NEW HEAD OF AGRICULTURE RESEARCH SECRETARIAT NAMED

Washington, D.C. -- The appointment of Mr. Alexander von der Osten-Sacken (50) as the next executive secretary of the CGIAR secretariat (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research), was announced by W. David Hopper, chairman of the Group and a senior vice president of the World Bank, at the recent annual meeting of the CGIAR in Washington D.C. Mr. von der Osten will assume duties at the beginning of June 1989, on the retirement of the current executive secretary, Mr. Curtis Farrar.

Mr. von der Osten is at present director general of the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR), which was established by the CGIAR to help developing countries strengthen their agricultural research. A German national, he is a graduate of the University of Heidelberg where he specialized in economics and in languages. He is fluent in English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian.

Inaugurated in 1971, the CGIAR is an association of 50 countries, international and regional organizations, and private foundations that supports a system of agricultural research centers and programs across the world. The Group's goal is to improve the well-being of the world's poor by helping to increase sustainable food production. Centers in the CGIAR system initiated the research that led to the worldwide adoption of high-yielding varieties of rice and wheat.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Program and the World Bank are cosponsors of this effort. The World Bank provides the CGIAR's chairman and its secretariat in Washington D.C. The CGIAR is assisted by a technical advisory committee whose secretariat is located at FAO headquarters, Rome.

Mr. von der Osten's experience in international development is wide and varied. He has conducted research at the University of Heidelberg, where he was in charge of joint research projects with FAO. He has visited and worked in some 50 developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and the Near East. He has led delegations to international conferences, workshops, and seminars on behalf of the organizations for which he worked. He has also led or participated in numerous evaluation missions.

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He was executive secretary of the CGIAR's technical advisory committee and, in that position, was a member of the FAO director general's Program and Policy Advisory Board. Earlier, he served as assistant to the FAO director general A. H. Boerma, carrying out a broad range of management responsibilities. He held senior positions at the German Agency for Technical Cooperation; and with ISNAR, prior to his appointment as director general. In Germany, he was managing director of Weingut Eduard Diehl, where he had overall control of an agriculture-based enterprise in the private sector.

He is a recipient of the Volkswagen Foundation's research fellowship, and is a member of the Research Center for International Agrarian Development, Heidelberg.