



STATEMENT BY

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ON THE OCCASION OF

**INCEPTION WORKSHOP FOR THE PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE RATIFICATION
AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT
SHARING**

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**Convention on
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Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to this inception workshop for the UNEP GEF Medium Sized Project to support the ratification and entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing

As you all aware, the tenth Conference of the Parties to the CBD, adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) to the Convention on Biological Diversity on 29 October 2010. The Protocol supports the further implementation of the Convention's third objective: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The Nagoya Protocol obtained 92 signatures by the closing date for signature and as of today, 16 Parties to the Convention, including Ethiopia, the host of this workshop, have deposited their instruments of ratification or accession. We are also aware that a number of countries are in the process of finalising their national level procedures towards ratification. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate these countries for sending a clear signal of their commitment to the entry into force and implementation of the Protocol. We are confident that the Protocol will enter into force in time for the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be hosted by the Republic of Korea in October 2014. I therefore encourage other countries to follow suit by expediting their national processes towards ratifying or acceding to the Protocol, which will also ensure that they can sit as Parties during the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (COP-MOP 1) and play an important role in influencing the decision making process for further development and implementation of the protocol.

The entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol is of strategic importance as it will provide greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources, creating a framework that promotes the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge while strengthening the opportunities for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use. Hence, the Protocol will create new incentives to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, and further enhance the contribution of biodiversity to sustainable development and human wellbeing. Thus effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol also contributes to achieving post 2015 development goals and for realizing "*the future we want*,".

As you would recall, the African Ministerial Conference of the Environment (AMCEN), at its 14th ordinary session convened in Arusha, Tanzania, from 12 to 14 September 2012, called on African countries that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to and implement the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefit Arising from their Utilization

Furthermore and in the same spirit, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki- Moon, sent a letter to all Heads of States last month highlighting the valuable contribution that the Protocol can make to sustainable development. In his letter, the Secretary General urged Heads of States to therefore to take steps to ensure the ratification or accession to the Nagoya Protocol at the earliest so that the international community can move on to the implementation phase.

This workshop is thus very timely as it specifically aims at facilitating discussions, exchange of views and experiences with a view to developing strategies and options to effectively address the needs and priorities of countries in their efforts towards the ratification/accession and the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. This workshop will be also an opportunity for countries participating in this UNEP GEF Medium Sized Project to acquire the necessary knowledge and tools to carry out activities aimed at expediting the finalisation of national ratification processes.

As you are well aware, the Nagoya Protocol's success will require effective implementation by Parties at the domestic level. The Nagoya Protocol provides flexibility: the challenge is to determine the best approach to implement the Protocol in order to meet common objectives while taking into account national interests.

Allow me to take a moment to extend my wholehearted appreciation to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), which is implementing and executing this Project. UNEP's efforts under this project and other initiatives to support the ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol further attest to its unwavering commitment to advancing the third objective and the overall implementation of the Convention

Finally, I would like to express once again the Secretariat's sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for hosting this workshop. This further reiterates and confirms Ethiopia's leadership and continued commitment towards the early entry into force and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

I wish you all very fruitful and productive deliberations for a successful workshop and as always the Secretariat stands ready to support your efforts on this issue.