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May 14, 2003

Dear Ian and Francisco,

I am writing on behalf of the Search and Nomination Committee for the CGIAR Science Council (SNC-SC).

The SNC-SC has undertaken an open, transparent, and global search process for the SC Chair and Members, following the steps described in the process note of January 28, 2003 circulated to key CGIAR stakeholders. The Committee sought nominations and applications from individuals and leading scientific organizations worldwide using a variety of means - including call for nominations addressed to CGIAR stakeholders; advertisements in science journals, magazines and newspapers; and targeted search by the Committee members and others.

As a result, curriculum vitae (CVs) were received from over 340 nominees/applicants. Reference letters were solicited for candidates in the long list. Through several iterations, the SNC-SC, with full participation from all members, reduced the long list to a preliminary short list of 21 candidates including eight who had indicated an initial interest in the Chair position. The list included nine candidates from developing countries and five female candidates. At our meeting last week in Paris, seven of the eight members of the Committee were present for the scheduled interviews of the short-listed candidates. The Committee interviewed ten candidates in person, nine through telephone, and one through a video conference hook-up. One candidate was not available for interview at that time.

As you know, the Committee has had to work on a very tight schedule. After intensive discussions at the Paris meeting we concluded that additional time was needed to complete the process currently underway. The interviews have enabled us to identify a number of excellent candidates for Chair and for Members of the SC. However, we feel that having more time will enable the Committee to gather additional information for a thorough assessment of the interviewed candidates. This will also give opportunity to the Committee to assess any gaps in the overall profile of the Council and fill these gaps with additional strong candidates. I have asked Committee members to complete their assessment of gaps and forward to me the names of any additional candidates (along with their CVs and other nomination documents) during the period under which further evaluation of the current promising candidates is carried out, i.e., by June 20, 2003. The Committee plans to hold its final meeting during the week of July 21 and transmit its recommended list to you shortly thereafter.

I am grateful to all concerned for their cooperation and assistance that enabled the search process to move significantly forward. We hope that the same high level of cooperation would be extended to us as we take the concluding steps in the process.

Finally, I would appreciate it if you could share this letter with the members of the CGIAR Executive Council.

With kind regards,



Mohamed Hassan
Chair, SNC-SC

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