



**STATEMENT BY MS. ELIZABETH MARUMA MREMA,
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
AT THE OPENING OF
THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION
16 May 2021**

Madam Chair,
Delegates,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

I am honoured, together with my team at the Secretariat, to have continued to support your work and preparations for the convening of this meeting. As we continue our journey towards the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the adoption of a robust and ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework, we will be listening attentively to your debates on the agenda items for this meeting and the recommendations that will ensue. With my remarks already made at the informal session of the Subsidiary Body in March, I would thus hesitate to repeat or say more, save for just brief highlights.

Our Honourable Chair, Charlotta,

I would like to sincerely thank you, as well as our colleagues in the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, for your outstanding visionary leadership in preparing for this formal online meeting. As we all know, virtual meetings present a host of new challenges that we must grapple with. Nonetheless, you are to be commended for aiding us in charting new possibilities.

Permit me to equally thank our host country, the Government of Canada, for generously providing us with additional financial resources needed for our virtual meetings, including the services of our dedicated team of volunteers. From all of us, thank you for your continued and unwavering support.

More than 1,800 participants registered for this online meeting, representing 129 countries and 195 organizations. I hope and trust all of them and more are present today and will be in the days to come. I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all and encourage your active engagement in the deliberations of the meeting.

Dear participants,

There is a familiar saying that, before anything else, preparation is the key to success, and you have indeed come prepared. You have participated in special virtual sessions of the Subsidiary Body as well as the informal session. At the informal session, we heard initial views of Parties and observers on most of the agenda items and received many valuable comments through statements and written submissions. The Secretariat has collected them all and will take them into account when supporting the Chair of the Subsidiary Body in developing conference room papers.

At this session of the Subsidiary Body, we will consider many key agenda items and develop important long-awaited advice for the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, who I know are eagerly waiting for your contributions. I wish you all success in your deliberations in the coming days and I urge you to keep in mind that this is a moment of truth for people and planet alike. We need to work together to protect the natural systems that support us all. For the



sake of future generations, for our children and grandchildren, we must take another step towards a safer, more sustainable, and equitable path.

In closing

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our colleagues and partners for their support and contributions to the preparation of some of the documents for these agenda items.

Moreover, as I close, I must recognize and sincerely thank my Secretariat staff. This past year to date has not been easy; my team has faced countless new challenges and demands, not to mention the stress of working from their homes. Nonetheless, they have worked tirelessly and diligently to ensure that all preparations were completed and ready to support your work and they will continue to do so. But I would urge empathy and flexibility on your demands to the Secretariat, as we do our best to respond to them within the existing constraints.

I look forward to hearing your views and perspectives in the coming weeks. With the support of the Secretariat and the guidance of the Chair of the Subsidiary Body and the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, this meeting will help advance the further development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and our preparations for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

I wish you all a successful meeting. Thank you.
