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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**SUMMARY OF MARCH 2022 SEMINAR ON "RESPONDING TO FALL ARMYWORM:
INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT AND POLICY APPROACHES"**

SUBMISSION BY PARAGUAY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The following communication, received on 21 June 2022, is being circulated at the request of the Delegations of Paraguay and the United States of America.

1. As part of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) week, on 26 March 2022, Uganda and the United States of America organized a virtual seminar entitled "Responding to Fall Armyworm: Integrated Pest Management and Policy Approaches".

2. Following reports about the invasive spread of fall armyworm in Africa and Asia, several Members recommended in 2018 using the pest as a case study to discuss facilitating access to tools and technologies to help address emerging pest outbreaks within the framework of the SPS Agreement.¹ Subsequently in 2019, a thematic session was held where speakers shared information on available tools and technologies and regulatory systems in place to review these approaches.² Following the session, a submission of compiled concepts to support voluntary regional and international collaboration to enhance and streamline SPS regulatory processes was shared for the SPS Committee to consider in future discussions.³

3. Building upon the work from the Fifth Review of the operation and implementation of the SPS Agreement⁴, presenters from the African Union Development Agency (AUDA) New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) Global Maize Program, FAO, Kenya, Uganda, United States, and WTO SPS Secretariat, summarized previous engagement and history of the fall armyworm outbreak and shared challenges encountered, including coordination across borders for emergency use authorizations of crop protection tools and developing enabling environments to adopt agricultural biotechnology solutions, particularly in Members that do not have a history of using these products. Speakers also identified availability, affordability, adaptability, and timely approval processes for tools and technologies as some common challenges to addressing pest outbreaks and developing robust integrated pest management programs to manage emerging pests, such as fall armyworm. Speakers shared methods and technologies that have helped respond to fall armyworm outbreaks, such as effective risk communication strategies, genetically engineered improved varieties of maize, and responsible pesticide use.

4. Speakers suggested various points to further leverage and explore, such as recommending that stakeholders:

- 1) Engage in international platforms to share information and best practices;
- 2) Develop and strengthen rapid alert systems for plant pests and diseases on local, national, regional, or continental levels;

¹ [G/SPS/W/305](#).

² Information on the SPS Committee Thematic Session on Fall Armyworm is available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/workshop19032019_e.htm.

³ [G/SPS/W/317](#).

⁴ [G/SPS/64](#) and [G/SPS/64/Add.1](#).

- 3) Establish flexible regulatory frameworks that allow for timely, transparent, and science-based review and approval of innovative, science-based, and affordable tools and technologies to respond to emerging pests;
- 4) Develop robust and affordable integrated pest management programs that consider host plant resistance, scouting and surveillance, safe pesticide use, biological control, and soil and plant health management to tackle pest outbreaks;
- 5) Consider cost, efficacy, safety, accessibility, and scalability when developing and evaluating tools and technologies for integrated pest management approaches; and
- 6) Enable and nurture an information sharing environment to encourage stakeholder receptiveness to sound policies which minimize risks.

5. Paraguay and the United States recognize that access and approval of tools and technologies is important but continues to be a widespread challenge and invites all Members of the SPS Committee to continue discussions. All Members are encouraged to engage in the Working Group on Approval Procedures to help develop meaningful outcomes to aid Members in addressing current and emerging issues, such as recommendations which promote conducting outreach and capacity building, as well as simplification and streamlining regulatory assessments.

6. The seminar recordings are available online in English, Spanish, and French here: <https://www.agrilinks.org/events/wto-sps-committee-week-virtual-side-event-responding-fall-armyworm-integrated-pest>.
