



**STATEMENT BY**

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**on the occasion of**

**THE CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-  
SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE**

**PYEONGCHANG, REPUBLIC OF KOREA**  
**12 October 2014**



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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## **Distinguished Participants,**

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all. Today, the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, will be remembered as an historic day for the Convention on Biological Diversity and for all of us. Today marks the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing and the beginning of a new era for how we share and conserve our earth's genetic resources, associated traditional knowledge and biodiversity.

The Convention on Biological Diversity was created 22 years ago inspired by the world community's growing commitment to the environment and sustainable development. In 2010, when the Nagoya Protocol was adopted, we laid a strong foundation for achieving the third objective of the Convention: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. With the Nagoya Protocol now turning into reality, we also take a dramatic step forward in the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components. In this remarkable date, we reaffirm our commitment to support a sustainable development that is equitable and in harmony with nature.

Along the way, we did not forget the crucial role of indigenous peoples and local communities and their traditional knowledge. The Nagoya Protocol incorporates a series of provisions which assist in preserving and maintaining traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. With the entry into force of the Protocol we envisage a future where we can learn from the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities on genetic resources in a respectful and collaborative way and with their prior informed consent and involvement.

The entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol is also of paramount importance for the business and the scientific communities. It will create opportunities for increased knowledge about genetic resources, generating incentives for preserving genetic diversity, biodiversity in general, and associated traditional knowledge while providing the conditions for continuous research and development of new products and processes based on genetic resources.

The sum of all our individual efforts, commitment and many years of perseverance, both at the national and international level, has allowed us to be here sharing this remarkable moment. My congratulations to all of you for this groundbreaking achievement.

I would like to offer a special thanks to those first 50 pioneering countries to ratify the Protocol. Without your vision and leadership, this day would have not been possible. In the last couple of weeks, we are glad to say that other 4 countries have joined the Protocol. I take this moment to encourage those Parties that have not already done so to take the necessary steps to ratify the Nagoya Protocol and be part of this process.

It is heartening to see here such a diverse group of participants, including representatives from governments, international organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as representatives from NGOs, the academy and the business sector. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your immense support along the way.

Let's continue the good work and collective efforts to make the Nagoya Protocol fully operational and make access to and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge a reality on the ground for the benefit of all. It's time to build trust and partnerships among different stakeholders and rightholders!

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is very timely that we are here today to launch a fully functional ABS Clearing-House. Indeed, as a platform for exchanging information on ABS, the Clearing-House has an essential role to play in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and creating the clarity, transparency and legal certainty that all parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, the academy, the business sector and other stakeholders are seeking.

For those of you here today, I hope that this capacity-building workshop will contribute to build a better understanding of the value and importance of engaging in the ABS Clearing-House and will provide you with the necessary tools and knowledge to fully participate in the process.

In the last months, the Secretariat has worked relentlessly to develop, implement and administer the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House on the basis of guidance provided by the Intergovernmental Committee and the Informal Advisory Committee for the ABS Clearing-House. Taking into account ongoing and valuable feedback from users, the Secretariat has aimed at improving the functionality of the system. We have also made efforts to raise awareness of the importance of participation, including through an outreach and engagement campaign, and to build capacities by providing hands-on training in the use of the ABS Clearing-House during the series of regional workshops on the Nagoya Protocol.

I know we can count on your continued commitment to share information through the ABS Clearing-House to ensure it becomes a valuable tool that meets your needs and serves the critical purpose it plays in the implementation of the Protocol. As you are well aware, Parties are expected to provide and update the information required under the Protocol through this information-exchange system, but we also want to hear more about how the Secretariat can support you through the ABS Clearing-House in your work in implementing the Protocol. We need your feedback and your participation.

I would like to thank the European Union for providing the financial support for this workshop and for the overall support to the pilot-phase of the ABS Clearing-House, and to the Japan Biodiversity Fund, Germany and Switzerland for the funding provided for other critical aspects of the development of the Clearing-House. Without your support, the Secretariat would not have been able to make the ABS Clearing-House functional for the entry into force of the Protocol. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to our hosts, the Government of Korea, for collaborating in making this workshop possible.

**Dear colleagues,**

Aichi Biodiversity Target 16 provides that by 2015, the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation. With the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol we have achieved the first part of the Aichi Target 16. Having a functional ABS Clearing-House is a vital component in facilitating the operationalization of the Nagoya Protocol and achieving Aichi Target 16 in full.

The Nagoya Protocol also contributes to the Aichi Biodiversity Target 18, which provides that by 2020, the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels, particularly at local and national level.

In the same vein, the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol will certainly be of valuable importance in the achievement of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals, which are set to build upon the Millennium Development Goals and become part of the post-2015 development agenda, to be adopted next year by the UN General Assembly.

Today is not another day, and the Nagoya Protocol is not just another environmental treaty. The Nagoya Protocol is special. It is special because at its very essence, at the basis of this heavily negotiated text, lies the spirit of fairness and equity. This Protocol reflects our willingness to strive, rooted on the respect for nature, for a better and more equitable future for everyone.

With this in mind, let's take a moment to celebrate the entry into force of the Protocol and the launch of a functional ABS Clearing-House.

Thank you