



STATEMENT

BY MR AHMED DJOGLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE FIRST MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR
SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION ON BIODIVERSITY**

Montreal, 29 October 2009

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COP 10 / MOP 5

Excellencies,

On 15 May 2006, immediately after eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Curitiba, Brazil, Ambassador Dumisani S. Kumalo of South Africa, then Chairman of the G77, suggested the preparation of multi year plan of action on South-South cooperation on biodiversity. To this end, he suggested the convening of a meeting of a group of experts for the preparation of such a plan aimed at enhancing the implementation of the threefold objectives of the Convention and the further the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly goal seven. In response to this request, a brainstorming session was convened in Montreal in November 2006 to discuss the preparation of such an expert meeting, a meeting between the secretariats of three major forest basins of the world. The document it produced was forwarded to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn in May 2008. In adopting their decision IX/25 on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development, the 6,000 participants in the Bonn biodiversity summit welcomed the initiative and suggested the establishment of the G-77 Forum on biodiversity to be convened on 18 October 2010 immediately before COP10.

At their thirty-third meeting, held in New York on 25 September 2009, the ministers of foreign affairs of the Group of 77 and China welcomed the Bonn decision.

I would like express my deep gratitude to all of you for attending this first meeting of the steering committee of this unique initiative. I would like to most sincerely thank H.E. Mr. Abdullah Al Saidi, the Ambassador of Yemen and President-Elect of the Group of 77, for his participation and support.

I would like to thank Mr. Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 in New York, for his tremendous work in promoting the solidarity and unity of the Group and for his continued support for promotion the South-South initiative on Biodiversity for Development. I would also ask him to convey to H.E. Mr Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations and Chairman of the Group of 77 my deep gratitude for his continued support and strong political message.

A warm welcome must also go to Professor James Seyani from Malawi. I like to think of Professor Seyani as the “dean” of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as he has been involved in all major meetings since the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nassau in 1994. He also chaired our South-South brainstorming session here in 2006. I am therefore delighted that we will be able to draw on his unique knowledge of the history of the Convention during this meeting.

Let me also kindly welcome Dr. Spencer Thomas from Granada, Chair of the Convention’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. The work of Dr. Thomas and SBSTTA is instrumental in the formulation the 2020 and 2050 biodiversity targets, the post-2010 Strategic Plan of the Convention and the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which will be officially issued in May 2010.

I would also like to welcome Ambassador Conrad Hunte from Antigua and Barbuda, who convened the expert meeting in Montreal in November 2008 that called for this first meeting of the steering committee.

As you all know, 2010 will be a unique year. On 20 September, in New York, for the first time in the history of the United Nations General Assembly, a high-level meeting will be

devoted exclusively to biodiversity. After this historic event, Ministers of Foreign Affairs will meet to review the work of this Steering Committee. This is an excellent opportunity to show how biodiversity can make a major contribution toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In October, in Nagoya, the Parties to the Convention will be adopting a new 2011-2020 Strategic Plan, and I sincerely hope that your multi-year plan on South-South cooperation on biodiversity will assist the Parties in implementing the Convention's post-2010 strategy. Together we need to develop and sustain the economies, the knowledge base, and the incredible biological resources of the South.

Our next meeting will be in Kampala, just after the fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, to be held in Nairobi in May. The outcomes of the meeting will be submitted to the First G77 Forum on Biodiversity to be held in Nagoya on 18 October 2010 just prior to the opening of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

I should also note that during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties itself a host of important dialogues will take place. These include a high-level ministerial segment; a city summit with the mayors of 300 cities worldwide; a youth summit; a meeting for parliamentarians; a dialogue for multi- and bilateral cooperative agencies; the second World Private Donor Forum, which follows the first-ever such forum held this past June; and a business summit for chief executive officers of companies and ministers, for which preparatory steps are being taken at the upcoming Business and Biodiversity Conference in Jakarta.

My colleagues and I feel privilege to be at your service in preparing and implementing the multi year plan of action for the period 2011-2020, which will also coincide with the implementation of the new Strategic Plan of the Convention. Indeed in your journey to Nagoya and beyond you can always count on the support of your Secretariat.

Thank you for your kind attention.