



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

BY MR AHMED DJOGHLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE ROLE OF
AGROBIODIVERSITY IN ADDRESSING HUNGER AND
CLIMATE CHANGE:
*THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY***

**13 SEPTEMBER 2010
CORDOBA, SPAIN**



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

Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero has said: “My idea of Spain is that of a country committed to the environment and the preservation of its landscape, its natural riches and its oceans, because only in conservation of these resources resides our hope for the future.”

In biodiversity lies our hope for the future – that is the theme of this 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. At the start of the year, Spain put the interlinked problems of biodiversity loss and climate change at the top of the agenda for its European Union presidency. Now, eight months later, here we are in great city of Cordoba to encourage dialogue among public institutions, universities, scientists, civil society and the private sector on the ways to combat biodiversity loss and climate change and thereby alleviate hunger and poverty.

Our main task is to collaboratively define priorities and policies at international, national and local levels. As you know, one of the key results of this meeting will be a declaration with recommendations that will be transmitted to the September 22nd summit of the United Nations General Assembly on biodiversity to be held in New York. Given the historical nature of the New York summit, our task at this conference could not be more important.

In New York roundtable discussions will be held on post-2010 biodiversity targets, the links between climate change and biodiversity, and the importance of biodiversity to poverty alleviation, development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Summit will provide a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the global biodiversity crisis and the urgent need for stronger action to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity. It will provide an occasion for the world’s 192 heads of state and government to lead a sustained global response to the continuing erosion of our biological resources.

More than ever the mobilization of the international community is required to meet the challenges of the unprecedented loss of biodiversity compounded by climate change. As the third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook showed last May, today species continue to go extinct at up to 1,000 times the natural background rate. Based on 120 national reports from Parties to the Convention as well as the scientific literature, GBO3 warns that massive further loss of biodiversity is projected to occur before the end of this century and that ecosystems are approaching tipping points beyond which irreversible degradation will take place, with dire consequences for human wellbeing.

That is what makes today’s conference so important, as well as the New York Summit and the Convention’s upcoming COP10 in Nagoya, Japan. In Nagoya our 193 Parties will finalize a 2020 biodiversity target and a 2050 biodiversity vision as a part of our 2011-2020 strategic plan for stopping biodiversity loss in the future. This will be done with the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including youth, local and indigenous authorities, parliamentarians, cooperative agencies and the private sector.

There is no more time to lose if we are to effectively address the biodiversity and climate crises. I therefore commend you for your participation in today’s meeting. The great philosopher and native son of Cordoba Ibn Rushd, or Averroes, said that “In nature there is nothing superfluous.” Let me add: With so much of nature’s bounty being lost today, it is now or never for the future of humankind on Earth.

Thank you for your kind attention.