



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

**CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL CAPACITY-
BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-
SHARING**

Minsk, Belarus, 31 March – 4 April 2014



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Deputy Minister Galina Volchuga

Distinguished Participants,

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all to the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia sub-regional capacity-building workshop on the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

It is heartening to see here a diverse group of participants from this region, including representatives from governments, international organizations, indigenous and local communities, as well as representatives from NGOs. This workshop validates the importance which the countries and organizations you represent accord to ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol through the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets. I would like to thank the Global Environment Facility and the European Union for providing the financial support for this workshop. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to our hosts, the Government of Belarus, for their support in making this workshop possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Minsk provides a perfect setting for our work this week. This beautiful capital city of Belarus and its serene environment provides us great inspiration and I believe the spirit and enthusiasm of your commitment will play a central role in facilitating the follow up actions and targets identified at this workshop so that the Nagoya Protocol is effectively implemented that contributes to sustainable development.

The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing provides a transparent international legal framework to advance the implementation of the Convention's third objective: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. One of the many benefits of the Nagoya Protocol is that it provides greater legal certainty, clarity and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge by establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources and for ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. By strengthening the opportunities for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use, the Protocol will also create incentives to conserve biological diversity, sustainably use its components, and further enhance the contribution of biological diversity to sustainable development and human well-being.

The Protocol will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession by Parties to the CBD. I am pleased to inform you that the momentum is building to bring the Protocol into force in time to hold the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. To date, 29 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have deposited their instruments of ratification or accession and a number of countries are in the process of finalizing their national processes towards ratification. Following the positive outcomes of the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol (ICNP-3), we are very confident that the Protocol will receive the remaining 21 signatures in the coming months thereby reaching the 50 needed for the Nagoya Protocol's entry into force.

In this sub-region, Albania and Tajikistan are the two countries that have ratified/ accessed the Protocol. I am very happy to learn that our host country Belarus has initiated its national process, and Poland and Czech Republic are at an advance stage. Following the approval of the European Parliament Plenary for the EU regulation as well as EU's ratification, I hope some of you ratify the protocol in the coming three months.

I take this opportunity to urge all countries in this sub-region that have not yet done so to expedite their national processes towards ratifying or acceding to the Protocol so that they can participate as Parties in the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (COP-MOP 1) and play an important role in influencing the first decisions that will guide the implementation of this important international instrument. Please use the opportunity provided by this workshop to develop road maps and action plans towards the ratification and implementation of the Protocol.

As stated by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki- Moon, in his letter sent last April to all Heads of States, the Protocol will make valuable contribution to sustainable development. 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.. 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.

Distinguished Participants,

In 1992, when the CBD 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.

It is thus very important to take steps to ensure its early entry into force so that the international community can move on to the implementation phase and contribute not only to achieving the objectives of the Convention and Aichi target 16 but also to achieving sustainable development and the well-being of our planet.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we embark on a week of learning and sharing experiences, I thank you in advance for your commitment and dedication to the Nagoya Protocol – an instrument of utmost importance in ensuring the equitable and sustainable use of the world’s precious biological resources. I trust that this week will be a very positive experience for both the Secretariat and participants and we are excited to know more about the circumstances, needs and priorities of all countries and groups represented here today.

This week will also include a day of hands-on training of the ABS Clearing-House, providing an opportunity to improve understanding of the Clearing-House and enable active participation by building capacity to both submit information and make use of the tools available through the Clearing House. A fully functional ABS Clearing-House is a vital component in the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 16 which provides that by 2015 the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation.

Distinguished Participants,

This workshop aims to promote awareness and understanding of the Protocol’s requirements and to strengthen your capacity to ratify/accede to the Protocol and prepare for its effective implementation with the view to contributing to the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 16.

The workshop provides the opportunity for practical outcomes which will pave the way forward for the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia region by planning for the next steps, with clear and

concise road maps and fostering regional and sub-regional cooperation on the implementation of the Protocol through exchange of information on existing and potential opportunities for collaboration. This will lay the groundwork for a solid and strong foundation upon which we can build on through future implementation.

I sincerely believe your experience this week will provide beneficial through engaging in hands-on training, sharing experiences and information while at the same time providing pertinent information to allow the Secretariat to gain greater insight into the role of the Nagoya Protocol in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. With this important region on board and moving forward in processes towards ratification/accession of the Nagoya Protocol, the global community moves closer to achieving sustainable development providing for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components.

With this in mind, I wish you a fruitful and successful workshop and look forward for concrete practical outcomes from the workshop.

Thank you for your attention!