



# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



## MESSAGE

from

**Ahmed Djoghlaf, Executive Secretary,**

**on the occasion of the**

**United Nations Day for South-South  
Cooperation**

*19 December 2008*

For information only

South-South cooperation has emerged as a powerful tool to promote multilateral economic cooperation among developing countries as a complement to cooperation between the North and the South. Since the 2005 Millennium Review Summit, it has been seen as a fundamental instrument for the implementation of the development agenda of the United Nations, which includes issues related to biodiversity. Indeed, the achievement of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity is essential for achieving sustainable development, as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

In recognition of this new reality, the United Nations General Assembly has declared 19 December as the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation. The Assembly also urged relevant United Nations organizations and multilateral institutions to “intensify their efforts to effectively mainstream the use of South-South cooperation in the design, formulation and implementation of their regular programmes and to consider increasing allocations of human, technical and financial resources for supporting South-South cooperation initiatives”. This call, made five years ago, is now more relevant than ever as we work towards a United Nations that delivers as one. It is also more relevant than ever for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Developing countries are the stewards of most of the world’s biodiversity. They can learn and benefit from each other’s experience and share their best practices. It is for this reason that ,in 2006, a major initiative on South-South cooperation for the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity Under the chairmanship of South Africa, a brainstorming meeting was convened in November 2006 and resulted in a framework and guidelines for a multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development.



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The G-77 Development Platform for the South, which aims to provide a framework of development options to support the participation and integration of developing countries into the global economy and the globalization process, was launched in Yamassoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, in June 2008. The Development Platform acknowledges that biodiversity is under threat, with species disappearing at a rate not seen since the demise of dinosaurs 65 million years ago, and with the greatest ever mass extinction of species being imminent. The Platform also recognizes the importance of the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from using genetic resources as well as the strong links between biodiversity and climate change: climate change is emerging as the greatest threat to biodiversity, while biodiversity can be utilized to combat climate change, in terms of both adaptation and mitigation.

The 6,000 participants attending the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted decision IX/25 on South-South cooperation on biodiversity for development. That decision calls for the preparation of a multi-year plan of action to be submitted to the tenth meeting of the Parties to be held in Nagoya, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010. It also: (i) encourages developing country Parties to engage in South-South cooperation on the issue of biodiversity, complemented and supported by North-South cooperation, and to incorporate biodiversity concerns in regional and subregional cooperation agreements and associated activities; (ii) encourages Parties to establish, as appropriate, multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships between Parties and other countries at subregional and regional levels to address biodiversity concerns at regional, subregional, national and subnational levels; (iii) invites Parties and other Governments, regional and international organizations to support the organization of a South-South cooperation forum on biodiversity for development at the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and (iv) invites Parties, other Governments, regional and international organizations to support South-South cooperation by facilitating projects and programmes aimed at joint conservation and sustainable use of cross-border ecosystems to further contribute towards halting biodiversity loss.

On 6-7 November, 2008, under the leadership of Antigua and Barbuda, a brainstorming meeting on the elements of a multi year plan of action on biodiversity for development was convened jointly by the secretariats of the Convention and the Group of 77. The meeting adopted a road-map for the preparation and finalization of the multi-year plan of action. The road-map can be considered as a tangible contribution of the biodiversity family for the celebration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation. It is also a recognition of the importance of coordinating and supporting South-South and triangular cooperation on a global and United Nations system-wide basis for achieving sustainable development.

*Montreal, 19 December 2008*