



INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Aide Memoire

To: Delegates to the Standing Committee, Coordinating Agencies, and Members of the Private Sector Advisory Panel

From: Executive Director

Subject: Meeting with Ambassador Rosario of the Philippines

Date: March 31, 2006

A delegation composed of Mr. Sipiwe Mkhize, Chair of the Standing Committee, Mr. Jacob Pasgo, Chair of the Task Force on Membership, and the executive director met with Ambassador Albert del Rosario at the Embassy of the Philippines on Wednesday, March 29, 2006. The Philippines withdrew from membership in the ICAC in October 2005. Withdrawal of membership will be effective on June 30, 2006 at the end of the current fiscal year.

It was noted that the cotton industry of the Philippines is growing through a sustainable partnership between the private sector and the Government of the Philippines, and that the industry has potential to provide direct employment to 25,000 persons and economic benefits to the Philippine economy of \$25 million per year. New technologies, including Integrated Pest Management, Bt cotton varieties from China (Mainland), and better organization of input delivery to small holders hold great promise for improved yields and profitability.

Mr. Mkhize and Mr. Pasgo pointed out that the Philippines has been a member of the ICAC since 1951 and that the Philippines is a valuable member of the Committee, representing the concerns of small holders and cotton importing countries. The Philippines benefits from ICAC membership through technology transfer, access to Secretariat publications, support for cotton research and by participation in discussions of international significance. It was also noted that membership in the ICAC is cost effective and that annual assessments to the ICAC are less than for most other intergovernmental organizations. It was observed that the private sector of the Philippines and the government agency with responsibility for the cotton sector are strongly in favor of continued membership in the ICAC.

Ambassador Rosario indicated that he supports the continued membership of the Philippines in the ICAC, but he noted that there are always budget implications and policy concerns to be considered. He said that he would communicate his endorsement of the continued membership of the Philippines in the ICAC to appropriate officials in Manila.