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8 February 2011

**United Nations Decade on Biodiversity
2011-2020**

Dear Madam/Sir,

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the period 2011-2020 as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity in its *Resolution 65/161*. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is in full support of this decision. The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity is a tremendous opportunity to mainstream the objectives of the Convention into actions and policies across society.

The Decade coincides with the duration of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its tenth meeting held in Nagoya, Japan. It contains ambitious, but crucial targets to help achieve the three objectives of the CBD and the Millennium Development Goals.

Building on the momentum generated from the International Year of Biodiversity, the Decade will spur efforts to meet the ambitious Targets in the Strategic Plan and ultimately secure the future of our planet's biodiversity - the basis of life on Earth.

As we begin the transition from the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) to the Decade on Biodiversity, the Secretariat encourages all Parties and organizations to use existing national committees established for the IYB, to continue to work throughout the UN Decade. In the event that a committee has not been established, the Decade provides the perfect opportunity to do so.

The Secretariat is currently in the process of finalizing and translating the Strategy for the Celebrations of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 in the six official languages of the United Nations. In addition, the Secretariat is also finalizing promotional materials for the decade including a logo for use by all Parties and international organizations.

The International Day for Biological Diversity, 22 May 2011, will serve as the platform to officially launch the UN Decade. Celebrations are scheduled to be held in Tokyo, Japan. Details will be made available once finalized. The Secretariat is also pleased to inform you that a series of launches currently being planned at both the national and regional level. Details will be made available once the programmes are finalized. The Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to encourage all CBD Parties and international partners to plan their own launches.

The Secretariat stands ready to assist in any way that it can and welcomes the opportunity to work with all of you during this important decade filled with promises for a more sustainable future.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

To: CBD National Focal Points and International Organizations