



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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BIODIVERSITY INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM FOR THE SOUTH, RECOMMENDS G77 EXPERT PANEL

Montreal, 30 April 2008. The inaugural meeting of the High-level Panel of Eminent Personalities on the Development Platform for the South, held in St John's, Antigua and Barbuda on 29-30 April 2008, has recommended in the draft Development Platform for the South a multi-year plan of action to implement the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The twenty experts included the Honourable Chandrika Kumaratunga, former president of Sri-Lanka and Honourable P. J. Patterson, former Prime Minister of Jamaica.

In his opening remarks, the Honorable W. Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of the Group of 77 stated that, "South-South cooperation is not aid. It is an expression of South-South solidarity and for two-way learning based on true partnership for mutual development, rather than on traditional donor-recipient relations. The premises are different, the conditions are different, the approaches are different, and the expectations are different."

These guiding principles also apply to South-South cooperation for implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, complementing traditional international cooperation arrangements.

Special guest, Ahmed Djoghla, Executive Secretary of the Convention, hailed the recommendations and stated, "Biodiversity is indeed a unique tool to promote a strategic South-South solidarity for addressing the unfolding global crisis and protecting Life on Earth." These recommendations will be submitted to the next meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, to be held in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire, in June 2008.

Ambassador John W. Ashe, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in New York stated, "The Group of 77 and China that I have the honour to chair, is fully committed to make a distinct contribution for the success of the United Nations biodiversity meeting to be held in May 2008 in Bonn, including the promotion of a multi-year plan of action for promoting South-South cooperation for the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity."

Speaking at the closure of the meeting, Mr Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77, stated that, "The unfolding global food crisis affecting the peoples of the 130 members of the Group of 77 calls for a global structural response which will need to include the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources."

Background information

In May 2006, H.E. Ambassador Dumisani S. Kumalo of South Africa, then Chairman of the Group of 77, requested the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to consider convening an expert meeting with a view of adopting a multi-year plan of action on South-South cooperation for the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention for submission to the high-level segment of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Germany in 2008.



Pursuant to this request, the Executive Secretary in partnership with the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York convened a brainstorming meeting in Montreal from 6 to 8 November 2006. The objectives of this brainstorming meeting were, *inter alia*, to:

- Discuss the elements of a plan of action for South-South cooperation that would enhance implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular goals 1 and 7;
- Make recommendations on the process from the development through to the adoption of a multi-year programme of work on South-South cooperation on biodiversity.

The 24 experts also agreed on possible programme areas, mechanisms, management arrangements for furthering the process, and outlined a preparatory process for the development of a plan of action for South-South cooperation on biodiversity. The meeting of the Chairmen/Coordinators of the various chapters of the Group of 77 welcomed the initiative to prepare a multi-year plan of action on the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity at their meeting held in Rome in February 2007.

More information is available at <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/ssc-01>

The Group of 77 (G-77)

The Group of 77 was established on 15 June 1964 by 77 developing countries that were signatories to the “Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries”, issued at the end of the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva. As the largest coalition of developing countries in the United Nations, the Group of 77 provides the means for the developing world to articulate and promote its collective economic interests and enhance its joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues in the United Nations system, and promote economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. Although the membership of the G-77 has reached 130 countries, the original name was retained because of its historical significance. Of this number, 128 are Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.