



STATEMENT

by

AHMED DJOGHLAF

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

of the

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

to the

SECOND COMMITTEE

at the

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of the

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ONE NATURE • ONE WORLD • OUR FUTURE
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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Addressing the special high level of your current session on progress made so far in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations pointed out: “*there is no question that we can achieve the overarching goal: we can put an end to poverty... We know what to do. But it requires an unswerving, collective, long-term effort.... We have wasted opportunities and face additional challenges, making the task ahead more difficult. It is now our responsibility to make up lost ground and to put all countries together firmly on track towards a more prosperous, sustainable and equitable world.*”

This assessment should give and inspire the international community when considering Millennium Goal 7, on environmental sustainability, which includes the 2010 biodiversity target of achieving a substantial reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss. In doing so, we should be inspired by the wisdom of Albert Einstein who pointed out that “we can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them”.

Held under the motto “One Nature, One World: Our Future”, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn in May this year, in many ways epitomized a new approach and new ways of doing business in addressing the unprecedented challenges of the loss of biodiversity compounded by the potential effects of climate change. Six years after establishing the 2010 target and two years short of the deadline, the Bonn biodiversity meeting provided a unique opportunity to build on the momentum achieved to date. This unique event was preceded by the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The Bonn “Life Summit” was in many ways unprecedented and I would like to pay tribute to the extraordinary leadership provided by the host, the people and the Government of Germany and for its distinct contribution in forging a universal “Global Alliance for Nature” and ushering in a new era in the manner in which biodiversity issues are perceived and addressed by the international community. More than 200 biodiversity events were organized by the host prior to the Bonn meeting.

These unprecedented preparatory efforts were reflected in the success of the Summit, which was characterized by many unique features. The Summit took place from 19 to 30 May, in Bonn, with record participation of over 5,000 attendees representing 191 Parties and their partners. 240 side-events were organized, including 82 by the representatives of the business community. 864 journalists attended and, for the first time, the meeting was webcast live on the Internet.

The High-Level Segment alone was attended by over 117 Ministers or Vice Ministers, with a Heads of State or Government component being convened for the first time, with the participation of the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who inaugurated the Summit, the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of Palau, the President of the European Commission and the first ever participation by the President of the United Nations General Assembly. On this occasion, the Chancellor of Germany launched the LifeWeb initiative, aimed at enhancing the networks of marine and terrestrial protected areas with an initial allocation of 40 millions euros. More than 60 Parties have committed themselves to supporting the initiative to extend protected-area coverage or pledged to support the initiative financially. A preliminary version of the report *The Economics of Biodiversity and Ecosystems* was presented by Mr. Pavan Sukhdev. Recognizing the intrinsic link between poverty and biodiversity, a major initiative on biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation was also launched with the support of Germany and France.

The decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety are before you. They usher a new era of enhanced commitment to and implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety with the active engagement of all stakeholders including business, local authorities and parliamentarians. The meeting also saw the launch of a multi-year biodiversity-education campaign for youth and children, called *The Green Wave*, which will include the coordinated planting of trees in all the schools around the

world on the International Day for Biological Diversity, in order to engage youth and children in the global biodiversity agenda. Another major breakthrough was the agreement on a firm process and elements for an international regime on access and benefit-sharing to be adopted at the Nagoya summit, in October 2010.

The Conference was also unprecedented in terms of the number of initiatives launched in partnership with an array of key stakeholders. For the first time, the Summit addressed one of the most pivotal stakeholders: urban city dwellers. Although cities occupy only 2.8 per cent of the Earth's surface, urban dwellers use 75 per cent of the planet's natural resources. In recognition of this, for the first time, a meeting on cities and biodiversity was convened in conjunction with the Conference and the results were submitted and discussed at the High-Level Segment.

A Mayors Conference on "Local Action for Biodiversity" was also convened on the margins of the Conference and their message, best practices, etc., were also conveyed to the Summit.

Similarly, recognizing the importance of engaging Parliamentarians and lawmakers in the biodiversity compact, a meeting on "Parliamentarians and Biodiversity" was also convened on 27 May, in collaboration with the German Bundestag Committee on Environment and Nature Conservation and an initiative to involve parliamentarians in the conservation of biodiversity was launched in collaboration with the International Parliamentary Union and the Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE).

In a first for any multilateral environmental convention, the Bonn Summit also adopted a gender action plan in recognition of the vital link between women, poverty and biodiversity. A special meeting of a unique network of women environment ministers was also held during the Conference. The Bonn meeting also agreed on the preparation of a multi-year plan of action on South-South cooperation to be submitted for adoption by the 2010 Nagoya meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Convention on Biological Diversity also moved closer to universal membership with the accession of Brunei Darussalam, one the richest countries in terms of biodiversity. Iraq also announced that it was in the process of completing its internal procedures necessary for ratification of the Convention. I sincerely hope that in Nagoya in 2010, universality will be achieved by welcoming the three remaining countries as Parties.

In considering the report of the Bonn Summit meetings, I would urge that this august Assembly, as the supreme body of the United Nations, has a unique opportunity, even responsibility, to bring to bear its considerable moral authority, to give an impetus to the decisions we have already adopted and energizing the United Nations family to cooperate and collaborate as we prepare for 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity, which will provide not only a unique opportunity for a global stocktaking, through a special high-level session of the General Assembly on the eve of its sixty-fifth session, on the extent to which we in the international community have been able to achieve our commitment to reverse biodiversity loss, but also an occasion to renew our commitments for the post-2010 phase, by charting the way ahead.

I thank you for your kind attention.