



## UNIÓN DE CIENTÍFICOS COMPROMETIDOS CON LA SOCIEDAD, A.C.

November 26th, 2012.

To the President of Mexico, Lic . Felipe Calderón Hinojosa  
To the Elected President of Mexico, Lic. Enrique Peña Nieto  
To the Biosafety Authorities of the Government of Mexico  
P r e s e n t

In 2009, we sent the President of México, Lic. Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, a formal statement ([http://www.uccs.mx/doc/g/sciencetrmaize\\_es](http://www.uccs.mx/doc/g/sciencetrmaize_es)) reminding him of his utmost responsibility to safeguard one of the world's most precious resources for food security: Mexico's maize diversity. However, we observe that his administration has continued to promote the introduction of genetically modified (GM) maize in México, despite legitimate concerns over the broad implications of this decision. We find that the process to approve the large-scale release of GM maize into the Mexican environment, nearing completion for the first round of applications, has been procedurally deficient, and conducted with undue haste.

Joined together by scientists, academicians and citizens around the world, we draw attention to the scientific evidence that supports prudent precaution and foresight for such a momentous decision, given the potentially irreversible adverse impacts GM maize in México may have on maize agricultural biodiversity, farmer livelihoods and the right to food – not only for México, but maize farmers and consumers around the world.

Bound by a sense of ethical duty to preserve this critical resource for humanity, and at the heart of the Mesoamerican culture, we demand that the administrations of President Felipe Calderón, as well as that of the elected President, take all necessary measures to guarantee that no transgenic maize is released in Mexico, the center of origin and diversity of this essential food crop.

These measures are justified scientifically, as we have summarized in a Call to Action statement from our organization, the Union of Concerned Scientists from Mexico (Unión de Científicos Comprometidos con la Sociedad de México) that was publicly presented on November 15th of 2012 (<http://www.uccs.mx/doc/g/planting-gmo-corn>). This statement (which as of this date has been signed by over 2000 academicians and scientists, including Nobel laureates, Mexican national prize



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winner in science and other concerned citizens around the world) rejects the planting of GM maize in Mexico, and alerts on threats to maize in its center of origin and diversity; as well as on the potential risks to human health of that may result from large-scale releases of GM maize in Mexico. Through this Call to Action we will continue to seek support and inform the academic and scientific communities of the necessity to protect maize agricultural biodiversity.

Meanwhile, we have continued our investigations concerning the potential impacts of large-scale GM releases by reviewing and analyzing from the recent scientific and academic literature, the evidence that will continue to support our views. Further, we are synthesizing new evidence linked to the risks and also benefits of GM crops. This work is being carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of experts from the USA, Europe, Latin America and Asia. We have attached along with this letter, a briefing document that summarizes the outcomes of our analysis as conclusions to date, and the need for further investigation to clarify some critical uncertainties that may arise from the large-scale commercial release of GM maize in México.

This report, entitled, "GM (genetically modified) maize in Mexico: An irreversible path away from agricultural biodiversity, farmer livelihoods and the right to food within the center of origin of maize", originally written in English in order to reach the international community, has been endorsed by well-recognized networks of scientists and academics, and internationally recognized non-governmental organizations concerned about the impacts of technological developments on society and the environment around the world: Unión de Científicos Comprometidos con la Sociedad (UCCS), European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER), Third World Network (TWN), GRAIN and the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES). We will continue to make our report open for endorsement from other such networks and organizations.

For many issues and instances we investigated, the evidence is solid and clear, for others, critical uncertainties over potential impacts remain. Taken together gives a legitimate justification to require a precautionary policy that prohibits the commercial level releases of GM maize in its center of origin: Mexico. In the brief, we elaborate some of the critical uncertainties, inadequacies and unfulfilled promises of GM crops already cultivated for more than 16 years, clearly demonstrating that the track record of GM crops, and the documented consolidation in seed markets in countries that have adopted them, suggests that GM maize is not a viable agricultural development blueprint for México to follow.



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We illustrate with two examples: 1) Uncertainties regarding the long-term effect on human health from the consumption of GM crops in a country such as Mexico, where large quantities of maize are consumed with very little processing, and 2) socioeconomic and legal implications that may result from the inadvertent infringement of intellectual property rights (IPRs) resulting from GM and non-GM maize hybridization. Further, our analysis noted a critical lack of transparency and information as to the identity and origin of maize "pedigrees" or lineages used by the GM maize developers and adapted for the Mexican environment. We question whether the GM maize hybrids adapted to the Mexican agroenvironment, for which commercial release in Mexico is being sought, may contain native "criollo" native varieties that were originally created for the common good, but may be now in the process of being patented and privatized. We will continue to investigate this critical issue, and other related questions that are not readily available for informed public consultation.

This letter and attached brief are being circulated throughout the entire world via the networks of scientists who are concerned with the social and environmental consequences of technological developments, and to the press. We will keep you informed of our continued analysis through the relevant academic institutions and scientific organizations, and invite you to contact us with any questions or needs of assistance.

We look forward to a prompt response to this serious issue.

Sincerely,

UCCS  
Dr. Antonio Turrent  
(President)