Statement by Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema,

Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

on the occasion of the opening of the

Second Global Thematic Dialogue for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Online, 1 December 2020

Distinguished participants,
Representatives of the world's indigenous peoples and local communities,
Dear friends,

Let me start by thanking you for the lovely indigenous ceremony that opened this virtual dialogue.

May your Elders' spirit and wisdom guide us through this challenging time. We respectfully acknowledge the traditional peoples of this territory and their ancestors.

It is my great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all. And I thank you for joining us electronically from various parts of the world.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Campaign for Nature for their generous support in the realization of this second dialogue in virtual mode.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, today's dialogue is being held during some very challenging and difficult circumstances. And yet, despite being significantly affected by the pandemic, your efforts to protect nature remain tireless.

Indigenous peoples and local communities have demonstrated great resilience through the collective and local actions being taken in your territories, lands and waters. Your collective and local efforts, based on your sustainable lifestyles, contribute significantly to each of the three objectives of the Convention: conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing. And, importantly, your coherent actions taken at local levels are not disconnected from your efforts at the international level.

I congratulate you for successfully completing your regional discussions over the last month on the new post-2020 global biodiversity framework. We look forward to hearing the outcomes of these regional dialogues.

The new post-2020 framework will inevitably impact your lives and wellbeing. Let's make sure that it is a positive impact. Accordingly, your views and aspirations for the future are needed to assist humanity in achieving our 2050 Vision of "Living in harmony with nature".

Next year, at its fifteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention will adopt a new global biodiversity framework. This will be a significant steppingstone towards making this vision a reality.

At its fourteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted an intense process for the preparation of the new framework, and this process remains in place despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In August, the peer review of documents in preparation for the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Science, Technology and Technological Advice was conducted, and indigenous peoples and local communities made a comprehensive submission on this topic.

That same month, the updated zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework was published. The updated zero draft, while still a work in progress, is a significant step forward towards the new framework.

In preparation for the upcoming meetings under the Convention, today's dialogue is an opportunity for you to reflect and build global messages on these recent developments. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this meeting. Therefore, I am very pleased to note that we have a considerable number of indigenous peoples and local communities participating in these critical discussions.

If we are to achieve by 2050 the Convention's vision of "Living in harmony with nature", it is critical that we harness the power of the collective and local actions of the world's indigenous peoples and local communities. The Convention must ensure that indigenous peoples and local communities are valued partners in shaping the post-2020 framework to help achieve a more sustainable future for us all.

Let us make sure that your optimism, perhaps now needed more than ever before, is embodied in the new global biodiversity framework.

I wish you all the best in your deliberations.

Thank you.

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