



STATEMENT BY

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

on the occasion of

**THE THIRD MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF THE NAGOYA
PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING**

PYEONGCHANG, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Vice-Minister Jeong Yeon-man,

Governor Choi Moon-soon,

Janet Low, Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Committee,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. It is an honour to be here with all of you today to continue our important work in advancing the preparations for entry into force of the Protocol and for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

As we begin, I must mention that we are missing one familiar face here this week: our Co-Chair Fernando Casas. Unfortunately, for personal reasons, Fernando was unable to travel to Pyeongchang to take part in this meeting. While we will miss his presence here, we may rest assured that he remains committed to the process. We are very grateful to Janet for her willingness to chair the meeting herself and I know she has the full support of all of you who, I am sure, will do your utmost to work in a cooperative spirit to assist in the smooth proceeding of the meeting.

Dear colleagues,

We have made great strides in the 15 months since the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held in India. We have received an additional 22 ratifications of the Protocol and today, the Protocol boasts a total of 29 ratifications, including countries from all five regions, demonstrating its global appeal and significance. In addition, I understand that the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guyana, Guatemala, Liberia, Madagascar, Namibia, Niger, Pakistan, Samoa and Yemen are at an advanced stage of completing their national requirements and may very soon deposit their instrument of ratification/accession. We are also aware that many more of you are working very hard domestically to take the necessary steps for your country to ratify the Protocol and we expect further ratifications to come in the weeks ahead. With the momentum of the Protocol building towards its entry into force, I urge you all to continue your efforts towards ratification and similarly urge those countries that have not already done so to take the necessary steps to ratify the Nagoya Protocol.

With this growing momentum, we are very confident that the Protocol will enter into force in time for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to be held concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in October this year, right here in Pyeongchang. Those who have ratified will sit as Parties during MOP-1 and participate in the decision-making at what will clearly be one of the most significant moments in the history of the Convention on

Biological Diversity. You will also stand to benefit from the legal certainty and transparency that the Protocol can bring.

The past 15 months have also seen the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, send a letter to Heads of State and Government highlighting the valuable contribution that the Nagoya Protocol can make to sustainable development and urging ratification of the Protocol at the earliest opportunity. Such high-level support has undoubtedly contributed to the growing momentum for the ratification of the Protocol. Also, as we all know, the Secretary General is himself from the Republic of Korea and I trust that his own country will soon be welcomed among the Parties that have ratified the Protocol!

The Protocol was also the subject of a special event in the Second Committee of the General Assembly held in New York, in October 2013. The event brought together representatives from a number of different parts of the United Nations to brief the Second Committee on the implementation of the Convention, including actions undertaken to promote access and benefit-sharing. In addition, in December 2013, the General Assembly, in resolution [A/RES/68/214](#), invited Parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol so as to ensure its early entry into force and its implementation.

We have also been busy undertaking the activities that you have requested from your Secretariat, including organizing expert meetings and capacity-building workshops, and developing the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House. Many of you had the opportunity to participate in the ABS Clearing-House workshop yesterday and I hope that we can count on all of you to participate in the testing of the Clearing-House to ensure it becomes a tool that meets your needs and serves the critical purpose it plays in the implementation of the Protocol.

For all these activities, we are, as always, extremely grateful to donors who provide the necessary resources to support the work. At this juncture, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Governments of Denmark, Germany, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for their generous contributions which have enabled the participation in this meeting of representatives from a significant number of countries. In addition, I would particularly like to thank the Government of Japan for their generous overall financial support and commitment to the Intergovernmental process of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing

Distinguished delegates,

We are also most grateful to the Republic of Korea, its people and its Government, as well as to the local authorities of Gangwon province, for their invaluable efforts in making the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee possible. The beautiful setting of the Alpensia Convention Center coupled with the stunning landscape of the Taebaek Mountains undoubtedly will provide us with an inspiring environment, which will greatly facilitate our work. Our gracious hosts have indeed honored us with a magnificent venue for the meeting.

I also wish to pay tribute to their commitment to biodiversity. We are all aware of the active role the Republic of Korea has played in recent years in hosting international environmental conferences and we are very excited that this role will continue in October of this year when they host the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and, we believe, the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.

Beyond this, however, the Republic of Korea has been taking concrete actions towards the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. As one example, I would note the country's proposal for the designation of two Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems. The Republic of Korea continues to hold a significant number of agricultural and fisheries heritage systems that represent the people, knowledge systems and richness of nature and landscapes. It is precisely these types of systems that the Nagoya Protocol seeks to support and maintain.

Distinguished delegates,

In 1992, when the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted, it represented a fundamental shift in the international governance of genetic resources. The result was the establishment of the principles that access *shall* be based on prior informed consent, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits *shall* be established in mutually agreed terms. These principles are now at the heart of the Nagoya Protocol and we must do our utmost to ensure that they are upheld in order for access and benefit-sharing to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The significance of the Nagoya Protocol has also been recognized in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, specifically in Aichi Biodiversity Target 16, which provides that by 2015, the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation. We are well on the way to meeting this target. With the number of ratifications continuing to mount, the Protocol should enter into force in October 2014, months before the target date. I know we are all striving to make the Protocol operational and I believe that as countries begin to share information through the ABS Clearing-House, we will be able to declare that we have achieved Target 16.

In this regard, the week ahead will be critical. As we enter the final stages leading to the Protocol's entry into force, it is important for us to build upon the progress we have made in the first two meetings of the Intergovernmental Committee. Your recommendations this week will address key issues that will lay the foundations for the effective implementation of the Protocol. As this Intergovernmental Committee takes its final steps, I urge you all to continue your work in the spirit of cooperation and compromise that has enabled us to reach this point. As the proposed programme budget for the biennium following the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol is only a draft estimate which will be adjusted taking into account the decisions and guidance emanating from the Intergovernmental Committee and the Conference of the Parties, in-depth discussions on the quantum of the budget will be undertaken at the first meeting of the Conference of the

Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, with an initial discussion at the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee.

Distinguished delegates,

Against this background, I wish to remind you that during and following our meeting in Pyeongchang this week, the Secretariat stands ready to assist you as we move toward the entry into force and implementation of the Protocol. With these remarks, I wish you engaging and fruitful deliberations and a successful outcome at the end of the week.

I thank you for your attention.