



OPENING REMARKS BY

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

to the

**HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE
ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**Hyderabad, India
16 OCTOBER 2012**



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Excellency Prime Minister,

Excellency Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of Environment and Forests of the Government of India,

Excellency Mr. Hiroyuki Nagahama, Minister of Environment of the Government of Japan,

Excellency Mr. Nallari Kiran Kumar Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh,

Mr. Achim Steiner, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to address you at the opening of the high-level segment of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Excellency Prime Minister,

On behalf of the many participants in this meeting of the Conference of the Parties, I would like to express our very deep gratitude to the Government of India for its warmth, hospitality and generosity in hosting this important international gathering in the historic and inspiring setting of Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh. I would like to express also our sincere thanks for your presence here today.

Your presence today is testimony to the importance that India attaches to achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and will serve as inspiration for the successful completion of the work before us at this meeting of the Conference.

India's ratification of the Nagoya Protocol, and your call here to all Parties to the Convention to do likewise are most welcome. It sends a powerful message of support for this new legal instrument and its significance to many countries, particularly biologically rich developing countries. The Nagoya Protocol will provide the framework for the realization of one of the three objectives of the Convention: the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

The experience of India in this area – its rich biodiversity, culture, traditional knowledge and systems of natural resource stewardship, combined with the knowledge management and regulatory measures that India has now put in place – so eloquently described in your address will provide invaluable lessons and insight to other countries.

The preservation of the Earth's biodiversity is essential to the future of humanity, to sustainable development and to uplifting the conditions of the poor. Effective implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and attainment of its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, are essential to reversing the alarming decline of life on Earth. Critical to the achievement of these targets, as you so rightly stated, will be the mobilization of the necessary financial, technical and human resources.

And there is no doubt that one of the most difficult tasks facing this conference is to reach agreement on how to ensure the mobilization of adequate investment for biodiversity. For this reason, your launch of the Hyderabad Pledge and your announcement of such major financial commitment to strengthen institutional mechanisms in India set a strong example, as does the generous commitment to provide funds to support similar capacity building in developing countries.

At the start of this meeting of the conference, I invited each Party and partner to this Convention to commit to becoming a regional or global champion for biodiversity and the achievement of one or more of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. I am delighted that, through our announcement today, India will lead the way in pledges in this regard. I take this opportunity to re-issue this call and look forward to being able to announce a growing list of Biodiversity Champions.

Biodiversity needs to be seen as an opportunity – it is the natural wealth or capital of our nations. Heads of state have recently recognized, in the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference, that biodiversity is a critical and necessary condition to promote sustainable development and poverty eradication.

As we move into the high-level segment and the conclusion of our negotiations, let me end by re-stating my firm belief that expenditure on biodiversity should not be seen as costs, but as investments that will pay back with significant environmental, social and economic benefits for all our societies.

I thank you all for your kind attention and wish you success in your deliberations.
