



## STATEMENT

**BY MR. AHMED DJOGLAF**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

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SEMINAR ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF  
BIODIVERSITY**

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Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
United Nations Environment Programme  
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada  
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588  
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



Life in harmony, into the future  
いのちの共生を、未来へ  
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In his policy speech on 29 January, at the 174th session of the Diet, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama made a simple yet bold statement: “I want to protect the life of the Earth.”

What motivated him to say this? Allow me to quote at length from his speech:

“The universe is 13.7 billion years old, and 4.6 billion years have passed since the Earth's formation. Compared with this long timeline, the last 10,000 years - during which humans emerged and came to live in civilizations, giving rise to the so-called "homosphere" - are a very short period indeed. Within that short span, though, we have advanced the clock on our planet with surprising speed. We are squandering its resources, causing great damage to the global environment and causing drastic change to the ecosystem the likes of which has never been seen before. Of the roughly 30 million living species said to inhabit the planet, an estimated 40,000 are now going extinct each year. Our modern industrial activities and lifestyles have brought a wealth of benefits to our lives; at the same time, though, we must realize that they are also shortening the time remaining for humans to continue living the civilized lives they do today.”

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, stated in his video message that we have just seen, business as usual is no more an option for humanity. We individuals and institutions need to change. I would like therefore to convey to Director of UNIC here in Tokyo, Ms Sonoo, my deep gratitude for organizing today's event with the United Nations family and the diplomatic corps in line with the spirit and letter of the “One UN” initiative. I would like also to thank the Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), my friend Emmanuel, for joining forces with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity with today's signing of a four-year memorandum of understanding. My gratitude goes also to host of our event today, Dentsu, and in particular the CEO and President Takashima-San for his hospitality and for demonstrating the importance of the business and biodiversity agenda to address the unprecedented loss of biodiversity compounded by climate change.

The fact is that we are squandering our natural heritage and thereby compromising the health, well-being and prosperity of the human race. Today's rate of species extinction may be 1,000 times higher than the natural rate. The Convention on Biological Diversity was born in Rio de Janeiro at the Earth Summit in June 1992 to respond to this unprecedented challenge by promoting simultaneously the threefold objective of the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of biological resources, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Ten years later, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in September 2002, world leaders agreed to significantly slow rates of biodiversity loss worldwide by 2010 as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. In 2006, this 2010 biodiversity target was incorporated as part of goal seven of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

However, the third edition of the Convention's Global Biodiversity Outlook, to be issued on 10 May here in Tokyo as well as in all major United Nations cities, will soon show that the target has not been met. Indeed, the 110 national reports received to date from Parties to the Convention demonstrate that biodiversity continues to be lost at an unprecedented rate and that

climate change has emerged as one of the major threats to biodiversity. The Strömstad meeting of the European Union held in September last year confirmed that the European Union will not meet its 2010 biodiversity target. A similar conclusion was reached at the Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue in October last year, as well as at the first ASEAN Biodiversity Conference held the same month in Singapore.

2010, the International Year of Biodiversity, provides a unique opportunity to reverse these trends, to create a global alliance of all sectors of society to save life on Earth. To quote once again from the Prime Minister's speech to the Diet:

“We must make full use of our wisdom and take concrete measures to bring about an appropriate ‘homosphere’, which is in harmony with the system called the Earth. As a society we must act to slow, even by a little bit, the dwindling of the time remaining for our planet. This is the responsibility that we, who live today, have towards the future. This year, Japan serves as chair of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In order to be able pass on this irreplaceable Earth to the generations of our children and grandchildren, we must transcend national borders and join forces.”

As incoming President of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in October in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan has demonstrated tremendous leadership. Our meeting today is a case in point. Japan's decision to offer to host the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was taken at Cabinet level on 17 January 2007. The kick-off seminar for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held two years after the decision adopted by the 6,000 participants in the Bonn conference to accept the generous offer of Japan to host the meeting. More than one thousand participants attending this event in Nagoya listened to the COP-10 song performed by 192 children of Nagoya, representing the then number of Parties to the Convention. One year before COP10, a festival was held in Nagoya with more than 20,000 participants. The COP-10 song was performed by 193 children with 3,000 people in attendance. The meeting was blessed with the presence of Tajima-San, the Vice Minister of the Environment, who played a leading role in the adoption in 2008 of the Japan Basic Law on biodiversity a unique national instrument for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Under the leadership of Japan, the G-8 environment ministers adopted in May 2008 the “Kobe Call to Action for Biodiversity”. At the same time, Japan announced four commitments to help world leaders implement with their partners the agreement reached in Kobe. Japan also announced the establishment of the Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue, “a global forum in order to promote information exchange, a dialogue, discussion and collaboration among various stakeholders including governments, the business sector, NGOs, researchers and international organizations”.

The Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue took place last fall and was a resounding success. The meeting was attended by 300 participants who shared their experiences and views on the major biodiversity agenda, especially private-sector engagement and the revision of the Strategic Plan of the Convention. They called for a continuous and comprehensive platform which could be a ground for discussion between various sectors. They also emphasized the importance of sustainable use of ecosystem services and the importance of the *Satoyama* Initiative, which was launched in Kobe in 2008. Overall, the Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue was a major step towards the

establishment of constructive and permanent dialogue between all stakeholders, including business, to meet the unprecedented challenges of the loss of biodiversity in time for Nagoya.

One immediate effect of the Kobe meeting was to create momentum for the third global conference on business and biodiversity, which took place last December in Indonesia. More than 200 companies, non-governmental organizations and governments from all over the world gathered in Jakarta recognizing that biodiversity-based business can be more profitable than other economic activities, and that biodiversity already forms the basis of many economic sectors. The Jakarta conference resulted in two major outputs: the adoption of the Jakarta Charter on Business and Biodiversity, and comments for a strategy to advance the 2020 business and biodiversity agenda. These two documents are serving as roadmaps to Nagoya, where a private-sector forum is set to be held, and for the ongoing celebrations of the International Year of Biodiversity.

The Declaration on Business and Biodiversity adopted by the Japanese Business Federation, Keidanren, was presented to the participants to the Jakarta meeting together with the guidelines of mainstreaming biodiversity in the business sector prepared by the Ministry of Environment of Japan in close consultations with all stakeholders including the representatives of the civil society. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Nagoya presented Messe Nagoya 2010 on biodiversity to be held in conjunction with the high-level segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. A high-level dialogue between chief executive officers and ministers will be convened.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be inspired and guided by the “Japanese Model”, the “Japanese way”. Under the leadership of the Mayor of Nagoya, a Summit on Cities and Biodiversity will be convened prior to the ministerial meeting. More than 300 mayors are expected to attend this unique event and adopt a plan of action on cities and biodiversity associated with the Singapore Urban Biodiversity Index currently being tested in a number of cities including Nagoya city. Under the leadership of the Diet and in close cooperation with GLOBE Japan, a meeting on parliamentarian and biodiversity will be also convened. Under the leadership of JICA a meeting of heads of bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies will be also convened together with a private donors forum on biodiversity. Under the leadership of AEON Environmental Foundation, the Japan International Biodiversity Award has been established, and the award ceremony will take place in Nagoya. Under the leadership of the Japan Civil Society Network for the Convention on Biological Diversity, established last year, a planet festival will take place in Nagoya and the children’s origami project has been initiated. A summit on youth will also take place and will assist in promoting *The Green Wave* initiative, aimed at reconnecting children and youth with nature. I should point out the tremendous work being done by the Forests Culture Association and its founding organization, the Asahi Shinbun, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment and the Forestry Agency, to strengthen *The Green Wave* campaign in Japan. I could not have been more pleased to hear of their plans to have 100,000 trees planted throughout the Japanese archipelago on the 2010 International Day for Biological Diversity. There is no better way to raise environmental awareness in our children, who are tomorrow’s policy makers and the future defenders of life on Earth.

The expected 10,000 participants in the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit will gather under the motto “Living in harmony with nature into the future” with the active engagement of all stakeholders and with a view of adopting a 2050 biodiversity vision and 2020 biodiversity mission. The 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the Convention to be adopted in Nagoya will be inspired and guided by the Japanese post-2010 strategy and will contain therefore not only targets

and sub-targets but also means of implementation and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The new Strategic Plan will also address the issue of climate change and biodiversity.

The report of the Convention's Second Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Climate Change and Biodiversity will be submitted to the Nagoya meeting. It shows that climate change presents a near unprecedented threat to the innumerable ecosystems that humans depend on for their health and well-being. Approximately 10 per cent of species assessed so far have an increasingly high risk of extinction for every 1°C rise in global mean surface temperature, a trend that is expected to hold true up to at least a 5°C increase.

At the same time, the AHTEG report showed that if climate change is a problem, biodiversity is part of the solution. It is expected that the Conference of the Parties will recommend a joint plan of action between the three Rio conventions to translate into reality the Copenhagen accord on REED plus. By affecting biodiversity, climate change will also affect the livelihoods of the poor people. As the Japanese author and essayist Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki said, "The problem of Nature is the problem of human life." That is why the 2010 International Day for Biological Diversity will be celebrated worldwide on 22 May under the theme "Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation". Therefore, the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing will be a powerful contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Nagoya Summit will be preceded in September by a high-level meeting on biodiversity in conjunction with the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly with the participation of Heads of State and Government. World leaders are expected to submit their vision to the Nagoya Summit on the post-2010 strategy, including the issues of climate change and biodiversity as well as biodiversity and poverty alleviation.

The Japanese Zen Buddhist teacher Dogen Zenji once said, "Something you want badly enough can always be gained. No matter how fierce the enemy...or how carefully guarded the treasure, there is always a means to the goal for the earnest seeker." It is this spirit that will guide the world when it assembles at the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit.

In recognition of this historic meeting and for the first time in the history of the multilateral conferences in general and the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environment treaties, I am delighted to announce that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has announced today the appointment of the Japanese singer MISIA as the Honorary Ambassador to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Please join me in applauding this decision and conveying through the team of MISIA present with us today our gratitude for accepting to join forces for protecting life on Earth as biodiversity is life, as the slogan of the International Year reminds us, biodiversity is OUR life.

Thank you for your kind attention.