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OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE DONATION OF FOODS DERIVED FROM MODERN BIOTECHNOLOGY

* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board's time.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

Director, Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division (PSP): Mr J. Stanlake Samkange tel.: 066513-2767

Chief, Food Security, Safety Nets, and Relief Service (PSPP): Mr A. Jury tel.: 066513-2601

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Supervisor, Meeting Servicing and Distribution Unit (tel.: 066513-2328).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its Annual Session in May 2003, the Executive Board took note of the WFP policy on donations of foods derived from biotechnology, as set out in document WFP/EB.A/2003/5-B/Rev.1, taking into account that the Directors-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) had been consulted on the policy. The Secretariat was requested to submit to the Board operational guidelines for implementation of the policy. This paper contains the text of the operational guidelines that will be provided to all WFP country offices, regional bureaux, liaison offices and relevant Rome Headquarters units to guide staff in implementing the policy presented to the Executive Board in May 2003. This text reflects comments received from WTO, FAO and WHO on the draft guidelines. This paper is presented to the Board **for information**.

DRAFT DECISION*

The Board takes note of the information contained in the document “Operational Guidelines on the Donation from Modern Biotechnology” (WFP/EB.1/2004/10-C).

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. WFP's policy on donations of foods derived from modern biotechnology was presented to the Executive Board in May 2003 and is repeated below (paragraphs 3–7) for ease of reference. All WFP offices are to follow this policy in their operations. Operational guidelines provided by Rome Headquarters are intended only to assist WFP offices in implementing the policy.
2. Food aid must, from a legal standpoint, adhere to the same laws and international agreements that apply to commercial agricultural trade. WFP food donations must, therefore, meet internationally agreed standards that apply to trade in food products. Where such standards do not currently exist — as is the case with trade in genetically modified (GM)/biotech foods — the Programme has no legal authority to impose them and must respond instead to applicable national regulations, if such exist.¹ It is not the legal prerogative of WFP to impose standards on commercial food transactions involving Member States without their express consent or to offer technical advice on the desirability or formulation of food-import regulations.
3. WFP requires its country offices to keep abreast of and comply with all national regulations on the transit and importation of food, including any that may relate to GM/biotech foods. Such regulations must be followed as rations are developed, procurement actions are undertaken and country offices seek the agreement of beneficiary governments to import food aid donations, whether purchased or provided in kind. WFP continues to maintain its long-standing policy that only food that is approved as safe for human consumption in both the donor and recipient countries should be used as food aid.
4. Country offices are expected to comply fully with existing national import, transit and export policies, whatever form they may take.
5. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety entered into force on 11 September 2003. As ratifying nations adapt their import regimes to reflect the provisions of the Protocol, WFP country offices will be expected to comply with any consequent changes in national transit and import regulations.
6. Within the framework outlined above, WFP will continue to accept donations of GM/biotech foods. If a donor does not wish to have its cash donations used to purchase GM/biotech foods, the Programme will comply with any such request.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION RELEVANT TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WFP POLICY

7. **Definition of food derived from modern biotechnology.** Foods derived from modern biotechnology are derived from seeds produced through modern methods of recombinant

¹ While there are no international trade agreements specifically dealing with GM/biotech foods, there are existing WTO agreements that apply to all agricultural trade, including GM/biotech products. The Codex Alimentarius has also produced guidelines on food-safety assessment of GM/biotech foods.



DNA technology.² Foods derived from modern biotechnology are sometimes referred to as “genetically modified foods”, “GM foods”, “GMOs” or “biotech foods”. In keeping with the terminology used in the original policy paper approved by the Board in May 2003, these operational guidelines will use the phrase “GM/biotech foods” as having the same meaning as the correct terminology “foods derived from modern biotechnology” used by the Codex Alimentarius.

8. The three primary GM/biotech food crops traded extensively internationally are soybeans, maize and canola. Various processed food products such as blended corn-soya products also have some GM/biotech content, and some vegetable oils may be derived from GM/biotech commodities. The presence of foods derived from biotechnology in national food supplies varies considerably among countries.
9. **International Standard Setting on GM/biotech foods.** At present, several international bodies are actively involved in discussions on GM/biotech foods. These include FAO, WHO and WTO. FAO and WHO have held a number of consultations on biotechnology to assist the work of the Codex Alimentarius ad hoc inter-governmental task force on biotechnology. The task force was established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to develop standards and guidelines on assessments of food derived from modern biotechnology. As a result, the Commission adopted (July 2003) the internationally agreed *Principles for the risk analysis of foods derived from modern biotechnology*, *Guidelines for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant-DNA plants*, and *Guidelines for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods produced using recombinant-DNA microorganisms*. Meetings on various aspects of biotechnology have been conducted under the auspices of WTO.
10. **The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.** The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which came into effect on 11 September 2003, addresses among other issues the transboundary movement of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) “intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing”. An LMO refers to bioengineered organisms or parts of such organisms that are capable of transferring or replicating genetic material. Examples of LMOs currently in commercial use would be whole kernel GM/biotech maize, canola, or soy or biotech seed varieties. Processed food products derived from modern biotechnology, such as corn-soy blend (CSB) or soy oil are not considered LMO as they cannot germinate, and are therefore not covered by the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Protocol’s objective is to contribute to an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of LMOs resulting from modern biotechnology that could potentially have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, specifically focusing on transboundary movements. The Protocol outlines a decision-making procedure for LMO commodities allowing signatories to make safety assessments prior to the initiation of trade through an information exchange system (the Biosafety Clearing-House) in which countries should place decisions and copies of any national laws, regulations and guidelines applicable to the import of LMOs intended for direct use as food. Article 11 of the Protocol allows developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to take, in the absence of a domestic regulatory framework, decisions regarding LMOs for direct use as food, feed or for processing, according to safety assessment guidelines

² The Codex Alimentarius “Principles for the risk analysis of foods derived from modern biotechnology” define modern biotechnology as “the application of: (i) *in vitro* nucleic acid techniques, including recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and direct injection of nucleic acid into cells or organelles; or (ii) fusion of cells beyond the taxonomic family; that overcome natural physiological reproductive or recombinant barriers and that are not techniques used in traditional breeding and selection.”



specified in the Protocol. Any commodity distributed by WFP to or transiting through a Party to the Protocol that meets the definition of an LMO (which at present would apply only to unprocessed maize and soybeans) should be considered as “intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing” under terms of the Protocol.

11. Article 18 (2)a of the Protocol addresses the issue of documentation to be provided for LMOs intended for direct use as food, feed or for processing, to or through Parties, but states that the Parties to the Protocol shall take a decision on the detailed requirements for documentation within two years of the Protocol’s entry into force. The Protocol does not currently provide detailed standards for documentation of LMO shipments, but may do so within the next two years.
12. The Protocol imposes obligations on state Parties, which are responsible for establishing national regulations for implementing the protocol. As stated in the WFP policy, WFP offices need to stay informed of any changes in *national* regulations on the transit and/or importation of LMOs that are taken by a government in their country or region of operation as part of that government’s implementation of the Protocol. The countries that are currently Parties to the Protocol are listed in Annex I.
13. **The United Nations Position on GM/Biotech Foods.** On 27 August 2002, the United Nations issued a statement with regard to the use of GM/biotech foods as food aid in southern Africa (Annex II). It is the most up to date statement of the joint United Nations agencies’ position on this subject. While the statement was prepared specifically in response to the situation in southern Africa, its descriptions of the United Nations position on the safety and environmental impact of GM/biotech foods remains accurate. The statement confirms that to date WHO, FAO and WFP are not aware of scientifically documented cases in which the consumption of GM/biotech foods has had negative human health effects.

Responsibilities of WFP Country Offices

14. WFP country offices have primary responsibility for obtaining information on whether or not the government of the country in which they are present has any regulations limiting the transit and/or the import of GM/biotech foods and/or LMOs. Many food aid recipient countries are in the very early stages of developing regulatory systems to address GM/biotech foods and/or implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. WFP offices should be aware that biotech regulations are most likely to involve some or all of the following products: soybeans, maize, blended corn-soya products and vegetable oils (irrespective of the country of origin). Each country office (or the relevant regional bureau if WFP does not have a country office in a country where WFP food is being transited or distributed) should regularly review the national food transit and import regulations of the country to ascertain if there are any limitations on the transit and/or import of GM/biotech foods or LMOs and monitor the status of any proposed regulations. It is the responsibility of the host government to inform WFP if changes in transit and/or import regulations will be made that will affect the trade in GM/biotech foods and/or LMOs.
15. Countries have the right to regulate the importation or transboundary movements of GM/biotech products. For the purposes of such regulations, some countries may choose to define in different ways what constitutes a GM/biotech food. Some countries may choose to regulate only whole-grain GM/biotech commodities (unprocessed soy and maize products), while others may choose to regulate all food products derived directly or indirectly from GM/biotech crops. These could include processed foods (maize meal, soy flour, CSBs) and/or vegetable oils from soy, maize or canola. WFP will abide by the



decisions of each national government on its definition of what is a regulated GM/biotech food import.

16. If a WFP office becomes aware of the existence of a regulation or proposed regulation limiting GM/biotech food imports into a country or transiting through it to a third country, it should take the following steps:
 - Advise the regional bureau and the relevant Rome Headquarters offices (Operations Department—including the Food Procurement, Ocean Transportation, Surface Transport and Programming Services; Fundraising and Communications Department; and Policy, Strategy, and Programme Support Division) of the regulation or proposed regulation, including as much detail as possible on how the regulation will be applied and when it will come into force.
 - Seek to clarify with the government, if it is not already clear from the text of the regulation, which GM/biotech products are covered by the regulation, taking note of the possible different definitions of GM/biotech foods that countries may choose to apply, as discussed in paragraph 15 of this document.
 - Once the regulation is finalized and its date of entry into force is known, take steps in cooperation with the regional bureau and Rome Headquarters to adjust rations, food procurement procedures, and food pipeline plans to ensure that all WFP food is imported in full compliance with the changed regulatory environment for GM/biotech foods or LMOs.
17. Government officials considering making changes to their country's food transit and import regulations affecting GM/biotech foods may contact WFP country offices for advice and comment. It is important that country offices follow carefully the WFP policy on GM/biotech foods in responding to such requests. As stated clearly in the WFP policy, it is not the legal prerogative of WFP to offer technical advice on the desirability or formulation of food-import regulations; therefore, country offices should not offer such advice. It is, however, appropriate for WFP to provide information on how a particular regulation might affect WFP operations in the country in question. Thus, if the WFP food pipeline in a country is largely dependent on food commodities that would be limited or excluded from import under the proposed regulation, then the country office may inform the host government of the potential impact the proposed regulation might have on food deliveries. WFP offices can also inform national governments of the practical arrangements necessary for WFP compliance with any proposed new regulation. For example, if a country decides to limit the import of a GM/biotech food on environmental grounds because it believes the imported food might be used as seed, WFP can discuss the options, such as milling the GM/biotech food, which would lead to an import that is consistent with national regulations.
18. Shipping documentation. In anticipation that implementation of the Cartagena Protocol may lead governments that are Parties to the Protocol to require documentation of LMO shipments (currently the only WFP-shipped commodities considered LMOs are whole grain GM/biotech maize or soy), WFP will begin as soon as practical to include "may contain" language in the shipping documentation for all whole-grain maize or soy destined for or to be transhipped through Cartagena Protocol Party countries. This documentation should accompany shipments of whole-grain maize or soy, irrespective of country of origin, unless the provider of the commodity certifies it contains no product derived from modern biotechnology. The documentation requirement will be met by including the following declaration on the commercial invoice: "Cartagena Protocol Provision. This shipment may contain "living modified organisms intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing" that are not intended for intentional introduction into the environment."



The documentation should list as contact point for further information on the shipment the last exporter prior to the transboundary movement and the first importer.³ WFP practice is to address any other government-established GM/biotech shipping documentation on a country-by-country basis. Country offices should seek guidance from Rome Headquarters if additional GM/biotech documentation rules are established in their countries.

19. Labelling. National governments may also adopt policies with regard to the labelling of GM/biotech foods. There are no agreed international standards for labelling GM/biotech foods; therefore WFP country offices may inform governments of this. WFP practice is to address any government-established GM/biotech food labelling rules on a country-by-country basis. Country offices should seek guidance from Rome Headquarters if GM/biotech labelling rules are established in their countries.

Responsibilities of Headquarters Units

20. Once advised by a country office of a change in national import regulations affecting GM/biotech foods, the Operations Department (both in regional bureaux and at Headquarters) will assist the country office, to the extent that donor-provided resources permit, in continuing its food aid operations as planned, fully compliant with national regulations. Similar Operations Department assistance will be provided if restrictions on GM/biotech foods imposed by a transit country affect the delivery of WFP-provided food aid to a country office. The Shipping and Surface Transport Service will ensure that shipping documents for donated commodities specify that the commodities meet the national import regulations of both the country of their final destination and any country transited en route to delivery. The Shipping and Surface Transport Service will also ensure that any shipments of whole maize or soy to or through Parties of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, except where certified as not containing a product of modern biotechnology, include in the shipping documentation the declaration language contained in paragraph 18 of these guidelines. The Food Procurement Service will ensure that any food it purchases is certified as meeting the specified requirements for food imports into the country in question. It will also ensure that food purchases made with funds provided by donors who restrict the use of those funds for the purchase of GM/biotech foods comply with the donors' conditions.
21. The Fundraising and Communications Department (FCD) is responsible for informing donors of the proposed limitations on GM/biotech food imports to a particular country. FCD is also responsible for notifying the Food Procurement and Programming Services and relevant WFP regional bureaux, Headquarters units, country and liaison offices of any restrictions placed by donors on the use of their funds for the purchase of GM/biotech foods.
22. The Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division (PSP) is responsible for monitoring international policy developments concerning trade in GM/biotech foods. It will advise country offices, regional bureaux, and relevant Headquarters units of:
 - a) any change in the list of GM/biotech or LMO food products that might be part of WFP food aid beyond those commodities already listed in these guidelines; and

³ This shipping declaration language is consistent with the guidance provided by the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat in its 5 September 2003 notification of requirements that need to be fulfilled by state parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.



- b) any change in the international framework, including the implementation procedures of the Cartagena Protocol, that affects trade in GM/biotech or LMO foods and is relevant to implementation of WFP's policy on donations of foods derived from modern biotechnology.

Distribution of These Guidelines and Related Materials

- 23. WFP Headquarters will issue a directive containing these guidelines to all country offices, regional bureaux, and Headquarters units to ensure the guidelines are understood and applied within WFP. The guidelines and the two Executive Board policy papers on WFP policy on donations of foods derived from biotechnology (WFP/EB.A/2003/5-B/Rev.1 and WFP/EB.3/2002/4-C) are documents of public record and may be distributed upon request to national governments (donors and recipients), other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, academics/researchers and accredited journalists.



ANNEX I

STATUS OF RATIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL, AS OF 5 JANUARY 2004			
	Country	Date of ratification/accession	Date of entry into force (1)
1.	Antigua and Barbuda	10 September 2003	9 December 2003
2.	Austria	27 August 2002	11 September 2003
3.	Barbados	6 September 2002	11 September 2003
4.	Belarus	26 August 2002	11 September 2003
5.	Bhutan	26 August 2002	11 September 2003
6.	Bolivia	22 April 2002	11 September 2003
7.	Botswana	11 June 2002	11 September 2003
8.	Brazil	24 November 2003	22 February 2004
9.	Bulgaria	13 October 2000	11 September 2003
10.	Burkina Faso	4 August 2003	2 November 2003
11.	Cambodia	17 September 2003	16 December 2003
12.	Cameroon	20 February 2003	11 September 2003
13.	Colombia	20 May 2003	11 September 2003
14.	Croatia	29 August 2002	11 September 2003
15.	Cuba	17 September 2002	11 September 2003
16.	Cyprus	5 December 2003	4 March 2004
17.	Czech Republic	8 October 2001	11 September 2003
18.	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	29 July 2003	27 October 2003
19.	Denmark (2)	27 August 2002	11 September 2003
20.	Djibouti	8 April 2002	11 September 2003
21.	Ecuador	30 January 2003	11 September 2003
22.	El Salvador	26 September 2003	25 December 2003
23.	Ethiopia	9 October 2003	7 January 2004
24.	European Community (3)	27 August 2002	11 September 2003
25.	Fiji	5 June 2001	11 September 2003
26.	France	7 April 2003	11 September 2003
27.	Germany	20 November 2003	18 February 2004
28.	Ghana	30 May 2003	11 September 2003



STATUS OF RATIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL, AS OF 5 JANUARY 2004			
	Country	Date of ratification/accession	Date of entry into force (1)
29.	India	17 January 2003	11 September 2003
30.	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	20 November 2003	18 February 2004
31.	Ireland	14 November 2003	12 February 2004
32.	Japan	21 November 2003	19 February 2004
33.	Jordan	11 November 2003	9 February 2004
34.	Kenya	24 January 2002	11 September 2003
35.	Lesotho	20 September 2001	11 September 2003
36.	Liberia	15 February 2002	11 September 2003
37.	Lithuania	7 November 2003	5 February 2004
38.	Luxembourg	28 August 2002	11 September 2003
39.	Madagascar	24 November 2003	22 February 2004
40.	Malaysia	3 September 2003	2 December 2003
41.	Maldives	2 September 2002	11 September 2003
42.	Mali	28 August 2002	11 September 2003
43.	Marshall Islands	27 January 2003	11 September 2003
44.	Mauritius	11 April 2002	11 September 2003
45.	Mexico	27 August 2002	11 September 2003
46.	Republic of Moldova	4 March 2003	11 September 2003
47.	Mongolia	22 July 2003	20 October 2003
48.	Mozambique	21 October 2002	11 September 2003
49.	Nauru	12 November 2001	11 September 2003
50.	The Netherlands	8 January 2002	11 September 2003
51.	Nicaragua	28 August 2002	11 September 2003
52.	Nigeria	15 July 2003	13 October 2003
53.	Niue	8 July 2002	11 September 2003
54.	Norway	10 May 2001	11 September 2003
55.	Oman	11 April 2003	11 September 2003
56.	Palau	13 June 2003	11 September 2003
57.	Panama	1 May 2002	11 September 2003
58.	Poland	10 December 2003	9 March 2004



STATUS OF RATIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL, AS OF 5 JANUARY 2004			
	Country	Date of ratification/accession	Date of entry into force (1)
59.	Romania	30 June 2003	28 September 2003
60.	Saint Kitts and Nevis	23 May 2001	11 September 2003
61.	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	27 August 2003	25 November 2003
62.	Samoa	30 May 2002	11 September 2003
63.	Senegal	8 October 2003	6 January 2004
64.	Slovakia	24 November 2003	22 February 2004
65.	Slovenia	20 November 2002	11 September 2003
66.	South Africa	14 August 2003	12 November 2003
67.	Spain	16 January 2002	11 September 2003
68.	Sweden	8 August 2002	11 September 2003
69.	Switzerland	26 March 2002	11 September 2003
70.	United Republic of Tanzania	24 April 2003	11 September 2003
71.	Tonga	18 September 2003	17 December 2003
72.	Trinidad and Tobago	5 October 2000	11 September 2003
73.	Tunisia	22 January 2003	11 September 2003
74.	Turkey	24 October 2003	24 January 2004
75.	Uganda	30 November 2001	11 September 2003
76.	Ukraine	6 December 2002	11 September 2003
77.	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	19 November 2003	17 February 2004
78.	Venezuela	13 May 2002	11 September 2003

Notes:

1. The Protocol enters into force for a State or regional economic integration organization on the 90th day after the deposition of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, or on the date on which the Convention enters into force for that State or regional economic integration organization, whichever shall be the later (paragraph 2, [Article 37](#) of the Protocol).
2. With a territorial exclusion in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland
3. Please note that, for the purposes of entry into force of the Protocol, any instrument deposited by a regional economic integration organization shall not be counted as additional to those deposited by member States of such organization (paragraph 3, [Article 37](#) of the Protocol)

Source: Website of the Convention on Biodiversity: www.biodiv.org/



ANNEX II

UNITED NATIONS STATEMENT ON THE USE OF GM/BIOTECH FOODS AS FOOD AID IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Rome, 27 August 2002—The United Nations is extremely concerned about the unfolding humanitarian crisis in southern Africa. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) estimate that 13 million people will need food assistance in the coming months to avoid widespread starvation and a dramatic deterioration in health and nutritional status of the population in the affected countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) believes the health of these 13 million people may well be seriously damaged as a result of the current food crisis. Stocks of food in the region fall far short of estimated needs, and food aid, along with medical and other assistance, will be critical to avoid a catastrophe.

WFP has received donations of foods for use in southern Africa, some of which contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Several governments in southern Africa have accepted these donated foods without reservation, and GM/biotech maize varieties are grown in the region. However, other governments have expressed reservations on receiving food aid containing GMOs and have sought advice from the United Nations.

There are no existing international agreements yet in force with regard to trade in food or food aid that deal specifically with food containing GMOs. It is United Nations policy that the decision with regard to the acceptance of GM/biotech commodities as part of food aid transactions rests with the recipient countries, and that is the case in southern Africa. It is WFP policy that all donated food meet the food safety standards of both the donor and recipient countries and all applicable international standards, guidelines and recommendations.

With respect to GM/biotech maize, soy flour and other commodities containing GMOs, FAO and WHO are confident that the principal country of origin has applied its established national food safety risk assessment procedures. FAO and WHO have not undertaken any formal safety assessments of GM/biotech foods themselves. Donors to WFP have fully certified that these foods are safe for human consumption.

Based on national information from a variety of sources and current scientific knowledge, FAO, WHO and WFP hold the view that the consumption of foods containing GMOs now being provided as food aid in southern Africa is not likely to present human health risk. Therefore, these foods may be eaten. The Organizations confirm that to date they are not aware of scientifically documented cases in which the consumption of these foods has had negative human health effects.

Concerns have been expressed in southern Africa about the unintentional introduction of GM/biotech maize varieties into the region as a result of plantings or spillage of whole kernel maize provided as food aid. Any potential risks to biological diversity and sustainable agriculture resulting from the inadvertent introduction of living modified organisms used for food, feed or processing have to be judged and managed by countries on a case-by-case basis.

Maize is known for its propensity to outcross, but this is less of a concern in southern Africa, where there is no large genetic diversity of this crop. In the specific case of maize, processing techniques such as milling or heat treatment may be considered by governments to avoid inadvertent introduction of genetically modified seed. However, it is not United Nations policy that GM/biotech grain used for food, feed, or processing should necessarily require such treatments.

The United Nations agencies involved will seek to establish a long-term policy for food aid involving GM/biotech foods or foods derived from biotechnology. The ultimate responsibility and decision regarding the acceptance and distribution of food aid containing GMOs rests with the governments concerned, considering all the factors outlined above. The United Nations believes that in the current crisis, governments in southern Africa must consider carefully the severe and immediate consequences of limiting the food aid available for millions so desperately in need.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CSB	corn-soy blend
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCD	Fundraising and Communications Department
GMO	genetically modified organism
LMO	living modified organism
PSP	Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

