Abstract. Let $K$ be a compact metrizable group and $\Gamma$ be a group of automorphisms of $K$. We first show that each $\alpha \in \Gamma$ is distal on $K$ implies $\Gamma$ itself is distal on $K$, a local to global correspondence provided $\Gamma$ is a generalized $FC$-group or $K$ is a connected finite-dimensional group. We also prove a connection between distality and ergodicity which is used to show that ergodic actions of nilpotent groups on compact connected finite-dimensional abelian groups contains ergodic automorphisms.