



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE CITY BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT

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

Mayors of the World,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

More than two years ago, when the planning of this City Summit began, I challenged the Mayor of Nagoya and the Governor of Aichi to convene a parallel meeting at COP10 in which we would have at least one top sub-national and local government officer for each of the Parties to the Convention. I am glad to report that they clearly went beyond my challenge: we have 260 mayors, governors and top executive officers from more than 70 different countries here with us today. I feel humbled, and grateful, for this remarkable achievement.

Sub-national and local governments, assembled here today in the city of Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, have one message to our 193 Parties: we are ready to support you in implementing the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan. We understand the pressing need to protect biodiversity, this core asset for the well-being of our citizens. May the Parties be inspired by this example, towards the adoption of a strong and coherent Plan for collaboration.

I would also like to pay tribute to the many organizations that have allowed this Summit to be so successful:

Our long-standing partner ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), who through its Local Action on Biodiversity programme has managed to mobilize its more than 1,200 members on this subject, and who has collaborated with the Secretariat on publications, events, and partnership development. Today, ICLEI is at the forefront of integrated solutions in projects all over the globe, addressing climate change, land management and biodiversity, as well as development and poverty alleviation, as demonstrated by its participation in the Rio Conventions' Ecosystems Pavilion that will go to the next COPs of our sister Conventions and to Rio + 20.

Our sister UN agencies, UN-HABITAT and UNESCO, and their respective partners, who have collaborated with us on publications, events and on-the-ground projects, and with whom we plan to expand our collaboration.

IUCN, who has engaged, through its Countdown 2010 movement, so many local and sub-national governments and who will strengthen, in the near future, its strategic engagement with these levels of government.

The URBIO network, who has organized, in Erfurt in 2008, and now last November 2009, here in Nagoya, the largest scientific gathering on local and urban biodiversity, providing Parties with much needed information and technical assistance to implement the Plan of Action on Sub-national Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities before the Parties at COP 10.

UNU's Institute of Advanced Studies, who is dedicating research efforts to further investigate the links between national and sub-national action on biodiversity.

And last but not least, the four cities of the CBD Advisory Committee on Cities and Biodiversity, who have either hosted COPs or our own Secretariat. Last Friday, at a side event, we heard all the progress made by Curitiba, thanks in large part to its former Mayor Carlos Richa

and current Mayor Luciano Ducci, and the continued and exemplary engagement toward biodiversity on the part of Montreal, Nagoya and Bonn.

The CBD initiative on this subject is open to all of you – we look forward to exploring, with you, stronger and more effective ways to take the message and the challenges of the Convention to the local level.

The importance, for the future of this Convention, of the engagement demonstrated by sub-national and local governments in this City Summit cannot be overstated. Over the last 30 years, most regions and countries have seen a gradual redistribution of mandates towards more local, and decentralized, governance. Indeed it is well known that more than 50% (and up to 60% by the deadline of the Strategic Plan, in 2020) of the global population today lives in urban areas, and that cities, while occupying only around 2% of the Earth's surface, are responsible for up to 75% of all natural resource use. This situation becomes more significant when we reflect that over 70% of the growth in urban population over the next 20 years is expected to happen in Asia and Africa, where a considerable percentage of surviving biodiversity is located.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me here to pay professional and personal tribute to Aichi Prefecture, through Governor Kanda, and to Mayor Kawamura of Nagoya, for three achievements:

First, for their collaboration with the Government of Japan in the most sustainable COP ever organized, with attention to the smallest detail in recycling, operations, procurement policies, integration of biodiversity into event organization, and awareness-raising of its citizens who have so warmly received us.

Second, for this exemplary City Biodiversity Summit 2010, a unique platform that brings together more than 650 participants from all corners of the world to manifest their support for the Convention and invite Parties to meet them halfway, to promote synergies and collaboration that will take the Convention to the local level – and to success.

Third, for the way in which Aichi Prefecture and the city of Nagoya are acting as role models, in Japan and for the rest of the world, on how to integrate biodiversity into day-to-day operations, and to “live in harmony with nature, into the future”.

Indeed, this COP is, in and by itself, the best demonstration of what cooperation between national, sub-national and local governments can do when they work hand in hand. The fact that so many Parties are attending, particularly in the upcoming plenary, is a testimony of their engagement and support, and I thank them personally.

Sub-national and local authorities play an increasingly critical role in the next steps of this Convention. As Executive Secretary, I feel privileged to witness this strong and ever-growing movement. Thanks to all of you, I am sure we will have an extremely productive Summit. I look forward to the concluding event in 2010, in Kanazawa city, Ishikawa Prefecture in December, and I hope to see you all in New Delhi in 2012, for the next City Summit, to take stock of progress made over the next two years.

Thank you for your kind attention.