

COMMUNIQUÉ

Call for urgent action by the Aichi International Youth Conference on Biodiversity

Montreal, 7 September 2010 – The representatives of youth from 66 countries gathered in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, to build solidarity and discuss the importance of biodiversity, vital for survival of the next generation.

The International Youth Conference on Biodiversity 2010 was held from 23 to 27 August 2010 in Aichi, Japan, by the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Aichi Prefecture with a generous support from the AEON Environmental Foundation. An excursion programme for youth to experience the *Satoyama* landscape was provided in collaboration with Komono Town, Mie Prefecture. One hundred young people selected from 66 countries participated in the conference, which was a preparatory event for the upcoming tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-10), scheduled to take place in Nagoya, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010. Building on the youth conferences on biodiversity held in 2008 in Germany and 2009 in Aichi, Japan, the conference aimed to provide an opportunity for motivated youth from all over the world to learn more about biodiversity, discuss inputs for the upcoming meeting of the and establish a network for future actions.

“The international youth conference is another demonstration of the commitment of the Government of Japan and of Aichi Prefecture as hosts of COP-10 to promote stakeholder involvement at all levels of society. This should be followed by others. As the leaders of tomorrow, the voice of the youth is an integral input for the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

On the last day, the youth group presented the statement on biodiversity, which expressed serious concern for the continuing loss of biodiversity occurring worldwide, and called the global leaders to act on reducing pressures, promote sustainable use of biodiversity and protect associated traditional cultures. The statement also underlined the importance of awareness-raising and engagement of citizens and general public.

Mr. Issei Tajima, Senior Vice Minister of the Environment said, “The international youth conference has a critical role as a pre-COP-10 event that encourage international youth to participate and make inputs to COP-10. I’m convinced that the statement of this conference will make a significant contribution to the discussion at the COP-10.”

Mr. Masaaki Kanda, the Governor of Aichi Prefecture said, “As the host prefecture of COP-10, we are excited to organize the youth conference right before the COP-10. Through home stay and

international exchange programme offered by Aichi Prefecture, I hope the participants learned more about the culture and people of Japan as well as the situations of local biodiversity look like.”

The young people participating promised that they will continue taking action for biodiversity, and called for other young people to join forces.
