture
& the AgriFuture
Foundation**



Policy Panel

at the



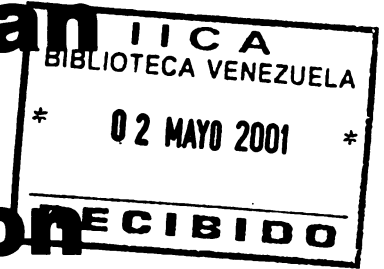
**Second International
Conference on Women
in Agriculture**

**Washington D.C.
June 28-July 2nd, 1998**



IICAE

**The Inter-American
Institute
for Cooperation on
Agriculture
& the AgriFuture
Foundation**



Policy Panel

at the



**Second International
Conference on Women
in Agriculture**

**Washington D.C.
June 28-July 2nd, 1998**

00008162

250





The Second International Conference
on Women in Agriculture

Women Coming Together to Feed the World

June 28 - July 2, 1998
Washington, D.C.

Sponsored by The President's Interagency Council on Women





**Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
& The AgriFuture Foundation - Roundtable**

***Women's Knowledge,
Biotechnology and International Trade
-Fostering a Dialogue into the Next Millennium -***

***June 29, 1998, 2:00-3:30 pm: Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington D.C.
Second International Conference on Women in Agriculture.***

Agricultural biotechnology has the potential to transform global food security. Creating new partnerships with rural women, the primary family caregivers and key agricultural forces in some of the most populous nations and continents in the world, is the creative challenge entering the next millennium.

Given the continuous innovation in biotechnology and the globalization of the world economy, what new ways can we find to achieve food security that empower rural women and respect their local knowledge?



ABSTRACT

Biotechnology and its applications will rival information technology as the “change maker” in the next millennium transforming almost every aspect of life on the planet. It has been termed by some as ‘genetic commerce’ - the raw resource of the new global economy. The impact of the biotechnology revolution in the 21st Century will place previous technological revolutions in its shadow. Strategies specific to agricultural biotechnology have the potential to change the balance in issues of global food security. Ensuring dialogue in the development and use of these new technologies by rural women - the primary family caregivers and key agricultural forces in some of the most populous nations and continents in the world - is the creative challenge entering the next century and new millennium.

Intellectual property and/or knowledge about crops, animals and farming systems, at the *local level*, resides to a large degree with rural women (in Africa alone, it is estimated that fully 80% of agricultural activities are undertaken by women); at the *regional level* in the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research; and *internationally* is negotiated in multilateral fora such as the World Trade Organization and through such instruments as the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants. While individual entrepreneurs, research institutes and multinational corporations develop products and formally file for intellectual property protection, local knowledge systems such as those of rural women regarding crops, livestock breeding and farming systems (which historically have served to underpin family food security) are valuable repositories of indigenous knowledge which are often unprotected and unrecognized.

Food security has the potential to be greatly enhanced by products of genetic engineering and biotechnology rendering plants, for example, more drought resistant, pest-resistant, higher-yielding and salt-resistant and changing, for example, the growth rate of animals and the level of their meat, milk or wool production. By what new partnerships between agricultural biotechnology corporations, international agriculture research institutes, NGOs and women’s local knowledge groups can the benefits of this technology become effective in reducing poverty, preserving biological diversity and addressing local needs? Whose knowledge is it, how does it get developed and protected and who benefits from this knowledge? These questions will be fundamental to addressing rural poverty and a sustainable economic paradigm in the Twenty First Century.

Women’s knowledge systems have several distinguishing features from knowledge systems developed in the traditional science and technology system. They are developed locally, without formal infrastructure and in the absence of public funding. They are rarely written down or published in official journals but passed between generations verbally and often from mother to daughter. They are not protected under formal systems of intellectual property protection. They are developed communally and shared locally. Yet women are the primary care-givers of three generations including the young and the elderly, and rural women and their agricultural knowledge systems usually underpin *family food security strategies* at the local level around the world.

The Conference Challenge:

The roundtable “policy dialogue” of the IICA/Agri-Future Foundation will contend that *the world needs a paradigm shift towards new partnerships* among those generating agricultural knowledge systems, those patenting the knowledge systems, those benefiting from the knowledge and trade organizations. The roundtable dialogue will open discussion to explore creative models and reaching for a common conversation with the active participation of rural women.

***Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
& The AgriFuture Foundation - Roundtable***

***Women's Knowledge,
Biotechnology and International Trade
-Fostering a New Dialogue into the Next Millennium -***

***June 29, 1998, 2:00-3:30 pm: Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington D.C.
Second International Conference on Women in Agriculture.***

Opening Remarks:

T.H. Dr. Carlos E. Aquino, Director General, IICA
T.H. Gilbert Normand, Secretary of State, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
T.H. Elizabeth Aguirre de Calderon, First Lady of El Salvador

Co-Chairpersons:

Ms. Kay McClanahan, Representative in the United States, IICA
Ms. Clara Solis-Araya, Director, Sustainable Rural Development, Advisor to IICA DG

Keynote Challenge for Food Security:

The Hon. Flora MacDonald, Former Minister of External Affairs for Canada
Former Chair of the Board of Governors, International Development Research Centre

Panel Facilitators:

Ms. Maureen McTeer, LL.M., Professor of Law, Technology and Genetics
H.E. Dr. Marie-Lucie Jaramillo, Board of Directors, AgriFuture Foundation

Panel Participants:

1. ***Dr. Vandana Shiva*** - Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Ecology
2. ***Ms. Beverly Simmons***, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Int'l Trade Policy, USDA
3. ***Mr. Ray Mowling***, Vice-President, Monsanto Canada
4. ***Ms. Rosina Salerno*** - Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
5. ***Dr. Calestous Juma***, Exec. Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat
6. ***Ambassador H.E. Beatriz Ramacciotti***, Permanent Representative of Peru to the OAS

Closing Words and Synopsis

Ms. Maureen McTeer, LL.M., Professor of Law, Technology and Genetics

Canadian Embassy Reception 4:00-6:00 pm:

Panel Summary: T.H. Leonor Calderon, Minister, Youth, Women & Family Affairs, Panama

- Special Thanks -

***Monsanto, Sponsor of the Roundtable
Dow-AgroSciences, Sponsor of the Keynote Speaker
Royal Bank of Canada - Sponsor of the Canadian Embassy Reception***

Roundtable Policy Dialogue Hosts

The ***Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)*** is the specialized agency for agriculture of the inter-American system. Its mission is to encourage, facilitate and support cooperation among its 34 Member States and the organizations of civil society, in order to promote the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. IICA is governed by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), which comprises the ministers of agriculture of its Member States. The IABA is the Institute's highest ranking governing body and meets every two years to set guidelines on Institute policies and actions. The second ranking governing body is the Executive Committee (EC), which is made up of 12 member countries selected on a rotating basis and meets every year to translate the directives of the IABA into recommendations for action. IICA is the only hemispheric organization of this nature in the world.

Agri-Future Foundation is an independent foundation affiliated with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), an intergovernmental organization of the inter-American system that operates under the umbrella of the Organization of American States. Agri-Future was created to cooperate with public institutions, private sector enterprises and national, regional and international nongovernmental organizations, through the exchange of information and resources for efforts to improve the lives of rural people. The Foundation makes use of follow-up and supervision mechanisms for verifying the orientation of the assistance it provides, especially that offered through small-scale projects to women, young people, indigenous groups and other disadvantaged groups.

Roundtable Sponsors

Monsanto Canada Inc.

Monsanto Canada Inc., with net annual sales of \$285 million and 500 employees, has its pharmaceutical and nutrition and consumer products sectors based at the corporate offices in Mississauga, Ontario with a pharmaceutical quality control centre in Burlington, Ontario. The agricultural sector's main office is in Winnipeg, Manitoba with a Roundup Dry® manufacturing plant located in Morden, Manitoba and two research farms -- one in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and one in Lethbridge, Alberta. As a life sciences company, Monsanto is committed to finding solutions to the growing global needs for food and health by sharing common forms of science and technology among agriculture, nutrition and health. The company's 21,900 employees worldwide make and market high-value agricultural products, pharmaceuticals and food ingredients.

Royal Bank of Canada

Royal Bank of Canada is the fifth largest bank in North America, and provides full service, life cycle banking to 90,000 Canadian farmers. Our 120 agricultural centres, are staffed by 200 farm finance professionals, who are hired for their high level of knowledge about the agricultural sector, and trained in the nuances of the agricultural industry. As a financial services provider offering brokerage, discount broker, trust and insurance, we are also able to provide assistance in areas such as inter-generational transfer, estate planning, and retirement.

Dow AgroSciences

Dow AgroSciences, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a global leader in providing pest management and biotechnology products that improve the quality and quantity of the earth's food supply and contribute to safety, health and quality of life of the world's growing population.

June 22, 1998



Opening Remarks:

T.H. Dr. Carlos E. Aquino, Director General, IICA

We would like to thank the Government of the United States, and the Department of Agriculture in particular, for convening and organizing the Second International Conference on Women in Agriculture, which provides us with an opportunity to discuss and suggest lines of action for work in this field, keyed to the prevailing trends on the eve of the twenty-first century.

We congratulate President Clinton and the Interagency Council on Women on their decision to establish the Presidential Interagency Council on Women in Agriculture, an important mechanism for following up on and fulfilling the commitments assumed at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and the Conference on Women and Agriculture held in Australia two years ago.

In the twentieth century, we have witnessed spectacular breakthroughs in science, culture and technological development. The bipolar and confrontational world is now a thing of the past, and there are hopes of building a world based on cooperation, dialogue and human solidarity: a more equitable world.

Despite these advance, humankind is still faced with enormous difficulties, such as extreme poverty, the lack of participation by civil society, the degradation of the environment, global warming, the desertification of large portions of the planet, the inability of many to meet their basic needs, threats to personal safety and the failure to achieve peaceful coexistence.

In the face of such difficulties, we must establish new paradigms as the basis for a type of development that is more equitable, democratic, inclusive and sustainable, for all of the world's inhabitants.

The rapid and permanent changes being brought about by economic globalization and technological transformation provide excellent opportunities for instituting a new style of development, whose starting point and ultimate goal is greater well-being for as many people as possible.

From our standpoint, given the conditions and demands of today, it is essential to reposition agriculture, defined as the quest for competitiveness and equity in rural areas.

A challenge of this magnitude must be tackled by a broad-based, strong and determined alliance which enjoys the support of government authorities, public and private sector leaders, national and international institutions and, above all, the women and men who work the land.

The world scenario that has taken shape over the last decade presents us with enormous challenges for agriculture, greater than those seen previously.

Therefore, it is imperative that we undertake joint efforts to invest in the education and training of producers of both sexes and rural workers. The objectives for the short term must be **competitiveness, equity and the rational use of natural resources.**

It is not a question of producing at any cost, but rather of harmonizing production with the market and equity in a sustainable manner. The aim must be to ***"produce while conserving and conserve while producing"*** for a market that is demanding more and more in terms of the quality of food for human consumption, and environmental considerations.

The world has enough land, water and human and economic resources to produce the food it needs. However, all resources must be managed in a sustainable and orderly fashion since, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, ***"What there is in the world is sufficient for human needs but not for human greed."***

Investment in agriculture and rural areas must be stepped up, and clear, transparent, stable and precise rules must be defined that will allow producers to take the best possible decisions and actions.

More suitable organizational models are required - they must be creative, innovative, efficient and competitive - to provide production support services in areas such as marketing, information, technology generation and transfer, training, infrastructure and biotechnology.

The great challenge is balancing the needs of the state, civil society and the market, through processes that articulate modernization with democracy, in order to ensure that agriculture reaps the benefits of the new international context.

The concept of democracy is directly linked to the theme of this conference: women in agriculture, because one of the essential elements for achieving democracy is the creation of equal opportunities for men and women.

This international conference provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the new trends in agriculture, and how they relate to the needs of women and to the creation and strengthening of opportunities for them to participate, on equal footing, in the different spheres of social, political, economic and cultural life.

In reconsidering the role of agriculture, we must also reconsider the role of the women who participate in it. Long past is the time when we could think of agriculture as a male activity. An increasing amount of information is available which confirms the participation of rural women in the most diverse activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural, throughout history. The growing contribution of women to the development of science and agricultural technology is equally

apparent.

It is worth noting that many development experts suggest that one of the most important phenomena in the agricultural sector is the so-called "feminization" of agriculture, on account of both the direct contributions that women make to production as a whole, and in their role as mothers, heads of households, educators of their children, generators of values, and in community development.

It is also important to underscore the fact that some 30% to 60% of agricultural and non-agricultural microenterprises in the non-formal sector in Latin America and the Caribbean are owned and run by women.

Since its creation in 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture has been involved in efforts to create spaces and opportunities for women in agriculture, both in regard to technical and vocational training in the agricultural and agro-industrial field, and to the promotion of affirmative actions designed to gradually reverse the exclusion of, and discrimination against, women, acknowledging their contribution to agricultural activities and to the development of science in this field.

As a result, and in response to the mandates issued by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, IICA will execute technical cooperation actions with its member countries aimed at repositioning agriculture from an expanded, inclusive, sustainable, competitive and equitable perspective.

Our message is that we must choose the path of sustainability, competitiveness and equity, and adopt an inclusive vision, on behalf of all the women and men alive today and for future generations.

To achieve this, we must broaden our vision of women and recognize their participation in the economy, in politics and in cultural life. We should think of sustainable rural development in terms

of the women and men who, day in and day out, are responsible for ensuring the continuity of the many economic activities that revolve around agriculture and which make a tangible contribution to improving the quality of life.

Thank you very much.

Opening Remarks:

**T.H. Gilbert Normand, Secretary of State,
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada**

Ladies and Gentlemen good morning. On behalf of the Government of Canada and our delegation of Canadian rural women, whom I have the honour and the pleasure to accompany today, I wish to greet this meeting with all the respect we owe to those who embody the hopes and aspirations of one quarter of humanity.

These women represent the very essence of diversity and excellence in the Canadian agricultural sector -- a sector that indeed is admired worldwide. From the fertile valleys of the Pacific Coast to the vast plains of the Canadian West, from the Great Lakes to the lowlands of the St. Lawrence and to the Atlantic, agriculture remains one of the pillars of Canadian prosperity.

The Canadian agricultural and agri-food sector provides one out of every seven jobs in our country, and accounts for nearly nine per cent of our gross domestic product. Domestic consumption of agri-food products totals 90 billion dollars. Our exports are growing rapidly and totalled more than 22 billion dollars in 1997.

Canada is recognized for the efficiency and high technological level of its farming sector. Our country is also recognized for the high quality, healthy food that our agri-food industry offers to consumers around the world. In the private sector, in our research centres, in our colleges and universities, advanced research has made Canada a leader in the environment, in technology and in productivity.

Everywhere, in all these areas and at every level, a growing number of women are running things. According to the 1996 census approximately one quarter of Canadian farms are partly or entirely run by women.

This statistic, however, though it is impressive, only partially reflects the real contribution of women to farm management and to the well-being of families and agricultural communities. As we know, their contribution is much greater.

The Canadian government recognizes the importance of the contribution by women, and particularly women in agriculture, to our country's cultural, social and economic fabric. In fact, the

Canadian government is appointing more and more women to its agricultural agencies and boards. At the present time, women hold nearly 26 percent of these positions. And in order to reach our objective of fair representation of women within our agricultural organizations, committees and boards, we have also set up a national database of women we can draw on for consultations and appointments.

Powerful organizations of rural and farm women form an efficient Canada-wide network that is increasingly connected to major world organizations and is everywhere on the Internet. A number of representatives of those organizations are indeed attending this International Conference on Women in Agriculture.

And the importance of women in agriculture as a political force is clearly shown by the fact that the Canadian government is listening closely to what they are asking for. In July 1994, for example, Canada's federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture, at their annual meeting, considered the status of women in agriculture. Their discussions led to a universal declaration of principle that will henceforth guide Canada's efforts to advance the cause of women in agriculture.

Moreover, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food meets with the major Canadian associations of women in agriculture at least once a year in order to discuss various current issues, such as rural day care centres, health and safety in agriculture, and income security. As Secretary of State for Agriculture and Agri-Food and Fisheries and Oceans, I have also been made responsible for this important issue.

The Government of Canada is certainly listening to women in agriculture, but we are also listening to rural communities and to the women who live in them. Earlier this year, my colleague Lyle Vanclief, who is Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Minister responsible for rural affairs, announced the "rural impact test" in connection with the Canadian Rural Partnership. This is a plan under which all federal departments and agencies undertake to examine the effects of their new programs, services and policies on rural Canada. They will also have to consider the presence of women in agriculture and the increase in their numbers.

But that's not all. The intragovernmental and intergovernmental effort is being complemented by an enormous Rural Dialogue project, which aims at allowing citizens in rural areas to speak to one another, share their experiences, challenges and knowledge, and learn from one other.

The Rural Dialogue will give us a better understanding of local and regional problems, and allow us to determine the role that the Government of Canada must play in resolving the major rural issues. In Canada, as in other countries, clear proof has been provided of the power of dialogue and communication, and the resulting co-operation and sense of community. For women in agriculture, this may mean, in future, an even better quality of life and an accelerated economic development.

In any discussion of the quality of life on the farm, emphasis must be given to the important issue of health and safety. As Secretary of State for Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans, and as a physician, this issue is of particular concern to me.

It is acknowledged that farming is the most dangerous occupation in North America, and that the increased participation of women in farming operations exposes them to some risks and possibilities of injury. Between 1991 and 1995 in Canada, we recorded 503 deaths -- which are 503 deaths too many -- connected with agricultural work, including 45 deaths of women.

In order to meet this serious challenge, the Canadian Government has established a partnership with the private sector in the Canadian Agricultural Safety Program. This program aims at reducing the number of injuries and deaths on farms and at ensuring a safe environment for farmers, their families and their communities. This program has been very effective, primarily because of the participation of our many partners, which of course include many women in agriculture.

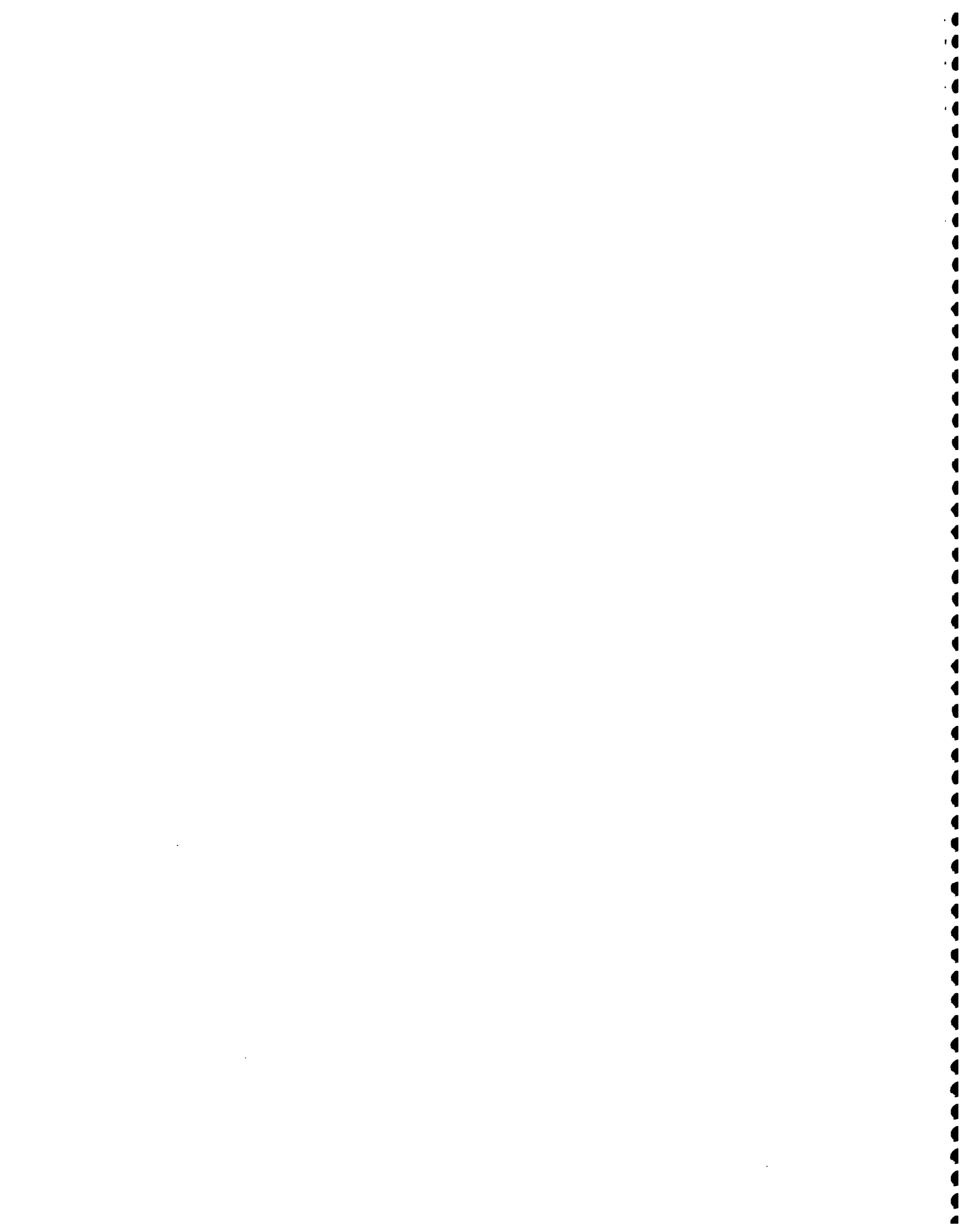
However, the dangers and challenges that women in agriculture face are not all related to farm operations. In particular, we should mention the Canadian initiative to combat domestic violence. Some projects undertaken in connection with this initiative deal with the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including women living in rural and remote regions.

Through this important meeting that so many of you are attending today, you are also taking on a

great challenge: to plan for the new millenium. Rural women, who make up a quarter of humanity, are counting on you.

We hope that the Canadian example, which I have touched on this morning, will help to make your discussions more productive. Our many Canadian delegates here will offer you their own assessments in the sessions starting today.

I wish you very productive deliberations. Thank you and good luck!



Remarks by Panel Chairperson:

**Ms. Kay McClanahan, IICA Representative
in the United States**

On behalf of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Agri-Future Foundation I would like to welcome you to our Round Table Policy Dialogue. We are honored to have so many distinguished leaders to participate in our program today and believe that the high level of interest by dignitaries, professional experts and special guests is an indication of the importance of the issues that we plan to address. Although we don't expect to arrive at simple answers to these difficult questions, we feel strongly that it is important to make this forum possible so that the dialogue can take place and to offer an opportunity for all view points to be expressed.

Before we begin, I would like to give a sincere thank you to two women who have worked closely with me on the planning and implementation of today's program, who kept us focused on the balance and professionalism that would insure the credibility of our session. They are Dr. Elizabeth McGregor from Canada, Member of the Board of Directors of the Agri-Future Foundation and Ms. Clara Solis from Costa Rica, Director of Sustainable Rural Development for IICA. Thank you both for helping us to frame the question in a positive way concerning how we can all work cooperatively to enjoy mutual benefits and provide for food security in the next millennium.

This afternoon we have three distinguished honorees who will offer us opening remarks. We appreciate their recognition of the important role that the relationship between bio-technology and food security in the new millennium will have on the lives of rural women. We will begin with the Honorable Dr. Carlos Aquino, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. We will then hear from the Honorable Dr. Gilbert Normand, Secretary of State for Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans of Canada and from the Honorable Vilma de Calderon, Vice Minister of Agriculture of El Salvador. Don Carlos, please take the podium.

Keynote Challenge for Food Security:

The Hon. Flora MacDonald
Former Minister of External Affairs for Canada

I'm very privileged to have been asked to address this impressive gathering and I know, even from the preliminary discussions, that this will be an exciting session. You will be addressing a wide variety of issues connected with this vitally important topic, "Food Security". Among you are specialists and scientists in the fields of biological diversity, biotechnology, intellectual property, natural resource conservation, sustainable development.

And while I make no particular claim to any specialized knowledge in these fields, I am familiar with one important aspect of food security -- the role and contribution of women. I have seen what women agriculturalists, operating under widely differing circumstances in different parts of the world, can and have accomplished. What I find to be the most impressive is the ability of women to organize and to get things done, when they have the opportunity to do so.

My great regret is that governments, bureaucracies, and international agencies generally fail to recognize this singular organizing ability of women for the great asset it is. A tremendous resource, like so many others in this world, could be said to be literally going to waste. But as individuals and as groups, women are showing that this need not be so. And that's what I would like to concentrate on for a few minutes.

A recent Canadian publication, "Connecting with the World", forecast that before the end of the current decade, seventeen of the world's twenty largest megacities will be in countries of the South. Consider that prediction in the context of the trends towards concentration, industrialization and dispossession of peasant farmers. More and more agricultural land is being lost, more and more people, totalling in the million, are moving to the cities. The increase in urban population and urban sprawl is changing the face of agriculture. Twenty years ago Susan George wrote: "If you want to eat, you must be able to grow your food, or to buy it, or a combination of both..." For the millions of newly-arrived urban dwellers who can't afford to buy food, the only answer is to grow it. As a result, urban agriculture is booming.

Millions of people in cities of the South have become farmers in recent decades, growing vegetables, raising livestock, and practising other types of agriculture in urban areas. These urban farmers, the majority of whom are women, enjoy benefits that include better diets and a higher income, and they make a significant contribution to the urban environment. Urban agriculture improves local food supplies, puts marginal lands to good use, and speeds the recycling of organic wastes into productive compost and fertilizers.

And here women are playing leading roles, although to do so they must overcome numerous restrictions and obstacles. For instance, most urban agriculture remains largely unrecognized and unassisted, if not outlawed and harassed, even in years of food shortages. Despite being a widespread practice, urban agriculture is not considered a legitimate form of urban land use by most local authorities and is therefore not planned for or supported by urban planners and managers. As the main cultivators of urban spaces in the quest to feed their families, women are the ones who come into direct conflict with urban managers. But in Kampala, Uganda, a group of determined women set out to convince city councillors of the necessity to revise Kampala's by-laws to make agriculture a legitimate use of urban land. Their successful efforts have benefitted all those engaged in crop production and animal husbandry in that city.

The productivity and profits of women farmers soar when constraints are removed. This is illustrated by the experiences of Peru Mujer, a Peruvian NGO. Peru Mujer initiated a community gardening project ten years ago that, as a result of careful organization, today reached women in five thousand families in Lima. Women receive training and extension visits, as well as marketing and processing support.

In Bangladesh, a sizable group of women are visible testimony to the impact and the value of organization. They are participants in a CARE-Canada-led and CIDA-funded project called the Rural Road Maintenance Program. Its aim is to assist destitute women. In Bangladesh, women who are widowed, abandoned or divorced are frequently relegated to the status of nonentities -- they become drop-outs from society. Destitute and desperate, their lives are a continuous search for ways to feed themselves and their children.

In 1985 CARE Canada gave a four year contract to 78,000 of these women to carry out road maintenance on some of the 100,000 kilometres of dirt roads over which the produce of rural Bangladesh is brought to the market. The work is difficult, often back-breaking, but for the first time in their lives these women can count on a regular wage paid twice a month, with a small sum being held back and deposited in a bank account for each woman.

During the last few months of her four-year contract, each road-worker receives training in how to operate a small business. When she leaves the program, her bank savings are released to her and she gets help to set up her own business -- raising chickens, operating a fruit stall, financing a bicycle rickshaw. Of the 500,000 women who have passed through this program in the last thirteen years, 73% are today running small businesses.

These once-destitute dropouts from society have changed their economic status -- developed skills, gained confidence and assumed leadership. They are now an organized force in the villages. And their networking strengthens them to take on new challenges. In the general election in Bangladesh earlier this year, 72 of these women ran for Parliament and 36 of them were elected!!

Their goal in this new status is to ensure a greater degree of food security for people whose situation mirrors theirs a few years earlier. What began its life as an aid project has become an agent of social change in Bangladesh. But it took organization to bring it about.

One of the most impressive examples of the organizing ability of women occurred in Zimbabwe in 1992, during the worst drought Southern Africa had experienced in over one hundred years. The failure of the long rains devastated crops, particularly maize, reduced scarce water supplies and placed the lives of millions of people at risk from starvation and disease. Thousands of animals died of thirst; crops wilted and withered in the blistering heat. Zimbabwe had long been known as the breadbasket of Southern Africa, but during the prolonged drought the government of that country seemed paralyzed, unable to cope with the crisis.

Not so Sithembiso Nyoni, then the coordinator and founder of the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), located throughout Western Zimbabwe. In the ten years since its founding, its membership had grown to over one million people. It is the largest grassroots movement in Southern Africa.

During the devastating drought, Sithembiso and her organization (ORAP) went to work. Early in the morning she would turn up at the main city markets to harass and bully commercial farmers, those who had irrigation, into giving her whatever vegetables -- cabbages, turnips, carrots -- they could spare. Trucks transported the vegetables to her organization's headquarters where women from surrounding villages waited to begin the day's work.

From dawn to dusk, to the rhythm of their own singing, the women cut up the vegetables and spread them in the sun to dry. The following day they bagged the dried vegetables, along with lentils and powdered milk. Meanwhile, Sithembiso and her organization had set up six hundred feeding centres throughout western Zimbabwe, all run by volunteers. And every morning two hundred thousand children came to the centres to be fed a nourishing meal made from bagged vegetables. All in all it was a superb feat of organization displaying the power of human resources properly harnessed.

Just recently, I returned from Bolivia where I had been visiting projects sponsored by HelpAge International, a non-governmental organization working with the destitute elderly in some seventy countries. In Bolivia, as elsewhere, women form the majority of the elderly population. One project in particular is an example of what can be done under duress. It's called the Grupo de Ancianas -- "The Awichas".

The Awichas are a group of older Aymara women who have moved from the countryside to the outskirts of the capital, La Paz. As their small plots of land in rural Bolivia became non-productive through overuse and inadequate water supplies, they had followed the younger people to the city. Once there, however, they found themselves forced to live on the streets. But the Awichas are nothing if not resourceful. Using their traditional talents they began spinning alpaca wool into yarn

and knitting mantillas and shawls. As the group grew they made contact with a group of older people in Sweden, who helped sell the woollen products.

The Awichas have since expanded their activities to look after all their basic needs. They lobbied for and took possession of a small piece of land, then set about building a house, constructing it themselves a room at a time as they raised the money. They have since added a kitchen with running water and electricity. At any one time about 14 older people live in the house and another 20 come for the day, working and eating a substantial noon meal together -- the highlight of the day.

Drawing on the knowledge gained through years of experience and experiment, the Awichas have set up a small pharmacy of traditional medicines -- the only one in the neighbourhood. The Awichas are determined to maintain their customs, their values and their way of life as best they can. Their achievements to date indicate their singular skill at organization.

These are anecdotal examples of impressive efforts by women in different parts of the world. I have no doubt that many of you can relate to similar stories. By themselves, none of these projects can effect widespread change, but if the overall impact of all such examples were to be aggregated, the result would be phenomenal. However, it would still be only a drop in the bucket compared to what could really be accomplished if the organizing abilities of women were given free rein. That, however, requires radical change in social, economic, and cultural policies and approaches in many jurisdictions. It also requires a new respect for and appreciation of generations-old knowledge, of which women are the principal custodians.

This century has witnessed a breakthrough for women in a variety of fields, not least as agricultural researchers, scientists and practitioners. Much of what has been accomplished can be traced to the nurturing of their knowledge. It will be vitally critical to continue that practice as we embark on new creative ventures and working partnerships for the next millennium. The competition to keep agricultural research and development as a top priority in an increasingly globalized world will be fierce.

Given the talents that women have traditionally displayed as agriculturalists, and given the global networks that are being created to coordinate the organizing abilities of women, I have no doubt that many of the achievements in the 21st Century towards global food security will come about as a result of the efforts of women. But only if it is widely recognized that the inherent talents, knowledge and creativity of rural women are vital to the decision-making processes.





Remarks by Panel Facilitator:

**Ms. Maureen McTeer, LL.M.
Professor of Law, Technology and Genetics**

Introduction

This conference on rural women and agriculture gives us an opportunity to stop and take stock of what has been achieved and what remains to be done to ensure several national and international objectives. Narrowly, the key objective is stated as "feeding the world". But to do that we must also meet important and perennially elusive goals, including:

- giving rural people the tools and the influence to have their voices heard and listened to;
- changing existing systems to recognize and respect the very people public policy is drafted to serve; and
- integrating women in a real and positive way into all decision-making in government, the community and industry.

The panel on this specific topic should be considered as a starting point to an ongoing dialogue across national boundaries and individual backgrounds. In the few minutes we have today, only the bare-bones of the issues can be raised. None of you in this room assumes a major breakthrough in an hour and a half. To ensure that this dialogue can continue, we are asking all of you to fill in the page on your chair and leave it at the desk.

The panellists before you this afternoon come from different backgrounds. To ensure real dialogues those here have agreed to limit their remarks to five minutes each and to speak to only one specific question.

That question is:

What new ways can we find to achieving food security that empower rural women and respect their local knowledge?

Es un placer para mi el presidir este panel e iniciar esta dialogo internacional.

Este es un dialogo que debe mantenerse con las mujeres rurales y otros grupos en los meses que siguen.

Esta tarde, formularemos una pregunta.

Este pregunta es dificil pero esencial:

"Como podemos alcanzar seguridad alimentaria que empodere a las mujeres rurales y respete su conocimiento local?"

Dr. Vandana Shiva

Dr. Shiva is unable to be with us in person but will address us electronically. She is the Founder and Chair of the Research Foundation for Science Technology and Natural Resource Policy in India. She will address the question asked within the context of biodiversity, women' s knowledge and intellectual property rights.

Beverly Simmons

Beverly Simmons began her career as an agricultural economist in the oilseeds and products division of the US foreign agricultural service, where she is now Assistant Deputy Administrator for International Trade Policy. Her presentation will tell us how the structure and procedures of world trade allow agricultural producers with ready access to biotechnology and its benefits.

Ray Mowling

Ray Mowling is a VP and Director of Monsanto' s Life Sciences Business in Canada, which includes agricultural, pharmaceutical and consumer products and food ingredients. He has worked for Monsanto in both Mexico and Brazil. This afternoon, he will explore the use of micro-credits by his company for women agricultural producers as a partnership option to help small farmers, many of

whom are women, access to better technology and farm inputs.

Rosina Salerno

Rosina Salerno is a legal expert with the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), a member association of over 50 governments, foundations and organizations with 16 research centres around the globe, specializing in food crops, forestry, livestock, irrigation management, aquatic resources and policy issues. She will answer our question through the lens of gender, education and women's participation in agriculture.

Dr. Calestous Juma

Dr. Calestous Juma has written extensively on issues of science, technology and the environment and is currently the Executive Director of the Convention on Biodiversity in Montreal. He brings a special perspective to the question of preserving and respecting women's knowledge, promoting the sharing of its benefits and integrating this local and indigenous knowledge into national and international law.

Beatriz Ramacciotti

Beatriz Ramacciotti is a lawyer and is currently both the Ambassador with the Permanent Mission of Peru to the OAS and a member of the Hague Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Conclusion

It was our goal to open a dialogue today that can develop strong roots and blossom into a wider international action. The panellists have offered us some options and we appreciate your questions and look forward to receiving your addresses and interests on the white sheets on your chair, so that this dialogue today can continue on the Internet and through individual correspondence.

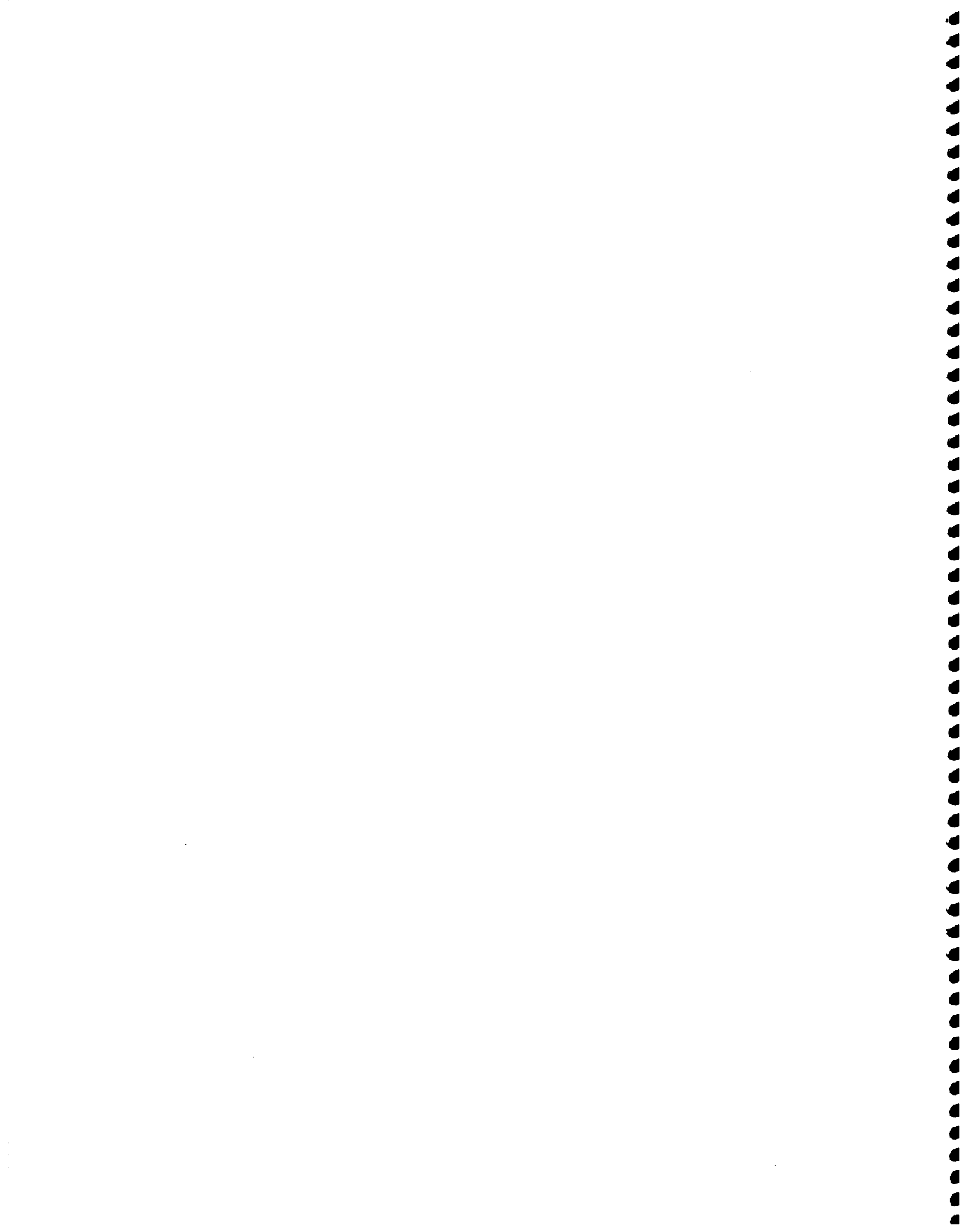
After listening to the panellists and to this audience's response, it is clear that the issues are both interwoven and complex.

- ◆ We cannot, for instance, speak about recognizing and respecting rural women's knowledge, without addressing practices like patents on seeds, plants and animals.
- ◆ We cannot expect equality of opportunity for women, where existing national laws deny them access to education and ownership of property.
- ◆ We cannot expect women's views to be articulated and heard when in almost every country of the world no place is made for them at the table, where public and private decisions are made.

We must carry forward the discussion here today on ways to achieve food security while empowering local women producers and legally protecting their local knowledge and access to all biotechnology.

But in the end, the biggest challenge is to change economic and political systems which remain insensitive and hostile to women and girls. Only then will women's way be integrated into the systems that now claim to speak and act on their behalf.

We again thank our sponsors, hosts and panellists, and most of all, we thank you for joining us.



Panel Participant:

**Dr. Vandana Shiva - Research Foundation for Science,
Technology & Ecology**

***Monocultures, Monopolies, Myths and the
Masculinisation of Agriculture***

I am writing this statement from beautiful Doon Valley in the Himalaya where the monsoons have arrived, and our Navdanya (Nine Seeds -- Our National Movement on Conservation of Biodiversity) team is busy with transplanting of over 300 rice varieties which we are conserving along with the rich diversity of other agricultural crops. Our farm does not use any chemicals or external inputs. It is a self-regenerative system which preserves biodiversity while meeting human needs and needs of farm animals. Our 2 bullocks are the alternative to chemical fertilisers which pollute soil and water as well as to tractors and fossil fuels which pollute the atmosphere and destabilise the climate.¹

One of the rice varieties we conserve and grow is basmati, the aromatic rice for which Dehra Dun is famous. The basmati rice which farmers in my valley have been growing for centuries is today being claimed as "an instant invention of a novel rice line" by a U.S. Corporation called RiceTec (no. 5,663,454).² The "neem" which our mothers and grandmothers have used for centuries as a pesticide and fungicide has been patented for these uses by W.R. Grace, another U.S. Corporation.³ We have challenged Grace's patent with the Greens in European Parliament in the European Patent Office.

This phenomena of biopiracy through which western corporations are stealing centuries of collective knowledge and innovation carried out by Third World women is now reaching epidemic proportions. Such "biopiracy" is now being justified as a new "partnership" between agribusiness and Third World women. For us, theft cannot be the basis of partnership. Partnership implies equality and mutual respect. This would imply that there is no room for biopiracy and that those who have engaged in such piracy apologise to those they have stolen from and whose intellectual and natural creativity they want to undermine through IPR monopolies. Partnership with Third World women necessitates changes in the WTO/TRIPs agreement which protects the pirates and punishes the original innovators as in the case of the U.S./India TRIPs dispute.⁴ It also requires changes in the U.S. Patent Act which allows rampant piracy of our biodiversity related knowledge. These changes are essential to ensure that our collective knowledge and innovation is protected and women are recognised and respected as knowers and biodiversity experts.⁵

Women farmers have been the seed keepers and seed breeders over millenia. The basmati is just one

among 100,000 varieties of rice evolved by Indian farmers. Diversity and perennality is our culture of the seed. In Central India, which is the Vavilov Centre of rice diversity, at the beginning of the agricultural season, farmers gather at the village deity, offer their rice varieties and then share the seeds. This annual festival of "Akti" rejuvenates the duty of saving and sharing seed among farming communities. It establishes partnership among farmers and with the earth.

IPRs on seeds are however criminalising this duty to the earth and to each other by making seed saving and seed exchange illegal. The attempt to prevent farmers from saving seed is not just being made through new IPR laws, it is also being made through the new genetic engineering technologies. Delta and Pine Land (now owned by Monsanto) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have established new partnership through a jointly held patent (No.5723785) to seed which has been genetically engineered to ensure that it does not germinate on harvest thus forcing farmers to buy seed at each planting season. Termination of germination is a means for capital accumulation and market expansion. However, abundance in nature and for farmers shrinks as markets grow for Monsanto. When we sow seed, we pray, "May this seed be exhaustless". Monsanto and the USDA on the other hand are stating, "Let this seed be terminated so that our profits and monopoly is exhaustless".

There can be no partnership between the terminator logic which destroys nature's renewability and regeneration and the commitment to continuity of life held by women farmers of the Third World. The two worldviews do not merely clash - they are mutually exclusive. There can be no partnership between a logic of death on which Monsanto bases its expanding empire and the logic of life on which women farmers in the Third World base their partnership with the earth to provide food security to their families and communities.

There are other dimensions of the mutually exclusive interests and perspectives of women farmers of the Third World and biotechnology corporations such as Monsanto.

The most widespread application of genetic engineering in agriculture is herbicide resistance i.e. the breeding of crops to be resistant to herbicides. Monsanto's Round up Ready Soya and Cotton are

examples of this application. When introduced to Third World farming systems, this will lead to increased use of agri-chemicals thus increasing environmental problems. It will also destroy the biodiversity that is the sustenance and livelihood base of rural women. What are weeds for Monsanto are food, fodder and medicine for Third World Women.

In Indian agriculture women use 150 different species of plants for vegetables, fodder and health care. In West Bengal 124 "weed" species collected from rice fields have economic importance for farmers.⁶ In the Expana region of Veracruz, Mexico, peasants utilise about 435 wild plant and animal species of which 229 are eaten.⁷ The spread of Round Up Ready crops would destroy this diversity and the value it provides to farmers. It would also undermine the soil conservation functions of cover crops and crop mixtures, thus leading to accelerated soil erosion. Contrary to Monsanto myths, Round Up Ready crops are a recipe for soil erosion, not a method for soil conservation.⁸

Instead of falsely labelling the patriarchal projects of intellectual property rights on seed and genetic engineering in agriculture which are destroying biodiversity and the small farmers of the Third World as "partnership" with Third World women, it would be more fruitful to redirect agricultural policy towards women centred systems which promote biodiversity based small farm agriculture.

A common myth used by Monsanto and the Biotechnology industry is that without genetic engineering, the world cannot be fed. However, while biotechnology is projected as increasing food production four times, small ecological farms have productivity hundreds of times higher than large industrial farms based on conventional farms.⁹

Women farmers in the Third World are predominantly small farmers.¹⁰ They provide the basis of food security, and they provide food security in partnership with other species. The partnership between women and biodiversity has kept the world fed through history, at present, and will feed the world in the future. It is this partnership that needs to be preserved and promoted to ensure food security.

Agriculture based on diversity, decentralisation and improving small farm productivity through ecological methods is a women-centred, nature friendly agriculture. In this women-centred agriculture, knowledge is shared, other species and plants are kin, not "property", and sustainability is based on renewal of the earth's fertility and renewal and regeneration of biodiversity and species richness on farms to provide internal inputs. In our paradigms, there is no place for monocultures of genetically engineered crops and IPR monopolies on seeds.

Monocultures and monopolies symbolise a masculinisation of agriculture. The war mentality underlying military-industrial agriculture is evident from the names given to herbicides which destroy the economic basis of the survival of the poorest women in the rural areas of the Third World. Monsanto's herbicides are called "Round up", "Machete", "Lasso" American Home Products which has merged with Monsanto calls its herbicides 'Pentagon', 'Prowl', 'Scepter', 'Squadron', 'Cadre', 'Lightening', 'Assert', 'Avenge'. This is the language of war, not sustainability. Sustainability is based on peace with the earth.

The violence intrinsic to methods and metaphors used by the global agribusiness and biotechnology corporations is a violence against nature's biodiversity and women's expertise and productivity. The violence intrinsic to destruction of diversity through monocultures and the destruction of the freedom to save and exchange seeds through IPR monopolies is inconsistent with women's diverse non-violent ways of knowing nature and providing food security. This diversity of knowledge systems and production systems is the way forward for ensuring that Third World women continue to play a central role as knowers, producers and providers of food.¹¹

Genetic Engineering and IPRs will rob Third World women and their creativity, innovation and decision making power in agriculture. In place of women deciding what is grown in fields and served in kitchens, agriculture based on globalisation, genetic engineering and corporate monopolies on seeds will establish a food system and worldview in which men controlling global corporations control what is grown in our fields and what we eat. Corporate men investing financial capital in theft and biopiracy will present themselves as creators and owners of life.

We do not want a partnership in this violent usurpation of the creativity of creation and Third World women by global biotechnology corporations who call themselves the "Life Sciences Industry" even while they push millions of species and millions of small farmers to extinction.

References

1. a) Cultivating Diversity: Biodiversity Conservation and the Politics of the Seed", Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy (RFSTNRP), New Delhi, 1993
- b) Sustaining Diversity: Renewing Diversity and Balance Through Conservation", RFSTNRP, New Delhi, 1994
- c) The Seed Keepers", RFSTNRP, New Delhi, 1995
2. Vandana Shiva, " Biodiversity and IPRs: Lessons from Basmati Biopiracy" and "The Basmati Patent: What it Implies? How Should India Respond? Briefing Papers prepared for the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Bratislava, May 1998
3. Vandana Shiva, K. Vijayalakshmi, K.S. Radha, "Neem: A User's Manual" RFSTNRP, New Delhi and CIKS, Madras, 1995
4. Vandana Shiva, "W.T.O., Rules Against Democracy and Justice in the U.S. - India TRIPs Dispute", Briefing paper prepared for the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Bratislava May 1998)
5. Vandana Shiva, Afsar H. Jafri, Gitanjali Bedi, Radha Holla-Bhar, "The Enclosure and Recovery

of the Commons", Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (RFSTE), New Delhi, 1997

6. Hope Shand, "Harvesting Diversity", RAFI, 1997.

7. UNDP, Agroecology: Creating the Synergism for a Sustainable Agriculture, 1995

8. Speech delivered by Hendrik Verfaillie, President, Monsanto at the Forum on Nature and Human Society, National Academy of Sciences, Washington D.C.-- October 30, 1997

9. Vandana Shiva, "Betting on Biodiversity: Why Genetic Engineering Will Not Feed the Hungry", RFSTE, New Delhi, 1998

10. a) Vandana Shiva, "Betting on Biodiversity: Why Genetic Engineering Will Not Feed the Hungry", RFSTE, New Delhi, 1998

b) Vandana Shiva, "Globalisation of Agriculture, Food Security and Sustainability, RFSTE, New Delhi, 1998

11. Vandana Shiva, "Most Farmers in India are Women", FAO, 1991

12. a) Vandana Shiva, "The Violence of Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics", TWN, Malaysia, 1991 and the Other India Book Store, Goa, 1993

b) Vandana Shiva, "Monocultures of the Mind: Biodiversity, Biotechnology and the Third World", TWN, Malaysia, 1993

Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology

A-60, Hauz Khas, New Delhi - 110 016

Tel: 91-11-6968077 Fax: 91-11-6856795

Email: vshiva@giasdl01.vsnl.net.in

<http://www.indiaserver.com/betas/vshiva/>

Panel Participant:

**Ms. Beverly Simmons, Deputy Assistant Administrator,
International Trade Policy, USDA**

Women in Agriculture

Biotechnology offers farmers an invaluable tool for producing more productive crops, food with improved nutritional content, with less reliance on chemical pesticides and more efficient use of herbicides and fertilizers. For small farmers, including rural women, biotechnology is a tool that can be used to produce crops that are appropriate to their economic and agronomic situation. The use of this technology can increase production of crops per hectare/acre resulting in a more efficient use of land. One additional aspect of the technology to keep in mind is the fact that it is essentially packaged in the seed. This means that farmers do not necessarily have to change their cultural practices or provide high level of inputs to benefit from this technology.

There are a number of examples where, through public-private partnerships, small farmers have benefited from biotechnology. I will use one example that is close to home--In Hawaii, small papaya farmers were on the verge of losing their livelihood because of rampant virus infection. A virus resistant papaya was produced through biotechnology by researchers at Cornell University. Through the coordinated efforts of these researchers, Monsanto, USDA, and the Association of Papaya producers, these papaya can now be planted in Hawaii and in other suitable areas of the world.

There are a number of examples of how biotechnology is being used to develop crop varieties that will be useful to small farmers in developing countries--improved bananas in Kenya, drought resistant corn being developed by the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CYMMT) to name a few.

At USDA, we are working through a number of programs to help foster the development that is so necessary in agricultural sectors around the world. Our efforts include scientific cooperation; technical assistance in the areas of food processing and distribution, plant and animal protection; soil and water conservation; sustainable use of natural resources and more. USDA has established programs that encourage the collaboration between scientists in developing countries and scientist in the United States with the dual goal of enabling scientists from developing countries to expand research in their own country and to develop products that will be useful to their country.

Trade is an important component in allowing agricultural producers worldwide ready access to this

growing technology. How do the procedures of the World Trade Organization (WTO) affect the continued progress being made in bringing the benefits of biotechnology to producers including small rural farms?

The WTO was established on January 1, 1995, as the multilateral institution charged with administering agreed-upon rules for trade among member countries. The WTO is both a code of rules and a forum for countries to discuss and resolve trade disputes and to continue negotiations toward expanding world trade opportunities. The WTO is not a government; individual countries retain their right to determine how they will make national laws conforming to their international obligations.

One of the most basic tenets of the WTO is transparency-- Notification, publication, and uniform application of trade regulations are required by all members of the WTO. For USDA, the principle of transparency is pivotal to encouraging technological innovation and efficiency needed for the development and dissemination of new products.

The principle of transparency is carried through to the Agreements on Agriculture and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS). These agreements articulate specific disciplines for agriculture in the areas of market access, export subsidies, internal support, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures. Under the Agriculture Agreement, all market access barriers will be based on a common standard -- tariffs -- which any exporter or importer can readily measure and understand.

Prior to the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement, there were no effective international rules to distinguish trade-protectionist measures from legitimate import regulations to ensure food safety or to otherwise protect the health of people, animals, and plants. Under the WTO, there are now rules that set a scientific standard for measures that restrict imports on the basis of health or safety concerns. Each country will set its own food safety and animal and plant health standards based on risk assessment and its determination of an acceptable level of risk. Alternatively, countries may use international standards. The SPS agreement ensures that countries use science, not politics, to set requirements for food and environmental safety.

In closing, a strong emphasis is needed to ensure that farmers and consumers around the world have access to approved products resulting from biotechnology.

In laboratories and research centers of dedicated scientists around the world, biotech tools are being developed to go beyond traditional plant breeding and meet our commitments to world hunger and preservation of our environment. Scientific cooperation between countries needs to be encouraged to help solve critical problems such as trade barriers and phytosanitary issues, food safety, and exotic diseases and pests.

The structure and procedures of the WTO assure open, predictable, and science-based processes that are necessary to facilitate collaborative efforts in bringing the benefits of biotechnology to all agricultural producers.

Panel Participant:

**Mr. Ray Mowling, Vice-President,
Monsanto Canada**

BIOTECHNOLOGY

- Extension of traditional plant breeding by:
- Adding selected traits to plants using living organisms to:
- Increase yield, improve quality of crops, improve grower efficiency
- And securing our natural resources



Why Biotechnology

- Meets demands for food And conserves natural resources
- Can't sustain unlimited increase in 'things' produced and consumed
- Can sustain unlimited increase in knowledge and information
- Replacing 'things' with information

Why Biotechnology---Easier!

- Seed carries the information replacing
- Seed + insecticides + herbicides + energy



The Case

- Biotechnology can address food security
- Greatest need---Emerging economies
- Barriers---Capital, knowledge, access
- Micro Credit---One partnership answer:-

Microcredits

- Small loans to world's poorest (1970's)
- Usually women
- Linkages to business understanding, trade, education etc.
- Leads to better understanding, improved family health, improved productivity etc.



Why Microcredits

- Exists---
- Partnerships
- Connects to 'local' knowledge

Why Corporations

- Link well being and commercial goals
- Linkage to consumers
- Improves social stability
- Improves stewardship of finite resources
- Creates healthy markets for trade



Potential Partners

- Financial institutions
- Corporations
- NGO's-anti poverty programs
- Science organizations
- Foundations, philanthropists
- Educational institutions
- Government officials
- Media

Microcredit Announcement-June 25

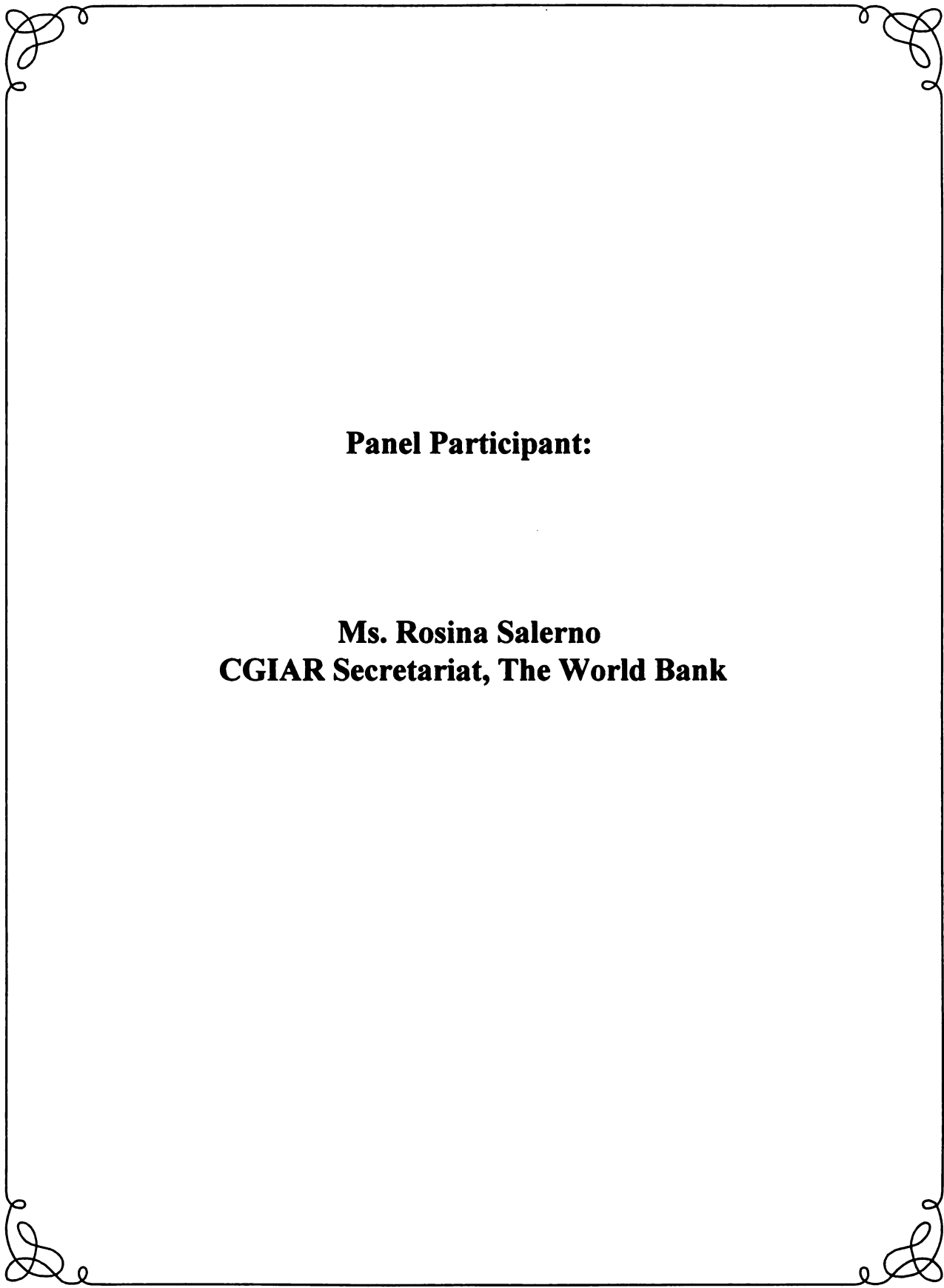
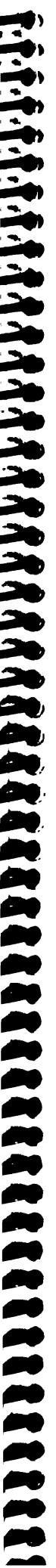
- Monsanto Center for Environmentally Friendly Technologies
- Combines---Monsanto Science and Grammeen's link to low income families
- Major elements--- local crop focus
 - Local demo farm
 - Training
 - Access to inputs



Biotechnology- The Challenge

- Knowledge, understanding, confidence
- Capital
- Access to inputs





Panel Participant:

**Ms. Rosina Salerno
CGIAR Secretariat, The World Bank**

As some of you might not know the CGIAR I will start by introducing the Group. The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research is a member association comprised of over 50 governments, foundations, and international and regional organizations that subscribe the funds to support the System's 16 research Centers, as well as of eight governments that serve as regional representatives. A World Bank Vice president is traditionally Chairperson of the System.

The 16 centers of CGIAR specialize in strategic research in food crops, forestry, livestock, irrigation management, aquatic resources, and policies issues in developing countries in ways that will contribute to the alleviation of poverty. The Centers hold in trust 600,000 accessions in their banks for in situ conservation.

The CGIAR feels that agriculture is not only a means to produce more to feed more people. Agriculture is a trigger that can help the human family cope with the nexus of problems related to poverty, hunger and environmental degradation.

At the same time we are aware that the dramatic developments of agriculture of last century have not happened by chance they are the result of experimentation and investment in research.

The various aspects of agricultural research from problem identification to methodology and dissemination have social, then gender, implications: the technologies must be developed (agriculture research is no end to itself, but is instead technology oriented), technologies must be used (or they are ineffective), technology should improve the farmer's welfare and through that, the community welfare.

In this perspective we consider appropriate technology, to be developed from research, not a specific package of tools and techniques, but an approach that reflects a particular view of society. To ensure that this view englobes women's perspective, we have to involve women at different level of research.

For instance, it is interesting to know that gender could explain different properties of local rice in agriculture war reconstruction programs in Africa. Researchers assessed thirteen criteria deemed to be important by local population in choosing rice varieties. Men tended to stress agronomic factors, including yield, while women were especially interested in processing characteristic, how much effort and fuel is needed to cook different varieties and how well different types keep both before and after preparation. We need more women scientists, more women at the Universities, more women in agricultural extension, in the design and execution of the project. The CGIAR has done relevant progress in this direction in the last five years but more need to be done.

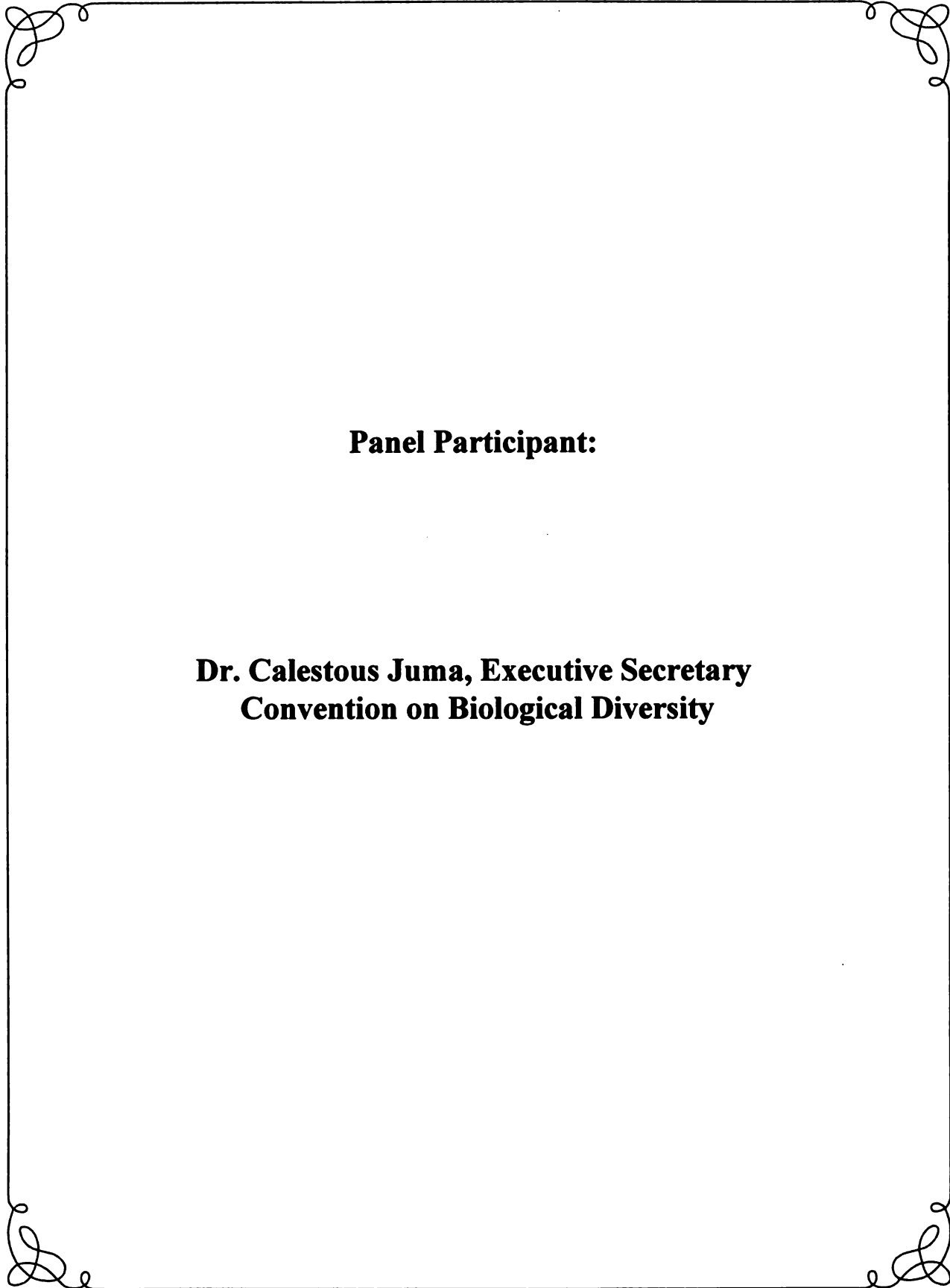
In recent years the development of Intellectual protection on the results of research has increased the complexity of the research environment. There is no doubt that we will witness a scientific and technological revolution in the Third millennium. To what extent the results of this revolution will be aware to all mankind is an important question.

Knowledge was once a public commodity and it is today a private good. The issues of Intellectual Property Rights are especially relevant for the CGIAR and its mission of working on the behalf of the small scale farmers to increase the food production security. It is feared that the germplasm provided freely by the Centers could become objective of exclusive monopoly or could become incorporated into material protected by the recipient. Also biotechnology research of Centers could be conditioned by restricted access to proprietary science.

We have the clear perception that the evolution of the IPR systems is gone to far simply to ignore its implications. One can resist this philosophy but not avoid its consequences when national and international legal systems conform to it. In this context, the CGIAR is trying to develop new concepts, such as internationally owned goods, that is results of research hold in trust by an international organization, and new models of partnership with the private sector. The debate is on going and perhaps only at its inception.

When we consider women's issues in front of the new scenario, we have to be aware that there is no other means to empower women and ensure food sufficiency than pursue and strengthen a

strategy of participation. Our task in the near future shall be to facilitate participation and provide a forum for an ongoing dialogue on research implications.



Panel Participant:

**Dr. Calestous Juma, Executive Secretary
Convention on Biological Diversity**

1. Traditional knowledge (including innovations and practices) has over the centuries played an important role in food production and food security around the world. It has not only been the basis for food security in most local communities, but it has also been a source of many of the innovations that sustain modern agriculture.

2. Modern biotechnology, for example, continues to rely on local knowledge for genetic expressions of importance to agricultural products in international trade. While innovation in modern agriculture is supported by a wide range of incentives including intellectual property rights systems, the generation and maintenance of local knowledge does not enjoy the same level of institutional support.

3. Much of this knowledge is held by women and integrated into traditional and customary practices. This role is increasingly being recognised at the national and international levels. For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity stresses that the vital role played by women in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and affirms the need for their full participation at all levels of policy-making and implementation for biological diversity conservation.

4. Evidence from around the world based on cases studies suggest that there are at least three categories of measures taken to ensure the full recognition of the role of women's traditional knowledge in enhancing food security (either through local production or large-scale commercial agriculture). These include the: (a) respect, preservation and maintenance of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices; (b) wider application of this knowledge with the approval and participation of local and indigenous communities; and (c) sharing of benefits arising from the use of such knowledge.

5. Giving effect to these measure requires changes in national legislation and partnerships among international entities such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Evidence from around the world shows that many governments are moving in this direction and the required partnerships among international entities are being forged.

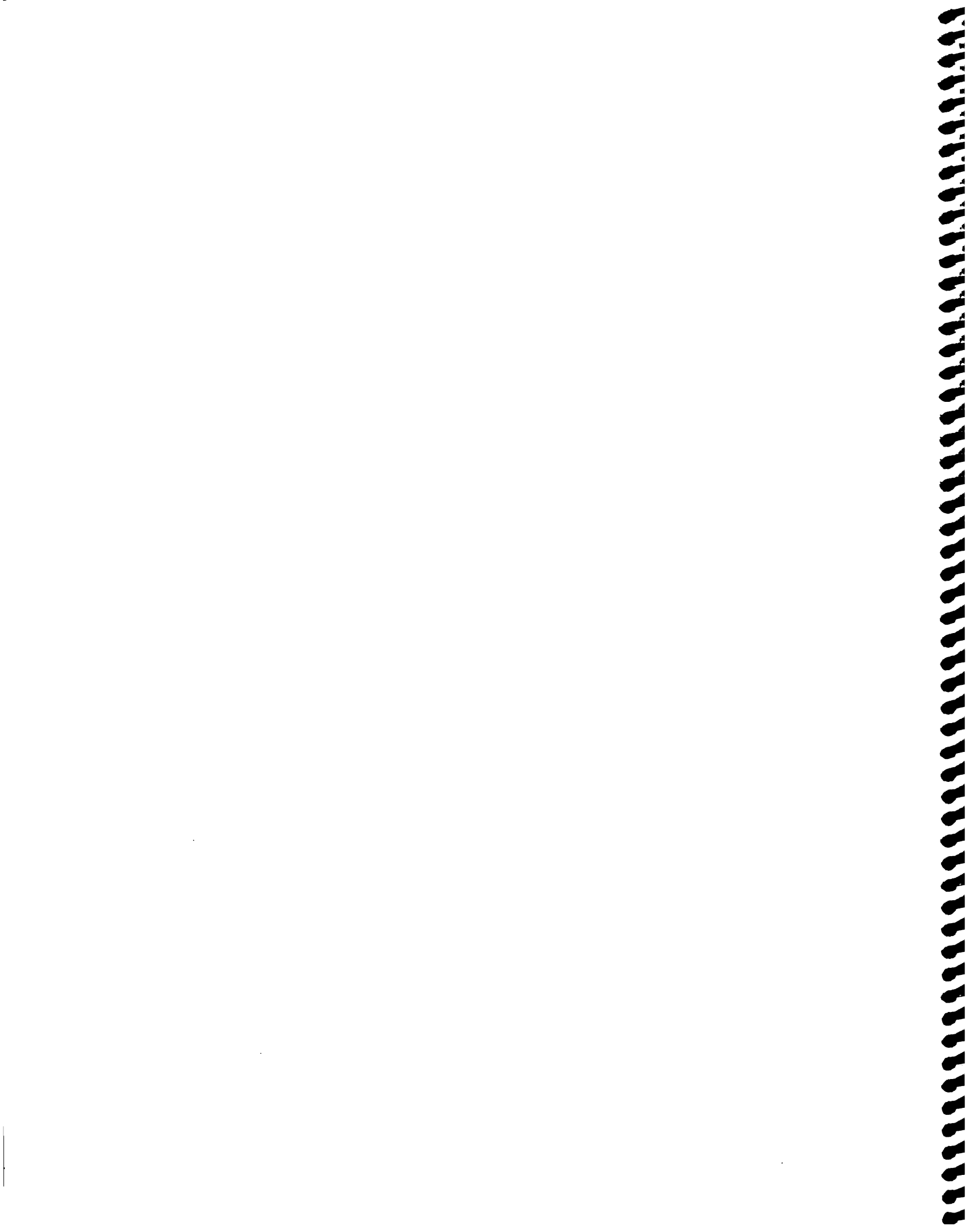
6. One of the most important measures in recognizing the role of women's knowledge in technological innovation and food security is to promote measures which ensure that such knowledge is maintained and preserved. The first step in this process is to document such knowledge in a manner that allows for the identification of the communities which hold the knowledge. Such documentation may require changes in domestic law, especially in providing for the recognition of the moral rights of the holders of the knowledge.

7. Other measures include creating institutions such as museums which are devoted to the preservation of traditional knowledge. Advances in communication technology make it possible to increase the rate at which traditional knowledge can be preserved and maintained.

8. Ultimately, the best way to ensure that traditional knowledge continues to be generated is to enhance its wider application. Such application, however, would require the full participation and approval of the holders of such knowledge. Promoting the full participation of local and indigenous communities in the wider application of the knowledge they hold also helps to ensure that the returns on such knowledge contribute to the maintenance of the livelihoods of these communities.

9. Also related to the above measures is the need to ensure that local and indigenous communities share in the benefits arising from the use of their knowledge, innovations and practices. Measures for benefit-sharing may include direct monetary return but in many cases they may involve activities such as education, training and credit schemes.

10. Many of these ideas are now being developed through the Working Group on Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Convention is working closely with WIPO and other international organizations to set norms for recognizing the role of traditional knowledge in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, especially in agriculture.



Panel Participant:

**Ambassador H.E. Beatriz Ramacciotti
Permanent Representative of Peru to the OAS**

1. First I want to thank you for this wonderful opportunity to share with you some comments with respect to the ideas that have been expressed in this important conference. As Coordinator for the office responsible for monitoring "The Situation of Women in the Americas" at the Organization of American States, I am pleased to recognize the current changes taking place with respect to gender equity at all levels, and in this case in relation to the problems of rural women.
2. Without any doubt, this awareness contributes to the changes in socio-economic relations and the big changes occurring in the world in the last quarter of a century, particularly in globalization. Nevertheless the situation lacks much to be ideal in terms of equality of opportunity and equity for women, because serious differences still exist, that in order to be overcome, will require definite action by governments, by international organizations and by civil societies working together.
3. And perhaps the largest degree of marginalization exists in the economic arena, where the notable differences between men and women in their abilities to exercise their rights and the lack of equal opportunities are most obvious. Control of economic resources is a source of power and it is for this reason that decisions and control at the economic level can generate relationships of inequality and subordination among people. That is why the idea of affirmative action was born in the political arena, and is today extended to the labor arena, as was just confirmed in a case in the European Court.
4. This situation is reflected in all its dimensions when we speak of the enormous gap that exists between the poor and the rich, in particular between rural and urban areas, and in this context we look with great concern at the backward, marginalized position of rural women.
5. As noted in a study completed by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and the InterAmerican Development Bank in 1996 ("Rural Women Food Producers in 18 Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean", Kleysen, B. and Campillo,

F.), in spite of the fact that women in the countryside participate in the production process, the decision making and method of remuneration keep the women in a subservient role characterized by the culture of rural life. In other words, although the role of the woman in rural production work is very significant, she, nevertheless, also continues in her traditional role with the inherent responsibilities associated with the care of children and all domestic chores.

6. On the other hand, it is also certain that, in general, agricultural policies and development programs for strengthening the process of production, productivity and food security in the rural areas, have been incoherent and weak, especially in the area of small agricultural cooperatives, social and gender inequalities, and particularly with the problem of the "Feminization of Poverty".
7. It is for that reason that I believe this meeting is propitious to highlight the importance of an initiative: I refer to the "Program for Strengthening the Integration of Rural Women in the Production/Marketing Chain". I was fortunate to have the opportunity to learn about this proposal at the meeting of the First Ladies of the Western Hemisphere in Panama in October, 1997, in which I represented the First Lady of Peru.
8. This initiative, a request of the Secretary Pro Tempore of the First Ladies, was shaped by IICA (October 1997) counting on the definite support of the Inter-American Commission on Women (ICW) at the OAS, and representing a proposal of continental scope, in order that rural women would not only be "agents" but also "beneficiaries" of development.

That is to say that this program is designed so that, by concrete actions, such as training for rural women in aspects of organization, financing of projects, self-management and promotion of leadership, she can participate actively in the production/marketing chain, promoting at the same time the effective exercise of their civil rights. That is to say that they pass from being second class citizens to first class citizens, with full knowledge and aptitude

for making decisions and participating actively in the structures of power.

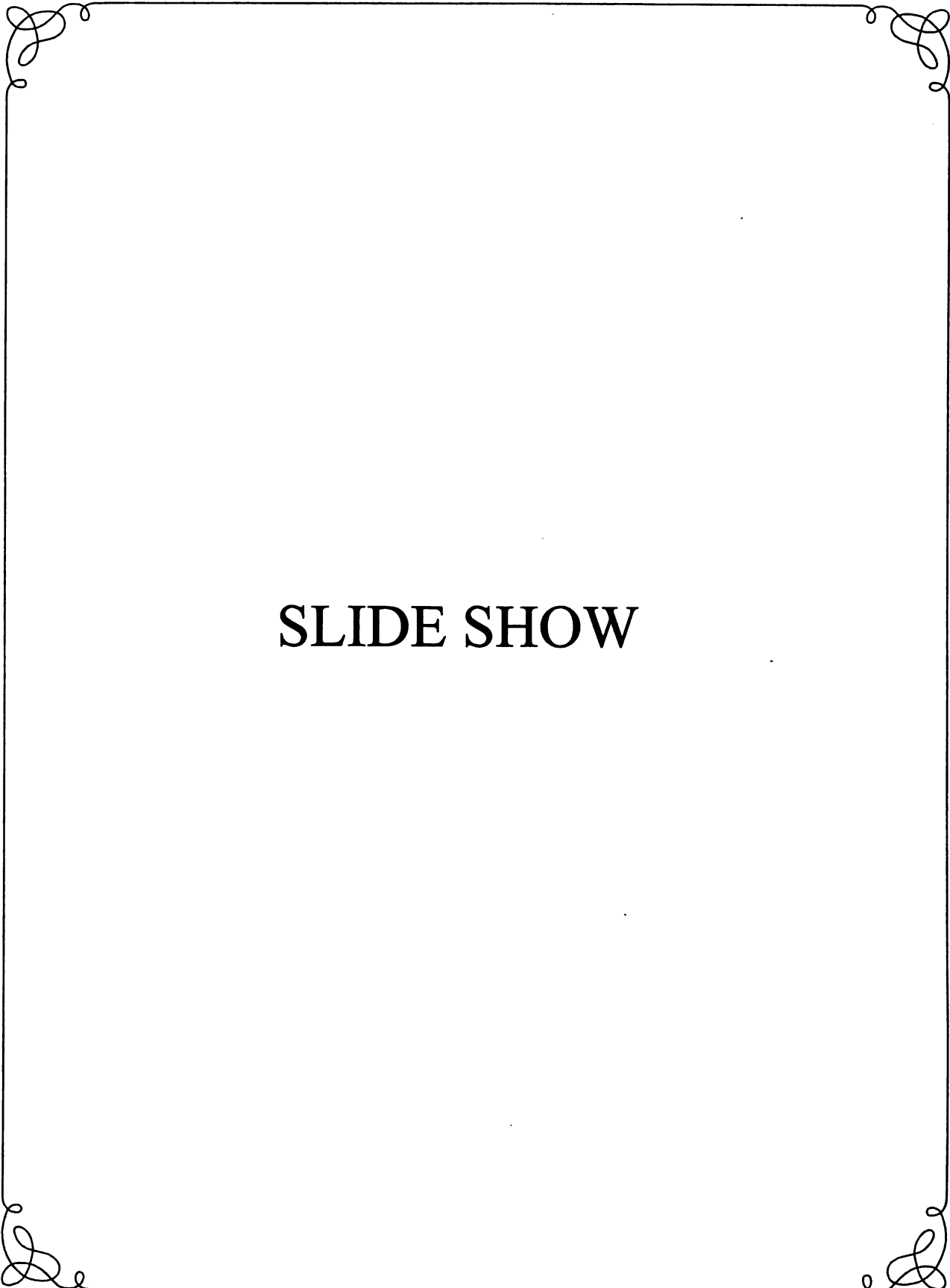
9. I want to reiterate in this forum, that the OAS, especially through the ICW, and for certain at the level of the political organizations such as the Permanent Council, hopes that this program will be a reality, because we believe that in this way IICA will be incorporating a focus on gender equity in a concrete and operative form in its activities.
10. To that end, I want to offer an invitation and a request at the same time: We want to speak from the OAS to IICA and all the entities that participated in this conference, about the great task of harmonizing and complementing the different efforts and initiatives in the Inter-American forum to promote the rights and opportunities for women by means of a permanent exchange of information (at the OAS we are suggesting the creation of an information network "Women of the XXI Century"). We can also meet periodically for inter-agency coordination in order to maximize actions, avoid duplication of efforts and utilize available resources in the most effective manner.
11. This idea was proposed through my position in the Permanent Council of the OAS, in the belief that only if we share the same objectives and proceed in a coordinated and complementary manner, will it be possible to advance the intrinsic strategies focusing on gender equity, putting special emphasis on the most vulnerable sector, that of the rural woman.
12. This central idea that I put on the table, that we share information and coordinate adequately and in a timely manner all our efforts, is not too ambitious.

We can and we ought to concretize it in order to guarantee the dynamic participation of women in the Americas, at all levels, economic, social and political. This objective will have to be accomplished in order to advance in the fights against poverty and discrimination, which continue to exist, and which were recognized by the presidents at the Summit of the

Americas in Santiago (April 1998), as the largest and most difficult challenges confronting our hemisphere.

13. We are convinced that only thus will we achieve some day, the sustainable social development and the democratic fortification of our societies, making the rights of thousands of women, youth and girls a reality, because they deserve a better life in the next millennium.





SLIDE SHOW



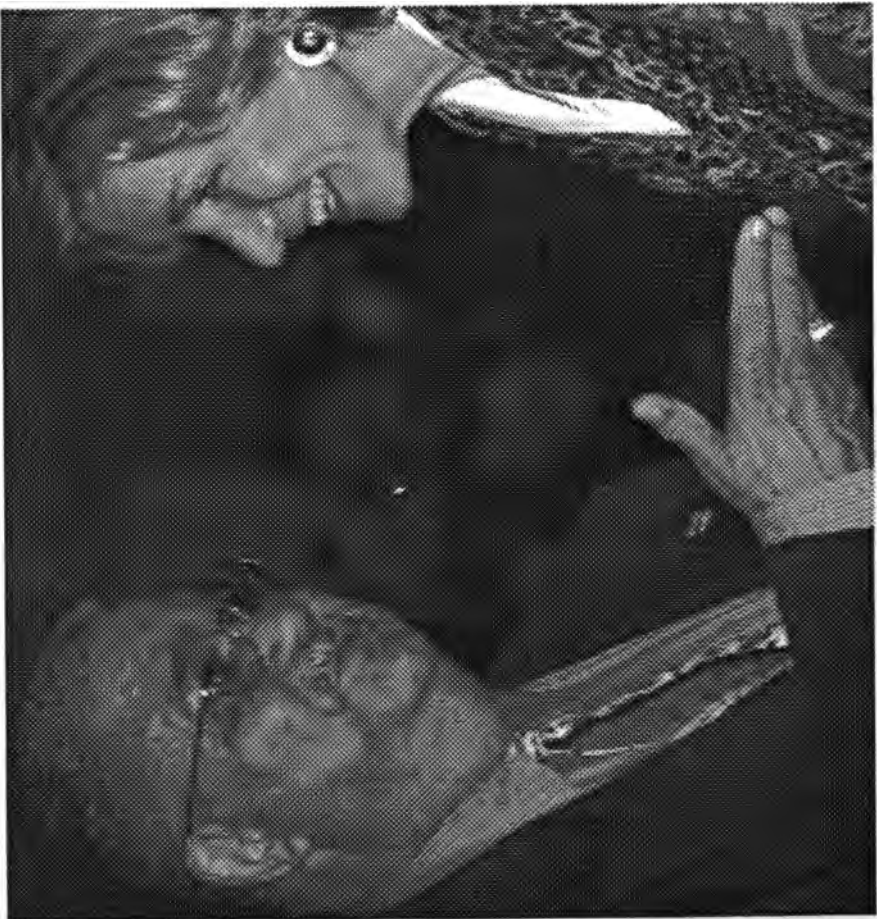
Eng. Carlos Aquino
Director General
IICA

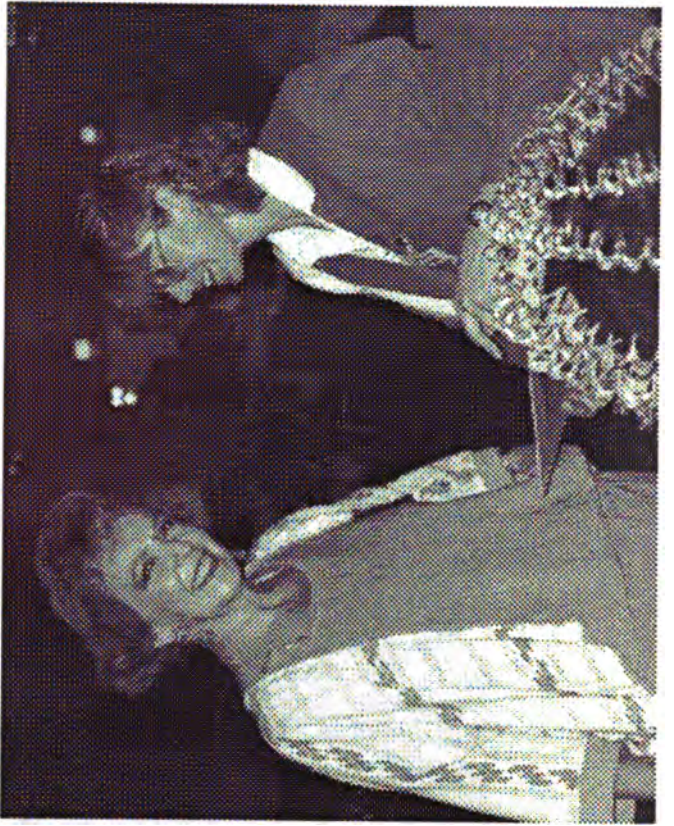


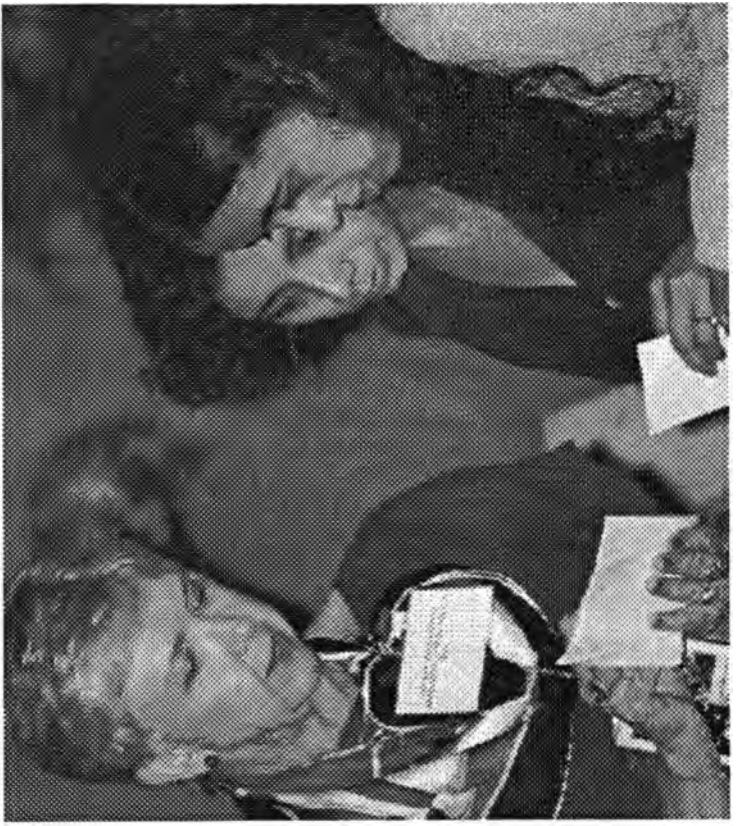
Kay McClanahan
IICA Representative
USA













1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100





**Jill Long-Thompson
Conference Chairperson:
Under Secretary, Department
of Agriculture, USA**





Ceremonial Handover to the
USA by Australia, Host of
First International Conference
on Women in Agriculture

**Special Guest Speaker:
Ms. Tipper Gore - Spouse of U.S. Vice President Al Gore**







**The IICA
Agri-Future Foundation
Policy Panel**

**Sponsored by
Monsanto Canada**

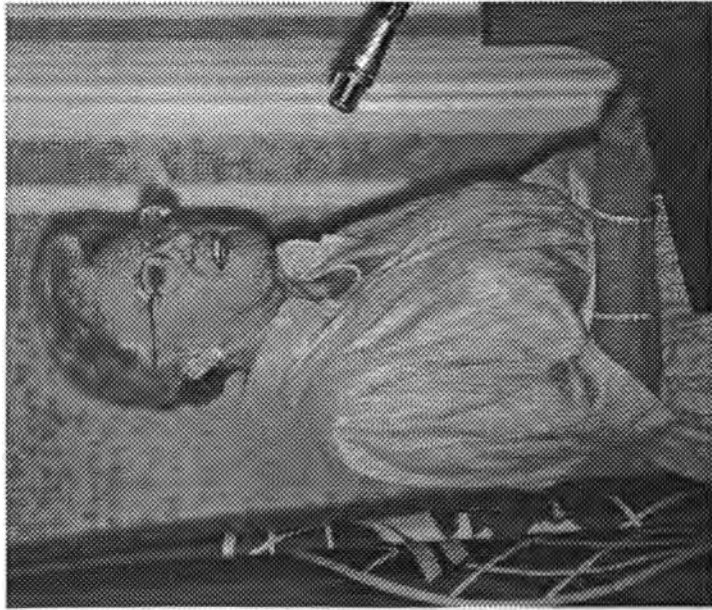
Panel Plenary Welcome Remarks

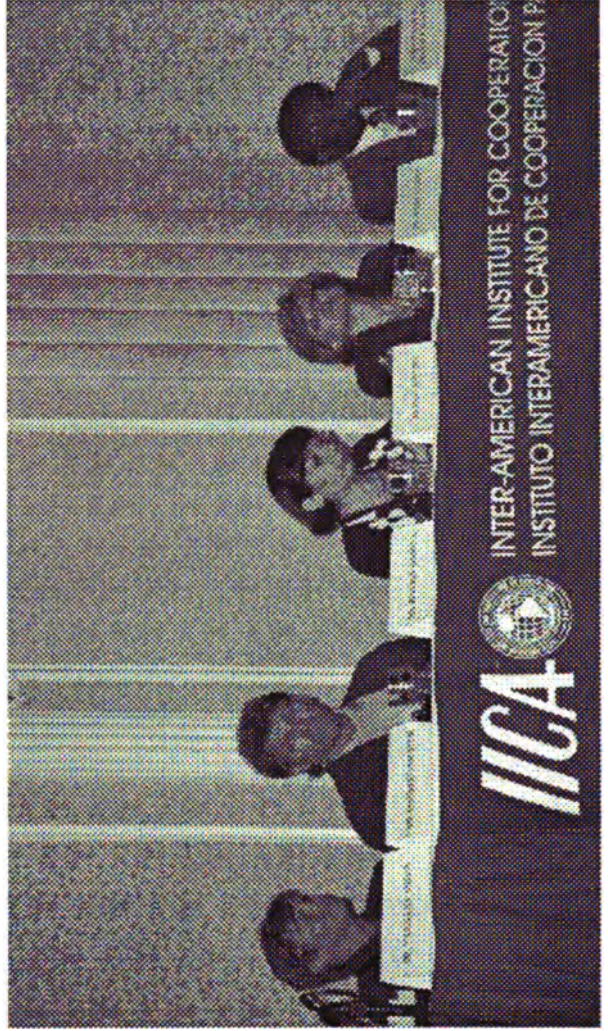


Director General, IICA
T.H. Carlos Aquino



The Honorable Flora MacDonald
Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Canada
Keynote Speaker







**Ms. Maureen McTeer
Professor of Law,
Technology & Genetics
Moderator**

**Ambassador Beatriz
Ramacciotti,
Peru's Representative
to the OAS**

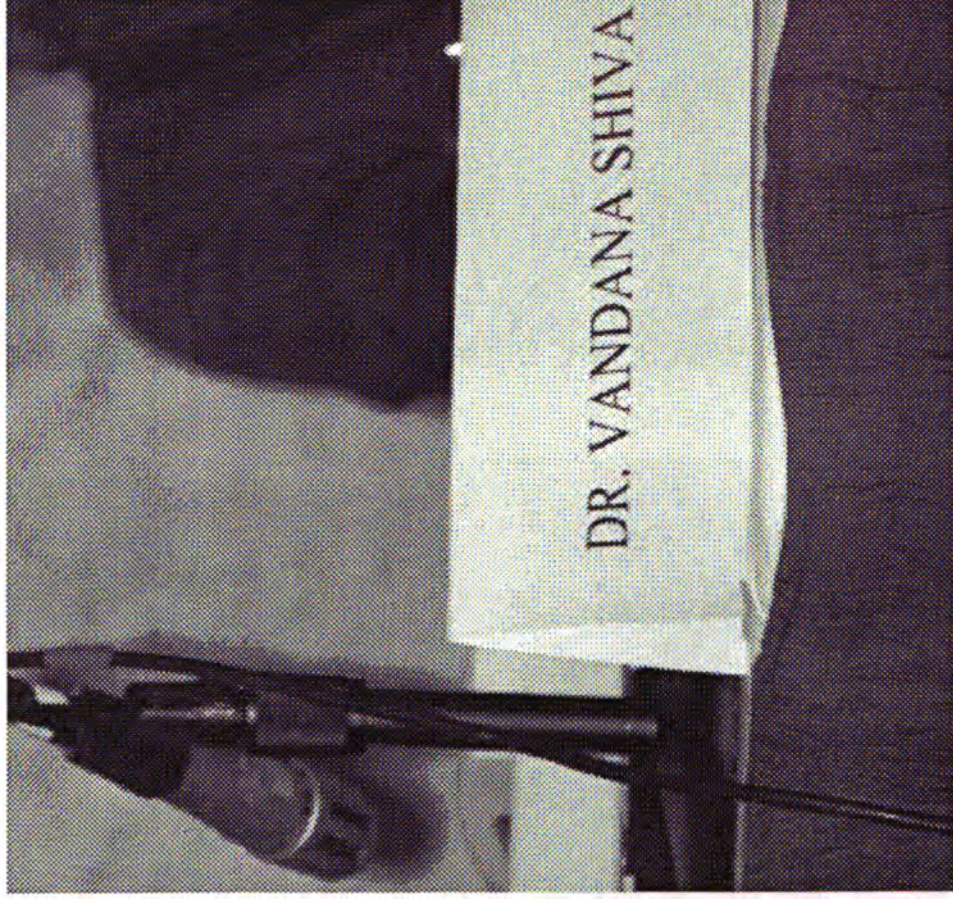




Dr. Calestous Juma
Executive Secretary
Convention on Biological
Diversity Secretariat

Mr. Ray Mowling
Vice President
Monsanto Canada Inc.





**Dr. Vandana Shiva
Teleconferencing from India
to the Policy Panel & Forum**





Ms. Rosina Salerno
Consultative Group on
International Agricultural
Research (CGIAR)

Ms. Beverly Simmons
Deputy Assistant Administrator
International Trade Policy
USDA

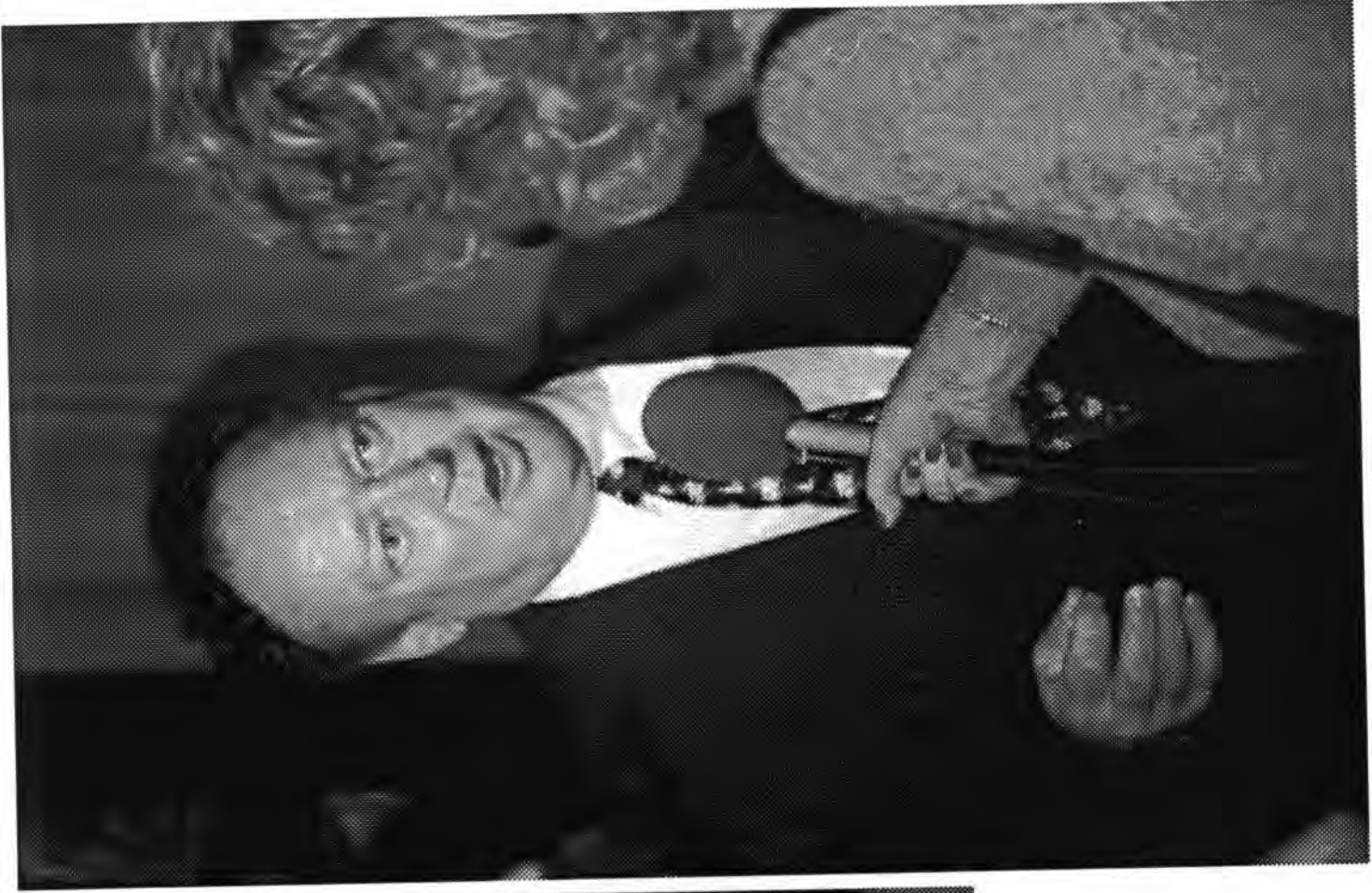








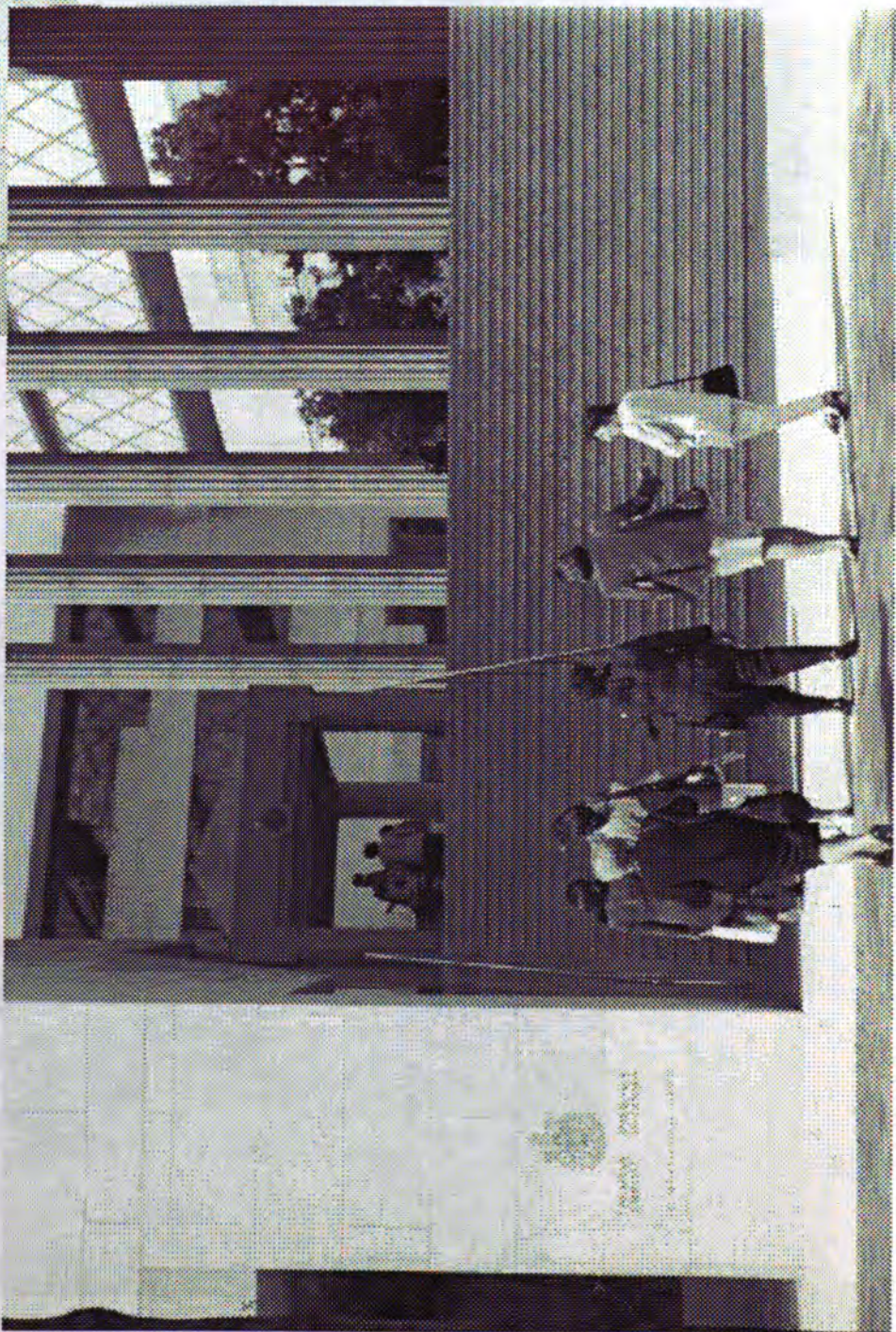
Hon. Gilbert Normand
Secretary of State,
Agriculture and Agri-Food
Canada



.....

**Canadian Embassy
Washington, D.C.
Panel Reception**





Canadian Embassy Hosts Washington D.C

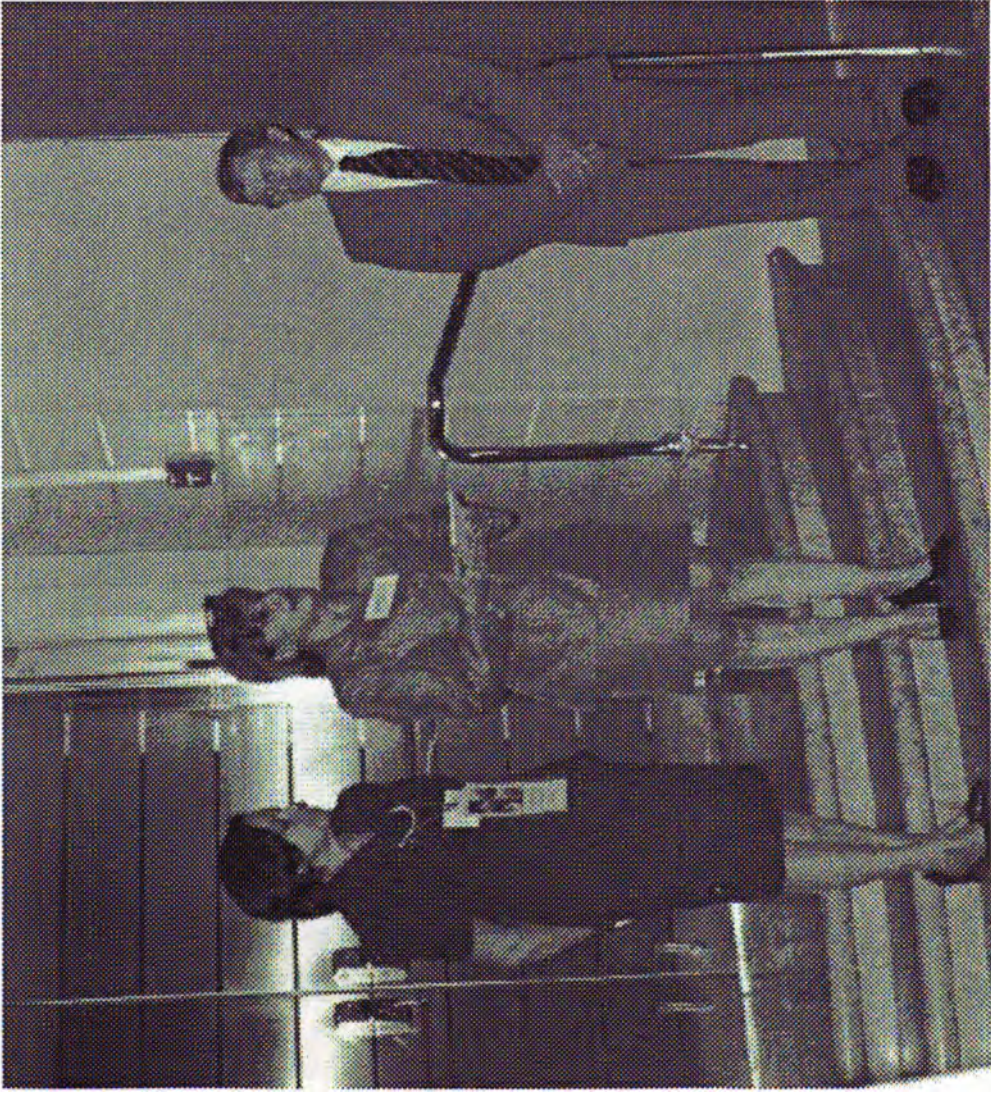


**Mr. Doug Waddell
Minister (Economic),
Deputy Head of Mission**



**Ms. Astrid Pregel
Minister-Counsellor
(Commercial)**





**Policy Panel Summary:
T.H. Leonor Calderon,
Minister of Youth
Panama**





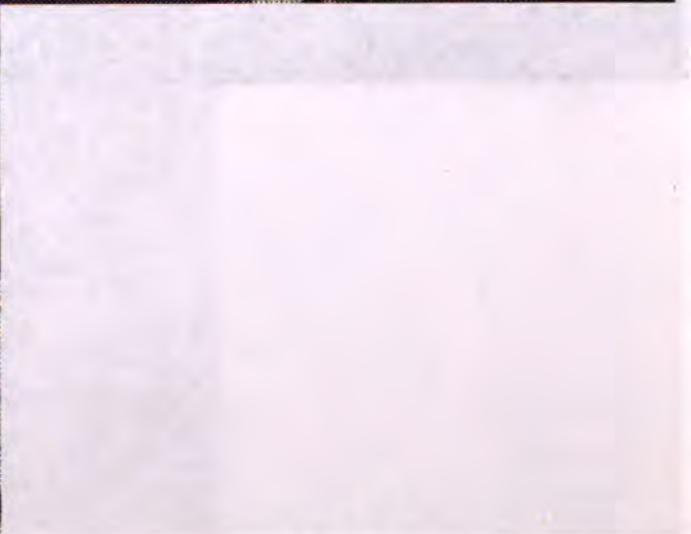






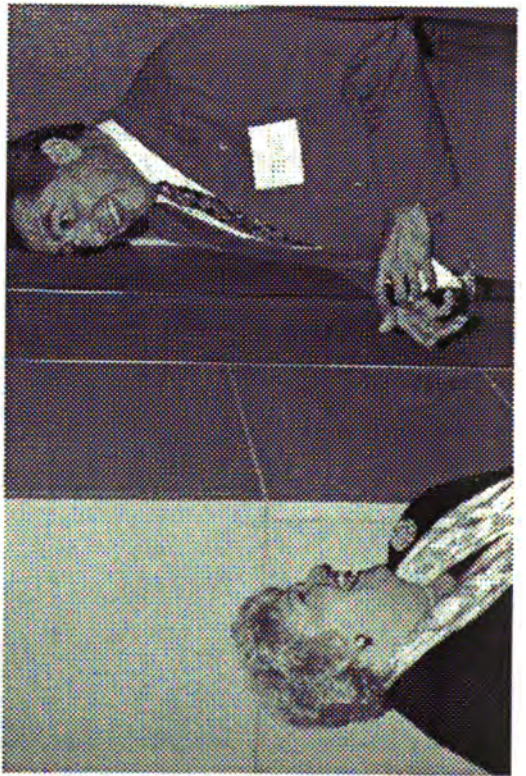
















Lawyer D. Jones

Panel Dinner





THE HISTORY OF
THE HISTORY OF
THE HISTORY OF
THE HISTORY OF

THE HISTORY OF
THE HISTORY OF

THE IICA ON THE WEB

Argentina

<http://www.urunet.com.uy/iica/>

Brazil

<http://www.iica.org.br/>

Canada

<http://www.iicacan.org>

Centro Regional Andino

<http://www.iicasaninet.net>

Costa Rica (Sede Central)

<http://www.iica.ac.cr>

Estados Unidos

<http://www.milcom.com/iica>

Panamá

<http://www.iica.or.pa>

Peru (IICA/GTZ)

Santa Lucia

<http://www.candw.lc>



Agricultural biotechnology has the potential to transform global food security. Creating new partnerships with rural women, the primary family caregivers and key agricultural forces in some of the most populous nations and continents in the world, is the creative challenge entering the next millennium.

Given the continuous innovation in biotechnology and the globalization of the world economy, what new ways can we find to achieve food security that empower rural women and respect their local knowledge?

Comments & Contributing Ideas: _____

I would be interested to contribute to any future dialogue Yes

I could bring the perspective of: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Organization: _____

FECHA DE DEVOLUCION

28/8/02

IICA
A50-259

Autor

Título Women coming together to feed
the world

Fecha
Devolución

Nombre del solicitante

28/8/02 Melania Portillo

