

OPENING STATEMENTS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HOST COUNTRY

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Dear participants in the 14th meeting of the ECPGR Steering Committee

Dear representatives of the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Government of the Republic of Srpska

I am very honored that we as a country once again are hosting a meeting of the ECPGR Steering Committee. Since 2008, when we first hosted this meeting, BiH has made significant progress in the field of conservation of plant genetic resources. Then we had only the SEEDNet project. Thanks to this project we have established a very good basis for the current situation and I am very grateful to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and in particular the SEEDNet Coordinator, Eva Thörn, for the financial and expert assistance given, but also for a friendly relationship and understanding of our specific situation.

The genetic resources in BiH is the responsibility of two entities: the Federation of BiH and the Republic of Srpska, but reporting to the European Commission in terms of achieving progress in harmonization with the EU regulations as well as reporting to other international organisations and conventions is at the level of Council of Ministers of BiH, i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations.

Today in BiH we have a Program for Plant Genetic Resources of the Republic of Srpska, adopted in 2008 by the National Assembly, as well as the Action Plan for PGR of Federation of BiH, adopted by the Government in 2014. The Genetic Resources Institute of the University of Banja Luka is today the only institution in BiH that has the conservation of plant genetic resources as the primary activity of work and also coordinates implementation of the Program of conservation of plant genetic resources of the Republic of Srpska.

I wish you a warm welcome, a successful work and a pleasant stay at this place, dedicated to our Nobel Prize winner, Ivo Andrić.

