



**OPENING REMARKS BY**

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**to the**

**CITIES FOR LIFE SUMMIT**

**Hyderabad, India  
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**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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Honorable Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh;

Honorable Minister of Municipal Administration & Urban Development of Andhra Pradesh;

His Worship the Mayor of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation;

Distinguished guests on the dais;

Ladies and gentlemen:

As Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, allow me to bid you *welcome* to the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD! The City of Hyderabad and the State of Andhra Pradesh are, along with the government of India, of course, not only the hosts of Cities for Life, but also of this entire Conference. I therefore thank you, sincerely, for the efforts that have gone into making COP 11 such a success so far.

This biennial meeting exists primarily to serve the 193 parties to the Convention – national governments and the European Union. However, the parties will not be able to achieve the objectives of the Convention and the Aichi targets alone. Local and subnational governments are increasingly recognized as key partners in this endeavor. This Summit, attended by so many distinguished local and subnational leaders from around the world and from India, is another very strong indication of the will of governments, of all levels, to work together. The past several years have seen a considerable increase in such cooperation on biodiversity issues; and an increase in focus on this area by the CBD. The latter is demonstrated by the level of partnership between the Secretariat of the CBD and ICLEI – the global network of local governments that co-organized this event. Considering the challenges before us, in putting a stop to global biodiversity loss, it is truly encouraging to consider the collective potential of local and subnational governments. Together we *can* make a significant difference. It is a pleasure and, indeed, an honor to have you with us.

After these short words I must bid you farewell, to attend to some other duties, but I will be back late this morning for two additional, important, interventions. Until then, and for the next two

days, I wish you a productive and inspiring Summit. I look forward to learning of its outcomes when representatives among you report to the High Level Segment of the COP later this week.

Thank you for your interest, your attendance and your commitment. And again, welcome, to COP 11.