



**STATEMENT BY DR. CRISTIANA PAȘCA PALMER
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**ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE
SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION
9 – 13 JULY 2018
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Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, in Montreal.

Congratulations to you, Mr. Sabino Ogwal, on assuming your duties as Chair. Your leadership is pivotal in taking forward these challenging, yet necessary, issues on the agenda. You and the Bureau have my full support and that of the Secretariat as you carry out this important task.

Vice-Minister Carlos Hurtado, thank you for your inspirational remarks. Recent developments demonstrate Mexico's continued leadership in advancing the outcomes of the Cancun Biodiversity Conference.

Let me also acknowledge our honorary guest, Dr. Roberta Bondar, Canada's first female astronaut and the world's first neurologist in space. She has had remarkable achievements in space and on Earth. Her work embodies the delicate balance we need to have with Earth, nature and our landscapes. Dr. Bondar, we look forward to your keynote address this morning.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The strength of our process lies in the full and diverse representation of Parties. I therefore wish to express my thanks to the Governments of Canada, Finland, Japan, and Sweden and the European Union as well as Tourisme Montréal. Their contributions enabled the Secretariat to support the participation of Parties from least developed countries and small island developing States. Moreover, the Governments of Australia, Finland, New Zealand and Norway have supported the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities. Through these means, the Secretariat has extended support to 85 developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, and to 10 representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, to attend the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body.

Other Parties and partners have also provided significant support to the Convention and its Protocols. In particular, the Governments of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund) and the Republic of Korea, and the European Union as well as the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland have contributed to support capacity-building activities.

And let me also mark our appreciation to the Governments of Canada and Quebec for their continued support as the host of the Secretariat in Montreal.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before I proceed, I would like to pay tribute to our dear colleague, Olivier de Munck, who passed away on 21 February 2018 after a battle with cancer. Olivier served the Secretariat for more than 19 years as a

programme officer for the clearing-house mechanism. He was a very hard-working and dedicated colleague who always strove for perfection and achievement of results. He will be greatly missed.

Distinguished delegates,

As we get into the substance of our work, I wish to highlight two relevant points: first, the timing of the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and, second, the importance of the issues under consideration.

The second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation is taking place at a critical juncture in the history of the Convention. This year, we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, which we will mark at the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Sharm-el Sheikh, Egypt. A number of countries and organizations all around the world have already embarked on events to mark this quarter-century anniversary. In Montreal, we celebrated with notable speakers representing all levels of government in Canada, indigenous representatives, civil society and numerous members of the diplomatic corps.

This anniversary, along with the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, are two immediate examples, which offer the Subsidiary Body on Implementation opportunities for intergovernmental course corrections and renewed political commitment to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Given the two remaining years of the current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body also offers a unique opportunity to instil further engagement from a range of stakeholders to advance the global biodiversity agenda. Under agenda item 3, the Subsidiary Body will review progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan, including progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

In this twenty-fifth anniversary year, let us acknowledge the Nagoya–Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which entered into force this past March. This Supplementary Protocol provides international rules and procedures to be followed in case of damage to biological diversity caused by living modified organisms. Its entry into force is a step towards achieving the objectives of the Cartagena Protocol and of the Convention.

I congratulate all Parties that have ratified the Supplementary Protocol and urge those that have not yet done so to ratify it as soon as possible. I also encourage Parties to scale and accelerate actions to implement this important instrument at the national level. With the support of donors, the Secretariat together with partner organizations will continue to actively support Parties in this regard.

After almost four years following the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, this second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation provides a first opportunity to assess and review the progress made in its implementation, based on an analysis of information contained in the interim national reports and the ABS Clearing-House. In this regard, the number of Parties to the Protocol has increased to 107, and more than 60 countries are working towards becoming a Party. Interim national reports have been submitted by 75 per cent of Parties to the Protocol to date, and the number of national records published in the ABS Clearing-House has almost tripled in the last year. I congratulate all countries that have ratified or acceded to the Nagoya Protocol and urge those that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible.

Further efforts are still needed, though, to make the Nagoya Protocol fully operational. Indeed, many countries are yet to establish institutional structures as well as legislative, administrative or policy measures for implementing the Protocol at the national level, and further assistance is needed.

Distinguished delegates,

In accordance with the mandate of this body, there are several procedural matters that the Subsidiary Body on Implementation will be addressing in relation to both the Convention and its Protocols. As in December 2016 in Cancun, you will recall that, for the first time, the meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held concurrently with the meetings of the Parties to the two Protocols. Therefore, during the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, you will be reviewing the experience in holding such meetings concurrently and making recommendations for their improvement. In the course of this week, you will also be reviewing the

effectiveness of the processes and structures under the Convention and its Protocols and considering ways of further enhancing the integration of implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.

Following the discussions last December in the meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, you will also consider how to further integrate the work on indigenous and traditional knowledge into the Convention and the Protocols and further enhance the full participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in our bodies.

Let us recall, that a core function of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation is to “develop recommendations on how to strengthen mechanisms to support implementation of the Convention”. This includes actions and institutional mechanisms and measures related to facilitating the mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors, fostering synergies and cooperation with other conventions, including the biodiversity-related conventions, international organizations and partnerships, and enhancing mechanisms to facilitate the review of implementation, among other things.

The Subsidiary Body on Implementation will also have an opportunity to consider a number of issues which cut across the Convention and its Protocols, such as resource mobilization, guidance to the financial mechanism, national reporting, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism, and further identify ways and means of increasing efficiencies through an integrated approach to their implementation.

This leads me to note successfully concluded negotiations for the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF-7). On 25 April this year, governments collectively pledged US\$ 4.1 billion to fund activities for the next four-year period. Of that amount, almost US\$ 1.3 billion has been programmed for biodiversity, representing nearly 32 per cent of the total GEF-7 replenishment. My sincere thanks to all governments that have made pledges for the GEF-7 replenishment.

The GEF-7 programming directions and resource allocation proposals, and some of the policy recommendations approved by the GEF Council at its 54th meeting, in June, in Da Nang, Viet Nam, also took into account the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties, including the four-year framework of programme priorities. The policy recommendations and programming directions aim to catalyse a transformation of systems that drive environmental degradation, to increase resource mobilization through private sector investments and to support transformational change through mainstreaming of environmental considerations and the promotion of programmatic approaches and multifocal area projects. Beyond GEF, we are collectively working to mobilize financial resources from all sources to implement the Convention and its Protocols. However, efforts are still needed in this regard, particularly in the light of the challenge to achieve transformative change for biodiversity. You will be considering this issue under item 8, on resource mobilization.

As requested by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meetings, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting will consider a report by the Secretariat on the status of contributions to the Trust Fund to facilitate the participation of Parties in processes under the Convention and the possibilities for and modalities of private sector contributions in supporting this Trust Fund. Currently, as our voluntary funds are unfilled, I appeal to donor countries to provide resources to allow for the representation of all Parties and a number of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities to participate in the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Sharm El-Sheikh. The process for arranging the travel for participants starts in less than three months. Therefore, we will need these resources as soon as possible, preferably before the end of August.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Your recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on an inclusive, comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will chart the course to the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and build momentum towards the vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050. Through different means, there should be relevant engagement of various stakeholders and sectors in the development of the post-2020 framework, with options and inputs that could foster further commitments and enhance implementation.

We are reminded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, that pathways for the future need to be

systemic, inclusive and transformative to benefit human well-being, the economy, and the planet. Furthermore, the outcomes of recommendation 21/1 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on scenarios for the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity provide us with orientations for action to advance towards transformational change for biodiversity.

The Seminar on Transformative Change for Biodiversity organized yesterday by the Secretariat, with the generous support of the Government of Switzerland, also facilitated an exchange of views and discussions on challenges and opportunities relating to systems transitions in the biodiversity agenda. I invite you to review the outcomes of the two dialogues on transformational change and other background documents, which are available as information documents for the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

Dear colleagues,

The science is clear and the alarm bells are ringing! The loss of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems continue at unprecedented rates.

We can see how our humanity's "Titanic" is moving faster and faster towards hitting the iceberg.

As biodiversity and ecosystems provide the essential infrastructure supporting life on Earth and human development, it should come naturally that considerations about biodiversity are placed at the centre of economic and social assessments, as well as political decision-making. The stark reality, though, is that biodiversity is far from being a prime preoccupation in the circles outside the community of experts.

As humans, we like to think that we are above nature's fray, but, in reality, we are all part of the delicate, interconnected matrix we call Earth. The difference is that, out of all the species, we have the greatest power to alter that balance. The good news is, as the most powerful agents in our ecosystems, we also possess the ability to restore balance—if we put our minds to it. I believe that, through collaborative efforts, mutual partnerships and joint commitments, we can harness our collective wisdom, expertise, technologies and resources to advance the global biodiversity agenda, to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals, but, most importantly, to preserve the great diversity and health of our planet.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce a new member of my staff, Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, who will serve as Secretary of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation this week and provide you with support.

I thank you for your attention and, together with the Secretariat, stand ready to support you in your discussions.
