



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

to the

**SUBREGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP TO ADDRESS INVASIVE
ALIEN SPECIES AND TO ACHIEVE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGET 9 IN THE
ARAB REGION**

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Excellency,
Distinguished representatives and participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address this Capacity-building Workshop on Invasive Alien Species to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 in the Arab region. In 2010, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 with 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Among the 20 global Targets, Target 9 is specifically set to addressing the issue of invasive alien species, and it states: “*By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.*”.

Since the Strategic Plan and Aichi Biodiversity Targets were adopted by the COP, Secretariat has organized series of workshops for the CBD National Focal Points to update the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) as a strategic instrument for implementing the Strategic Plan and achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This workshop is to follow up the NBSAP workshop took place in Beirut, Lebanon in 2011 for this region.

Under the CBD, Parties have been urged to implement “*the Guiding Principles for Prevention, Introduction and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species*” (the Guiding Principles). During the process of developing, revising and implementing the NBSAPs, Parties are also urged to consider the threats posed by invasive alien species. To do so, Parties agreed to develop and implement the national invasive species strategies and action plans as a part of NBSAPs. However, in many countries, developing and implementing such a strategy to address invasive alien species is challenging.

One of the challenges is the need to collaborate among different sectors within and outside the Government. This workshop is to support Parties in conducting the process of developing national invasive species strategies and action plans in close collaboration with the National Plant Protection Organizations, in order to promote cooperation between the environment sector and the agricultural sector. In addition, communication between the neighbouring countries and exchange of information on their best practices are expected to facilitate harmonization of national strategies and creation of synergy between the authorities for the CBD and for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

At the international level, standards and guidance have been set to prevent, manage and control those unwanted organisms crossing the boundaries of ecosystems and becoming invasive. The IPPC plays an important role in standard setting and implementation. In fact, some countries which are advanced in achieving Target 9 are also champions in the implementation of the IPPC. I am hoping that this workshop facilitates the process for the two national authorities responsible for the CBD and the IPPC to exchange ideas of collaboration and produce tangible national invasive species strategies and action plans. In this way, the next champion in achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 will be the Arab region, where diverse cultures are crossing every day as they have done so in each century in history.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of United Arab Emirates for hosting this workshop in the beautiful cosmopolitan metropolis where diverse businesses and

cultures from all over the world can meet. I would like to acknowledge with great thanks the Japan Biodiversity Fund, which allowed all of us to gather in this workshop today. My heartfelt thanks also go to various collaborators, including the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention, the League of Arab States and all colleagues.

I wish you a successful and fruitful workshop, and encourage every participant to become a champion in mainstreaming biodiversity.