



STATEMENT

BY MR AHMED DJOGLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE SECOND INTERGOVERNMENTAL MULTI-
STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON IPBES**

**5 OCTOBER 2009
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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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ONE NATURE - ONE WORLD - OUR FUTURE
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Victor Hugo said that “nothing can stop an idea whose time has come”. The establishment of a scientific mechanism to support the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention is indeed an idea whose time has come.

From January 2005 to October 2009, from Paris to Nairobi – here we are again to discuss the need for an institutional mechanism in support of the biodiversity agenda. During the last 58 months, under the guidance of an executive committee comprising 15 countries supported by a steering committee, six regional consultative meetings were convened with the participation of more than 80 countries. In May 2008 the 6000 participants attending COP9 welcomed the agreement of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene an ad-hoc open-ended intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting to consider establishing an efficient international science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being. In November last year in Putrajaya, the representatives of 77 countries called for a gap analysis to be undertaken with the aim of supporting future discussion by reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of existing science-policy interfaces and their coordination across all spatial scales.

The gap analysis is now before you. The study has been prepared following intensive consultation and engagement of governments in Panama, Liege and here in Nairobi. Three meetings of the advisory committee with the participation of the secretariat were held in London and here in Nairobi. The study demonstrates that current environmental problems, often of considerable magnitude and complexity, challenge science, politics, policy and their interrelations in unprecedented ways, confronting them with situations in which facts are uncertain, values in dispute, stakes high and decisions urgent. It recognizes that “Notwithstanding the considerable progress in and growth of the relevant sciences, some fundamental knowledge gaps exist, in particular with regard to the dynamic interactions between drivers of change, ecosystems and human well-being.”

This sense of urgency underpins the joint letter of the President of COP9, his Excellency Minister Gabriel Sigmar, and the incoming president of COP10, HEM Sakihito Ozawa. This is the first time that such a joint initiative has taken place between the current and incoming chair of the COP, reflecting the uniqueness of the partnership established under the triple COP presidency of Brazil, Germany and Japan. I sincerely hope that this sense of urgency will guide your proceedings during this week, so as to ensure a conclusion to your negotiations as soon as possible, and no later than in Nagoya in October next year.

You have just heard the statement made by Mr Spencer from Grenada, the Chairman of SBSTTA speaking on behalf of the Chairs of the Scientific Bodies of Biodiversity related convention that the secretariat is honoured to service since its establishment in 2007. The message is very loud and clear in support of the contemplated mechanism in support to and in complement to the SBSTTA.

Speaking on the importance of the science-policy interface in tackling climate change, the chairman of the IPCC Rajendra Pachauri said that “The coalition of science and policy expertise gives the Panel a uniqueness of personality that I believe is largely responsible for it having attained a level of credibility and a voice of scientific authority among policymakers and

the public all over the world.” This is what we hope for and need from an intergovernmental panel on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The unprecedented loss of biodiversity compounded by climate change requires more attention than ever before, including the mobilisation of the scientific community at all levels, from local to regional to international, in support of the three objectives of the Convention. The scientific community must be involved in the Convention’s enhanced phase of implementation initiated in Curitiba. The enhanced phase of commitment initiated in Bonn in May last year likewise requires the commitment of the scientific community. Needless to say, then, the Convention’s new phase of enhanced partnership to be born in Nagoya will also require collaboration with scientific institutions. Scientific involvement is crucial to every aspect of the most-widely-subscribed legal biodiversity treaty today – and hopefully next year in Nagoya a universal treaty, with the participation of the United State of America and Andorra. This universality, along with the extensive involvement of scientists, will be particularly important when it comes to supporting the international regime on access and benefit sharing to be adopted in Nagoya at COP10.

Such a partnership will need to build on and complement the achievements of SBSTTA, the legally-established and mandated scientific organ of the Convention at the service of COP. Such a partnership will require firm intergovernmental backing while ensuring the independence of the scientists involved. Such a partnership will remain unfulfilled without the full participation of the secretariat of the Convention, the storehouse of essential knowledge and information provided since 1996 by 192 parties through their reporting requirements. The secretariat is the repository of a total of 520 national reports and many other are expected in the coming weeks representing a unique wealth of information contained in more than 5000 pages. Servicing the 192 parties to the Convention, nine COPs, 14 SBSTTAs, 23 AHTEGs and 37 scientific meetings, the secretariat has made a unique contribution to promoting science at the service of the international community as a whole.

The celebration next year of the International Year of Biodiversity will coincide with the convening for the first time in the history of the United Nations of a high-level segment with the participation of heads of state and government exclusively devoted to biodiversity. This unique biodiversity summit in New York will precede the Nagoya summit on biodiversity, which will adopt a new protocol on liability and redress under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 2020-2050 biodiversity targets, a new 2011-2020 strategic plan, and, as mentioned, a new international regime on access and benefit sharing.

The establishment of a scientific mechanism in support of the new phase of the Convention with the full engagement of its statutory organs, including its secretariat, will make a major contribution toward achieving the objectives of the International Year of Biodiversity. I wish you a very successful meeting and pledge the full support of the secretariat and its 80 committed and dedicated high-level experts.

Thank you for your kind attention.