



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



COMMUNIQUÉ

COP 9 PRESIDENCY PAYS WORKING VISIT TO THE UNCBD SECRETARIAT

Montreal, 15 August 2008 – Mr. Jochen Flasbarth, Director General, Federal Ministry for the Environment, representing Mr. Sigmar Gabriel, Federal Minister of the Environment, Germany, and the President of COP 9, paid a two-day visit to the headquarters of the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to discuss the implementation of the Bonn decisions and the Nagoya road map as well as the preparation of the first meeting of the Bureau of COP 9 to be held in Barcelona, Spain, on 4-5 October 2008 at the margins of the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Mr. Flasbarth was accompanied during his visit, on 12-13 August 2008, by Ms. Nicola Breier, the UNCBD focal point.

The visit of the representative of COP 9 coincided with the visit of Mr. Tim Hodges, the co-chair of the open-ended working group on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS). During his visit, arrangements for the implementation of the Bonn ABS mandate were finalized in close consultation with Mr. Fernando Casas.

Addressing the Secretariat staff of the Convention, Mr. Flasbarth hailed the new spirit born at COP 9 and commended the staff for their dedication and hard work. He highlighted the challenges facing the implementation of the Bonn decision and the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity targets. He especially noted the breakthrough in negotiations on an international ABS regime, but cautioned, “Even though we achieved an important breakthrough on ABS there is still a lot that remains to be done. It is important that we focus on the issues at hand so that we don’t lose momentum,” said Mr. Flasbarth.

In his closing statement at COP 9 in Bonn, Mr. Gabriel noted that the “Having only two years left to meet the 2010 target, the German CBD Presidency will be guided by a clear roadmap to COP 10. We will do our utmost that the decisions taken by COP 9 are implemented comprehensively and timely, and we will enhance cooperation and team-spirit amongst parties and bodies of the CBD.”

Mr. Djoghlaif said, “The visit of the COP 9 Presidency a couple of weeks after the Bonn Biodiversity summit is yet another demonstration of Germany’s leadership and commitment to the new enhanced phase of implementation of the three objectives of the Convention. Such a visit has never happened before.” Mr. Djoghlaif also conveyed to the representative of the COP President the congratulations of Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General, addressed to German Chancellor Angela Merkel and to Sigmar Gabriel, COP 9 President, for their leadership, and for the success of the Bonn Summit as reflected in the meeting held on 7 August 2008 in New York.



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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits from utilization of genetic resources. With 191 Parties, the CBD has near-universal participation among countries committed to preserving life on Earth. The CBD seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The headquarters of the Secretariat of the Convention are located in Montreal.