

STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA AT THE  
MEETING OF 1-2 JULY 1997

1. South Africa has taken cognizance of WTO-SPS notifications (G/SPS/N/EEC/46 and G/SPS/N/EEC/47) regarding the recognition of certain third countries and certain areas of third countries as being free of Citrus canker, Citrus leaf spot and Citrus black spot, as well as modifications of phytosanitary measures in respect of the mentioned pathogens originating from third countries.

2. It can be confirmed that South Africa is free from both Citrus canker (*X. campestris*) and leaf spot (*C. angolensis*) and that strict measures are in place to prevent the introduction of these organisms. Citrus black spot (*G. citricarpa*) occurs in South Africa excluding the Western Cape area.

3. South Africa plant pathologists confirm that citrus fruit cannot be rated as an effective source of inoculum in the international trade of citrus fruit for the following reasons:

- The primary source of infection is the ascospores which are not produced on infected fruit but infected dead leaves.
- Pycnidiospores develop in pycnidia which occur *inter alia* on fruit lesions. Pycnidiospores when mature are extruded in a gelatinous mass and can only be spread by splashing water drops.
- The viability of pycnidiospores decreases rapidly. After four days in storage the mean figure for germination dropped by over 60 per cent. No germination of pycnidiospores are recorded after 30 days.
- A combination of the following three factors is essential for fruit infection: (i) presence of inoculum; (ii) free water on fruitlets for a period of eight hours; and (iii) fruitlets in a susceptible stage of development.
- Citrus black spot has never been reported to occur in any Mediterranean rainfall region, worldwide. The reason being that the climatic conditions are usually dry when the fruit is susceptible.

4. Currently a research programme is in progress in South Africa to establish the inoculum potential of pycnidiospores associated with citrus fruits. When this data becomes available and should evidence prove that the fruit is not a source of inoculum, the EEC will be requested to reassess the phytosanitary measures for *Guignardia citricarpa*.