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Press Release

Crucial Move to Ban Terminator Seeds in Canada: Private Members Bill Tabled

Ottawa, May 31, 2007 – Today, a Private Members Bill to ban “Terminator technology” – seeds genetically engineered to be sterile after first harvest – was tabled by Member of Parliament Alex Atamanenko, Agriculture Critic for the New Democratic Party and MP for B.C. Southern Interior.

If passed, this Bill will prohibit field-testing and commercialization of Terminator seed in Canada. The Governments of India and Brazil have already made Terminator illegal.

“Terminator threatens the right of Canadian farmers to save seed and offers farmers no benefits,” said Colleen Ross, farmer and Women’s President of the National Farmers Union, “Creating sterile seeds is blatantly anti-farmer and raises dangerous scenarios for intensified corporate control over farming in Canada. We ask every MP to demonstrate their support for Canadian farmers by supporting this Private Members Bill.”

Terminator seeds have not yet been field-tested or commercialized anywhere in the world. To prevent this, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity agreed to maintain a global moratorium on Terminator. However, corporations continue to develop Terminator, and despite signing on to the moratorium, Canada has indicated it is willing to defy it.

“Banning Terminator is the only appropriate action for dealing with this particular very dangerous technology,” said Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network. “Canada has already granted one patent on a Terminator. Corporations will push and push for this technology and they will wait as long as they have to. The only solution is to legislate a national ban.”

“Terminator technology robs the world's farmers of their capacity to control their own production. That is why it should be banned,” says André D. Beaudoin, Secretary-General of UPA Développement International. “Agriculture works with the living, and life begets life. Terminator is dangerous because it violates this fundamental principle.”

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