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**Summary statement from Breakout Session on the Development Aspects of Cotton,  
ICAC Plenary Meeting, Goiania, Brazil**

The main message coming out of the session was that the development of the cotton sector in Africa is in the hands of both Africa and the developed countries. More specifically, the session offered the following five conclusions:

1. From the perspective of cotton producers in Africa and other developing countries, we were repeatedly reminded of the key issue at hand: trade distorting agricultural subsidies continue depressing world cotton prices, hurting millions of cotton farmers in African and elsewhere. The losses in income, employment, and foreign revenues far outnumber all of the assistance committed thus far.
2. At the same time, the African cotton sector welcomes support from multilateral and bilateral donors to improve the efficiency and productivity of their cotton, including:
  - Investment in research (especially around varieties and technological characteristics)
  - Investment in training (especially for breeders and ginning)
  - Support to improve quality
  - Support to improve the classification system
  - Help with marketing tactics, sales info etc.
  - Increases in funds for the countries who most need them
3. Concerns were raised that many of the pledges of development assistance around cotton have not actually been implemented. The gap between commitments and disbursement remain substantial and must be closed.
4. Recipient country governments also have a responsibility: to establish and/or strengthen institutions through which assistance can be channelled; to increase transparency in the allocation of donor funds; and to support their own cotton sectors.
5. Finally, participants raised the need for greater understanding of other factors affecting the competitiveness of African cotton. In particular, concerns were raised around the questions of exchange rate (including the possibility of managing the exchange rate) and on the impacts of second hand clothing on the African textile industry.