

COMMUNIQUÉ

President-elect of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly visits the Secretariat

Montreal, 7 July 2010 – Mr. Joseph Deiss, President-elect of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, today paid a visit to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to discuss preparations for the high-level event on biodiversity to be held in New York on 22 September 2010.

“As incoming President of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, I am honoured to have visited the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This demonstrates my commitment to the success of the upcoming New York Summit on Biodiversity,” said Mr Deiss.

“The visit of Mr. Deiss represents the first time that the secretariat of a multilateral environmental agreement has had the honour to welcome the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I want to thank Mr. Deiss for demonstrating his commitment to the upcoming biodiversity summit and the International Year of Biodiversity,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The visit of Mr. Deiss focused on preparations for the discussions on biodiversity by Heads of State and Government on 22 September at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The meeting with the Secretariat staff in Montreal today precedes a brainstorming session to be held in Geneva on 1-2 September. This will be followed on 3 September by a meeting of ministers of former, present and forthcoming presidencies of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

As a means to mark the International Year of Biodiversity, the General Assembly decided on 15 April 2010 to hold a high-level event on biodiversity on 22 September 2010, the eve of the opening of the general debate of its sixty-fifth session

The high-level event in New York on 22 September, which precedes the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, will provide a unique opportunity to raise awareness on the global biodiversity crisis and the urgent need for stronger action to implement the Convention. The meeting also provides an occasion for world leaders to provide political impetus and support for a sustained global response to the world’s biodiversity challenges, and the need to address each of the Convention’s three objectives.

During the high-level event, dialogue will be held on issues of strategic importance to the Convention. Roundtable discussions will be held on post-2010 biodiversity targets; the links

between climate change and biodiversity; and the importance of biodiversity to poverty alleviation and development and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The event also serves to contribute to the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the achievement of the MDGs, to be held in parallel to it.

Mr. Deiss, a former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, who led his country's application for membership of the United Nations in 2002, was elected by acclamation as the next President of the General Assembly on 11 June this year.
