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INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS

GENEVA

COUNCIL

**Ninth Ordinary Session
Geneva, October 7 to 10, 1975**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR 1974
(Sixth Year)I. State of the Union

1. At the end of 1974, the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) consisted, as in the preceding year, of the following member States: Denmark, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom.
2. No new instruments of ratification or accession were deposited in the course of the year with respect to the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, of December 2, 1961 (hereinafter referred to as "the UPOV Convention"). However, bills in preparation for the ratification of the Convention or accession to it were submitted to the respective legislative bodies by the Governments of Belgium, Spain and Switzerland. In addition, the President of Italy was authorized by law to ratify the Convention.
3. The Additional Act of November 10, 1972, Amending the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants has not yet entered into force since, by the end of 1974, it had been ratified only by Sweden (on November 10, 1972) and by Denmark (on February 8, 1974).

II. Staff Matters

4. Vice-Secretary-General. Dr. Heribert Mast, former Ministerialrat in the Federal Ministry of Justice of the Federal Republic of Germany, was appointed Vice Secretary-General of UPOV as of March 1, 1974. He succeeds Mr. H. Skov, who had resigned from the post as of December 31, 1973.

III. Sessions

5. In the course of 1974, the different bodies of UPOV met as listed below. (Unless otherwise indicated, the meetings took place in Geneva.)
6. The Council held its annual session--the eighth ordinary session--from October 24 to 26, 1974, under the chairmanship of Professor L. Pielen. In addition to the member States, two signatory non-member States (Belgium, Switzerland) were represented at the session, in an observer capacity. The session was also attended by observers from a number of other interested non-member States which had been invited, namely,

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Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Gabon, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Spain and the United States of America. The Council took, inter alia, the following decisions:

(i) Mr. B. Laclavière (Secretary General of the French Committee for the Protection of New Plant Varieties) was elected President of the Council of UPOV. The Council took the opportunity to express its thanks to the former President, Professor L. Pielen (Federal Republic of Germany), for his successful activity and devotion to the service of UPOV throughout his terms of office.

(ii) Mr. J.G. Bustarret (Honorary Director General of the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) (France)) was re-elected for a further year as Chairman of the Technical Steering Committee, after which time Dr. D. Böhlinger (President of the Bundessortenamt (Plant Variety Office of the Federal Republic of Germany)) will take over that task.

(iii) The Council decided to examine the question how cooperation in the examination in the national offices of applications in respect of new plant varieties could be strengthened in order to save duplication of effort, both for government offices and breeders, and to enable the member States to extend protection to a greater number of species. The Council underlined the great importance of this problem for the future development of UPOV and established for that purpose a Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Examination. It elected Mr. J.I.C. Butler (Netherlands) as Chairman of this Committee; the Committee held its first preparatory meeting on November 7, 1974. At that meeting a general exchange of views took place and future work was organized.

(iv) In the context of the need to increase the number of member States and in the light of the discussions heard during the Meeting of Member and Non-Member States (see paragraph 15 below), the Council took the view that the two questions should be examined by UPOV: (i) whether the Convention could, on certain points, be interpreted in such a way as to facilitate accession by non-member States, and (ii) which provisions of the Convention would have to be amended at the next revision conference. The Council established a Committee of Experts on the Interpretation and Revision of the Convention and elected Mr. H. Skov (Denmark) as Chairman of that Committee.

(v) The annual report and the accounts for 1973 were approved and the program and budget for 1975 were established. In the discussion on the budget, the Council emphasized the need for economy. It decided to reduce the number of meetings of some of the existing working groups. Taking into account the important tasks which the Office of UPOV has to fulfill in promoting closer cooperation in examination and in preparing the work for an improved interpretation and a revision of the UPOV Convention, the Council recognized the need for the employment of an additional staff member and approved the budgetary means for that purpose.

7. The Consultative Working Committee, which has been renamed "Consultative Committee," held its ninth session from April 2 to 4, 1974, and its tenth session on October 23, 25 and 26, 1974, under the chairmanship of Professor L. Pielen. The discussions during the ninth session mainly concerned the possibility of closer cooperation in the examination of applications in member States of UPOV, possible items for the revision of the UPOV Convention and the preparation for the Meeting of Member and Non-Member States; the tenth session was mainly devoted to the preparation of the eighth ordinary session of the Council and the evaluation of the results of the Meeting of Member and Non-Member States (see paragraph 15 below).

8. The Technical Steering Committee held its fourth session on March 12 and 13, 1974, and its fifth session on November 5 and 6, 1974, under the chairmanship of Mr. J.G. Bustarret. In these sessions, the Technical Steering Committee discussed the general principles of the testing of new varieties and finally adopted Test Guidelines for the following species: African violets, Apples, Elatior begonias, Pears, Poinsettia, Potatoes and Rice. It was also decided, with the approval of the Council, that in future the interested international non-governmental organizations (International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH), International Association of Plant Breeders for the Protection of Plant Varieties (ASSINSEL), International Community of Asexually Reproduced Ornamental Plants (CIOPORA), International Federation of Seed Trade (FIS)) would receive the first drafts of test guidelines which had been approved by the Editorial Committee, for comments. In addition, it started to harmonize the technical questionnaires to be completed by breeders when applying for plant variety protection in the offices of the member States.

9. The Technical Working Party for Agricultural Crops held its second session at Wageningen, Netherlands, on May 14 and 15, 1974, and its third session at Lund, Sweden, on September 24 and 25, 1974, under the chairmanship of Mr. R. Duyvendak. During its second session, it discussed the draft Test Guidelines for Bent, Cocksfoot, Common vetch, Smooth Stalked Meadow grass, Timothy and White clover. The third session was mainly devoted to the testing methods for sugar beet. Several workshops, dealing mainly with Test Guidelines for Barley and Oats, were held between members of the Technical Working Party in connection with other meetings.
10. The Technical Working Party for Forest Trees held its second session at Wageningen, Netherlands, on June 11 and 12, 1974, under the chairmanship of Mr. V.A. Gøhrn. It discussed the draft Test Guidelines for Poplar, which were adopted for submission to the professional organizations. It also studied the problems in connection with the protection of multi-clone varieties.
11. The Technical Working Party for Fruit Crops held its fourth session at Faversham, United Kingdom, from May 29 to 31, 1974, and its fifth session at Angers, France, from September 2 to 6, 1974, under the chairmanship of Mr. P.H. Harding. At those sessions, a few remaining questions on the Test Guidelines for Apples and Pears were clarified before these two test guidelines could be published. In addition, the Working Party adopted the draft Test Guidelines for Strawberries to be submitted to the international organizations. It also discussed the draft Test Guidelines for Cherries, Plums and Raspberries.
12. The Technical Working Party for Ornamental Plants held its seventh session at Cambridge, United Kingdom, from June 25 to 27, 1974, under the Chairmanship of the late Mr. J.M. Evans. At that session, this Technical Working Party adopted the draft Test Guidelines for Poinsettia. It also adopted for submission to the international organizations the draft Test Guidelines for Carnations, Freesia and Pelargonium. Furthermore, discussions took place on the draft Test Guidelines for Chrysanthemums and Peruvian lilies.
13. The Technical Working Party for Vegetables held its sixth session at Bamberg, Federal Republic of Germany, from April 2 to 4, 1974, under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Roux. At that session, the draft Test Guidelines for Carrots, Cauliflower, Head Cabbage and Tomatoes were discussed. There was also a general discussion on the inclusion in test guidelines of characteristics relating to resistance to disease.
14. The Fee Harmonization Working Party and the Working Group on Variety Denominations did not meet in 1974.
15. From October 21 to 23, 1974, UPOV organized a lecture and discussion Meeting of Member and Non-Member States at the Office of the United Nations in Geneva. The following States not members of UPOV attended that meeting: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Hungary, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland and the United States of America. In addition, the following international organizations sent observers to the meeting: International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH), International Association of Plant Breeders for the Protection of Plant Varieties (ASSINSEL), International Community of Breeders of Asexually Reproduced Ornamentals (CIOPORA), International Federation of the Seed Trade (FIS), International Seed Testing Association (ISTA). The aim of the meeting was to acquaint participants from non-member States and organizations with the objectives of UPOV and to give them an opportunity to discuss with representatives of member States of UPOV and the Office of UPOV obstacles which had so far prevented some States from joining the Union. An introductory speech was made by the then President of the Council of UPOV, Professor L. Pielen, and lectures were given mainly on the importance of plant breeding and plant variety protection, as well as on the history and activities of UPOV, by Dr. C.E. Büchting, President of ASSINSEL (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. B. Laclavière, newly elected President of the Council of UPOV (France), Mr. H. Skov (Denmark), former Vice Secretary-General of UPOV, and Mr. W.R. Smith (United Kingdom). It was the general impression that the meeting had created a better understanding between the representatives of member States and the participants from non-member States and organizations. It resulted in a number of valuable suggestions for the improvement of the future activities of UPOV and its member States and for the interpretation and possible revision of the UPOV Convention.
16. In May 1974, the Secretary-General of UPOV was received by the Minister of Agriculture of Belgium to discuss the prospects of the ratification by Belgium of the UPOV Convention.

17. The then President of the Council of UPOV and the Vice Secretary-General attended the closing session of the 50th Anniversary Congress of the International Federation of the Seed Trade (FIS) and sessions of the International Association of Plant Breeders for the Protection of Plant Varieties (ASSINSEL), held in Madrid on June 5 and 6, 1974, respectively.
18. The Vice Secretary-General gave short lectures during the 17th Congress of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), held in Warsaw, Poland, from June 17 to 21, 1974, and at a meeting of the Committee of Novelty Protection of the International Association of Horticulture Producers (AIPH) held in Vienna, Austria, on August 13, 1974.
19. On various missions, the Vice Secretary-General visited the offices responsible for plant variety protection in the Netherlands and in Spain (in future), as well as the Ministry of Agriculture in the United Kingdom.

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