



## STATEMENT

**BY MR. AHMED DJOGLAF**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE SECOND MEETING OF THE COMMISSION FOR  
BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEMS, FINANCE AND  
DEVELOPMENT**

*New York, 12 April 2010*

*Please check against delivery*



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COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen

Victor Hugo used to say that “no army in the world can stop an idea whose time has come”. I cannot think of a better idea whose time has come than your Commission. I cannot think of a better opportunity to present the result of your commission than 2010. I would like to convey to you Rebeca Grynspan, the UNDP Associate Administrator, for her vision and leadership in establishing the Commission for Biodiversity, Ecosystems, Finance and Development . I wanted also to convey to you my deep gratitude for your continued support in spite your heavy new assignment and for the kind invitation to attend this important meeting. Indeed , the finding of your Commission will be crucial for the success of the biodiversity agenda. Your Commission is providing answers to the question, “Why biodiversity and ecosystems are these are important for sustained growth and equity in Latin America and the Caribbean”.

Latin American and Caribbean countries enjoy an immense richness of biodiversity. South America has more than 40 per cent of the Earth’s biodiversity and more than one-quarter of its forests. Central America has only 0.5 per cent of the world’s land mass, yet has 10 per cent of its biodiversity. The Meso-American Reef, which stretches nearly 700 miles from the northern tip of Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula to the Bay Islands in northern Honduras, is the largest coral reef system in the Western Hemisphere and the second largest in the world, hosting more than 65 species of stony coral and more than 500 species of fish.

And yet these natural assets are quickly being degraded or lost. Last year’s IUCN Red List revealed that Latin American countries such as Colombia, Mexico and Ecuador have the largest numbers of threatened species worldwide. In addition, species in the Caribbean face the highest levels of risk—for example, more than 80 per cent of amphibians in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Jamaica are threatened or extinct, along with an astounding 92 per cent of amphibians in Haiti. Latin American and the Caribbean, and particularly their poorest inhabitants, will increasingly suffer as a result of such unprecedented biodiversity loss. For example, the productivity of the fisheries sector in Belize, Honduras and Mexico depends directly on the health of the adjacent barrier reef. If this reef continues to be degraded as result of climate change, pollution and overfishing, the large numbers small-scale fishermen in this region will lose their main source of livelihood.

Your Commission is not only an idea whose time has come, but 2010 is the best timing for presenting its results. Indeed, 2010 coincides with the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity, the preparation and adoption in Nagoya of the new Strategic Plan of the Convention for 2011-2020, the 10-year review of the Millennium Development Goals which will coincide with the New York MDG Summit as well as the high-level meeting during the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to biodiversity with participation of Heads of State and Government.

Your Commission complements and builds on the study on The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), which will be submitted to the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit as well as the New York Biodiversity Summit. 2010 will also coincide with the celebration on 22 May of the International Day for Biological Diversity under the theme “Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation”. A Heads of State and Government panel on the same theme is being suggested during the New York Summit on 22 September. The presentation of the findings of your Commission together with the TEEB report will be crucial to the success of this interactive panel and mainstreaming at the highest political level of biodiversity into the development cooperation agenda.

The adoption of the new Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 in Nagoya as well as its integration into national biodiversity strategies and action plans in the period 2011-2012 offers a unique opportunity to translate the findings of your Commission into global and national policies. The discussions at the Nagoya Biodiversity City Summit of a 2011-2020 plan of action on cities and biodiversity, including the Urban Biodiversity Index, for adoption at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, offer a unique opportunity to translate at local level the findings of your Commission. Likewise, the adoption in Nagoya at the multi-year plan of action on South-South Cooperation following its discussion at the First Forum of the G77 and China on “Biodiversity for Development”. The Nagoya protocol on access and benefit-sharing to be adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention offers a unique opportunity to translate into legal terms the spirit and letter of the mandate of your Commission. Lastly, the Pavilion on Ecosystem-based Management of Climate Change to be organized in partnership with the three Rio conventions in Nagoya and then Cancun during the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change, and Seoul during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification and during Rio+20 in June 2010 offer a unique opportunity for the promoting widely and dissemination to the larger audience the findings of your Commission.

We in the Secretariat look forward to our enhanced collaboration and strengthened partnership in our common journey to Nagoya and beyond. To this end, the part-time liaison officer with UNDP who will join the Secretariat in Montreal in June this year will have a key role to play.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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