

**STATEMENT**

**BY MR AHMED DJOGLAF**

**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE SETUP AND KICK-OFF OF THE “NATIONAL  
COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
BIODIVERSITY” IN JAPAN**

**25 JANUARY 2010  
TOKYO, JAPAN**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I commend the Ministry of Environment for convening this first meeting of the National Committee for the International Year of Biodiversity. We have much work ahead of us. As the upcoming third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook will show, despite some progress the 2010 Target of slowing biodiversity loss worldwide has not been met. 2010 is therefore an opportunity to build on our successes and failures and pave a new way forward. To quote Dogen: "Something you want badly enough can always be gained. No matter how fierce the enemy...or how carefully guarded the treasure, there is always a means to the goal for the earnest seeker."

The International Year was officially launched in Berlin two weeks ago, and many events have been planned to continue the celebrations. In February the 6<sup>th</sup> Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity will take place in Norway, as well as a Global Ministerial Environmental Forum in Bali. On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the International Day for Biological Diversity will be celebrated under the theme "Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation". September will see the 65<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, where a high-level segment on biodiversity with the participation of heads of state and government will be convened for the first time ever. And of course, the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit will take place at the end of October, followed by the closing ceremony of the International Year of Biodiversity in December in Ishikawa Prefecture, an event that will help to ensure a seamless transition into the International Year of Forests.

I encourage Japan and its people to join in the celebrations throughout the year, and ask the members of the "Life on Earth" Supporters Club to help spread the message across the country. I look forward to helping with the preparations for Nagoya and to the success of the event itself. The stakes could not be higher. As the slogan of the International Year reminds us, "Biodiversity is life. Biodiversity is our life."

I wish you best of luck with the meeting.