



# 71st Plenary Meeting of the INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

16:00 hr. Thursday, October 11, 2012

Mr. Hans-Peter Egler, Head of Trade Promotion, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) in the Chair.

The CHAIR called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Final Statement of the 71<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting

The CHAIR recognized the delegate of BRAZIL, Mr. Andrew Macdonald who had served as Chair of the Drafting Group. The delegate suggested that the Committee had just spent most of the day preparing the Statement of the Meeting, and it did not need to be read again.

The delegates of NIGERIA, INDIA, USA, and SUDAN agreed with Brazil that it was not necessary to read the Statement of the meeting again. The CHAIR found there was a consensus not to read the Statement during the Closing Session.

Invitation from Colombia, Host of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting

The delegate of COLOMBIA congratulated the Organizing Committee and Government of Switzerland for an excellent plenary meeting, and she said that the Organizing Committee in Colombia would want to consult with Switzerland on lessons learned. She said that she represented both the public and private sectors of Colombia in issuing an invitation to the ICAC to come to Cartagena in 2013. She noted that cotton has high social and environmental impacts in Colombia, and that the cotton value chain of Colombia is organized from fiber-to-fashion. The delegate noted that the city of Cartagena is a world heritage site with modern infrastructure, and Colombia is a dynamic, multiethnic society that respects human rights. The delegate warned that the biggest threat to participants in the 72<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting will be a desire to remain in Colombia long after the plenary meeting is finished.

The CHAIR thanked the delegate of Colombia and recalled an earlier period in his own career when he had been stationed there. He said he very much looked forward to returning during the 72<sup>nd</sup> ICAC meeting.

Closing Comments by Argentina, Host of the 70<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting

The CHAIR recognized the delegate of ARGENTINA. The delegate thanked the Government of Switzerland and the Organizing Committee for their excellent work. She recalled that the theme of the meeting in Argentina had placed an emphasis on the roles of the public and private sectors in encouraging both efficiency and fairness, and she said that the theme of this year's meeting had been appropriate and constructive. The delegate reported that the World Café concept had worked well and should be repeated, and she endorsed the use of Reactors during open sessions. She thanked the Secretariat for their work and dedication.

The CHAIR thanked the delegate of Argentina for her kind words.

The delegate of INDIA thanked the government and people of Switzerland for their hospitality, and he said that this meeting had been one of the best plenary meetings he had attended during the last decade. He noted that the incoming Chair of the Standing Committee is from Switzerland, ensuring good continuity with the discussions during the plenary meeting and the work in the coming year.

The delegate of PAKISTAN thanked Switzerland for its warm and pleasing hospitality. He thanked the Organizing Committee and the Secretariat for their efforts in ensuring a productive plenary meeting.

The delegate of SUDAN thanked the government and organizing committee in Switzerland for their outstanding work. He also thanked the Standing Committee for its work during the year.

The delegate of TURKEY thanked the government and Organizing Committee in Switzerland. He said that the discussion of sustainability had been constructive. He said that consumers have a right to know the origins of products that they purchase. Noting that Turkey does not use biotech cotton, he said it was important to retain the importance of non-biotech cotton with bale identification. The delegate thanked the interpreters for their excellent work.

The delegate of CAMEROON thanked the Government of Switzerland for serving as host of the 71<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting. He also thanked the various chairpersons and the Secretariat for how the sessions had been conducted.

The delegate of EGYPT thanked the Organizing Committee and the Government of Switzerland. He said that Interlaken was a beautiful location for the meeting. He also thanked the Secretariat and the interpreters for their work during the week.

#### Closing Comments by Switzerland

The CHAIR expressed his gratitude to all participants for making the meeting an amazing experience with new insights. He said the Government of Switzerland was very happy with the spirit of mutual exchange and dialogue that was exhibited so well. He noted that about 300 participants had taken part in the World Café generating new ideas about how stakeholders can pave the way for the cotton sector on the journey toward sustainability. The Chair thanked all participants for their involvement in the process, saying that while a firm definition of sustainability was not possible, progress had been made on understanding the various dimensions of the overall picture of sustainability. The Chair pointed out that Switzerland supports locally grown organic and Fairtrade food items, that the ornamental flowers on tables were sourced from social projects and that the plenary meeting brochure was printed climate neutral. The Chair said he was gratified that pioneers from the private sector, such as Switcher, Remei and Migros had participated in the plenary meeting and demonstrated that their businesses are blossoming. The Chair said that he hoped participants had been inspired to take home their experiences and new impulses to “fertilize” cotton activities. He concluded by welcoming participants to Colombia next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.