

Statement related to Article 9 of the Treaty (agenda item 14) from Mr. Surya Prasad Adhikari from Nepal

(Representing South Asian farmers on-behalf of Community-based Biodiversity Management South Asia (CBM-SA), a Programme coordinated by Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) and supported by the Development Fund (DF), Norway.)

[English translation of his intervention in Nepali]

Mr. Chairperson,

I am Surya Prasad Adhikari, a farmer from Nepal involved in agricultural production and crop breeding activities for the last twenty years. I have following points to make regarding Farmers' Rights provisions of the Treaty.

Farmers' livelihood is intricately associated with seeds. Plant seeds in its present diversity exist today because of farmers' continued and enormous contribution made through the generations of seed selection and conservation. Therefore, all rights to seeds should go to farmers and not to private seed companies.

Mr. Chairperson,

Seeds are live entities as humans. Movement of seeds should be free around the globe as human do. Therefore, there should not be any restriction on free exchange of seeds as has been done by farmers of the world from time immemorial.

Mr. Chairperson,

Farmers should be provided with space to participate in any dialogue related to plant genetic resources both nationally and internationally. This requires farmers to organize and represent themselves in various fora.

Farmers' organization is critically important to empower them to voice their needs and aspirations, and effectively participate in making decisions related to sustainable use of plant genetic resources. It is, therefore, very important to have all necessary supports that ensure legal recognition of farmers' organizations both nationally and internationally.

Mr. Chairperson,

I strongly urge GB to ensure farmers' organization to be represented as an official delegate rather than merely as an observer. This is pre-condition to ensure Farmers' Rights in the spirit of Article 9 of the Treaty.

Thank you for providing me this opportunity to represent views of millions of small farmers from South Asia.