



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

on the occasion of

**THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE
MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS TO
GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING
OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION**

**PYEONGCHANG, REPUBLIC OF KOREA
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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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**Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the first meeting of the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. Yesterday, the Nagoya Protocol entered into force, in what is to be remembered as a milestone not only for the Convention on Biological Diversity, but also in the history of global governance for sustainable development. I am very grateful to the support of all the Parties that have ratified the Protocol and to those that are taking the necessary steps to do so in the near future. Your relentless work back home in your countries has allowed us to be here today, making history. Congratulations to all.

I am also very pleased to meet you here once again in the Republic of Korea. The kindness and thoughtfulness of the Korean people are truly remarkable. On behalf of all present here today, I would like to thank the Republic of Korea, its people and its Government, as well the local authorities of Gangwon province, for their tireless work in making the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol possible. We are indeed very privileged to have the opportunity to witness how Pyeongchang changes with the seasons. Last winter, when we convened for the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee, we had the opportunity to see the snow-capped landscape. Now, we can enjoy the fall colours and the fragrance of the buckwheat flowers and some rain. I have no doubts that the splendid setting of the Alpensia Convention Center will provide us once again with an inspiring environment, which will greatly facilitate our work.

We are, as always, extremely grateful to donors that provide the necessary resources to support the work that needs to be done. At this juncture, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the European Commission for their generous contributions, which have enabled representatives of a significant number of countries to participate in this meeting.

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, the road to Nagoya and the road to today's first COP-MOP here in Pyeongchang has often been challenging but always rewarding. At COP 7 in 2006, in Kuala Lumpur, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on ABS was given a new mandate – to elaborate and negotiate an international regime on ABS. The adoption of the Nagoya Protocol at COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan, after six years of intense negotiations, is the fruit of our collective efforts; however, we knew at that time that the work had only just begun.

Since the adoption of the Protocol, Parties have worked towards completing national processes in order to become a Party to this treaty. This has involved stakeholder consultations, briefings with high-level officials, awareness-raising and participation in capacity-building activities. As a result, the Nagoya Protocol now has 54 ratifications, including countries from all five regions, demonstrating its global appeal and significance. I would sincerely like to thank all Parties and individuals involved in this process for your commitment and hard work to the Convention and its Nagoya Protocol.

I would also like to thank the indigenous and local communities, who have undoubtedly played an important role throughout this process and will continue to participate as we move towards implementation.

The Rio+20 outcome document, in reference to the Nagoya Protocol, acknowledged the role of access and benefit-sharing in contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability and thereby contributing to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In the same vein, the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol will certainly be of great importance in the achievement of the proposed sustainable development goals, which are set to build upon the Millennium Development Goals and become part of the post-2015 development agenda, to be adopted next year by the United Nations General Assembly.

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. The entry into force of the Protocol will contribute to enhancing the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services and it represents a major step towards achieving Target 16 prior to our target date. We are also well on the way to meeting the second part of this target, which is making the Protocol operational. I know countries are working very hard nationally to make the Protocol operational. We look forward to hearing your experiences over the course of the week as well as seeing the results in the form of national records published in the ABS Clearing-House.

These efforts are illustrative of the dedication to achieve and deliver results. In opening COP-MOP 1 of the Nagoya Protocol today, we are poised to achieve Aichi Target 16 and take a crucial step in mainstreaming biodiversity into sustainable development.

Distinguished delegates,

We have made important progress in the eight months since the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee, which was held here in Pyeongchang. We have been busy undertaking the activities that you have requested from your Secretariat, including organizing capacity-building workshops and developing the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House. A total of five regional and subregional capacity-building workshops on the Nagoya Protocol have been held since the last Intergovernmental Committee meeting, covering Latin America, the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, West Asia and Africa. I would like to thank the donors that have generously provided financial support for this crucial work to take place: the European Union, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Spain.

A great deal of effort has gone into ensuring that the ABS Clearing-House is fully operational by the entry into force of the Protocol. Many of you had the opportunity to participate in the different capacity-building activities for the ABS Clearing-House, including the outreach and engagement campaign and our workshop and official launch yesterday. I would like to thank the European Union for providing the financial support for this workshop and for the overall pilot-phase of the ABS Clearing-House. Your support and the funding provided by Japan, Germany and Switzerland, has contributed to accomplish this task. I would also like to thank all of you who have collaborated in the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House providing the feedback necessary to make possible the functional ABS Clearing-House we have today. I know

we can continue to count on all of you to share information through the Clearing-House to enable it to fulfil the vital role it is designed to play in the implementation of the Protocol.

Against this background, we have before us a critical week. Your decisions this week will address key issues that will move the Protocol towards effective implementation. We are fortunate in that the Intergovernmental Committee has already done a great deal of work. For many agenda items, the Committee has forwarded recommendations with clean draft decisions ready for adoption. For this, we owe a debt of gratitude to Janet and Fernando, our co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Committee. Janet, Fernando: your dedication to ABS and the Nagoya Protocol is unsurpassed. Your skilful leadership of the Intergovernmental Committee over the past four years is undeniable, as we can see from the results that we have here before us. I offer you my most heartfelt thanks as do, I am sure, your colleagues in the international community. It is now up to the Parties to the Protocol to continue the work on the basis of the strong foundation that has been built by the ICNP.

Colleagues, for those draft decisions where the ICNP has already reached agreement, I urge you to accept the consensus that has been achieved and adopt these decisions. Of course, for some agenda items, there is still work to be done. The procedures and mechanisms for promoting compliance with the Protocol still require consideration. I am very pleased that a contact group that met during the first week of COP was able to advance on this issue, but further compromise is still needed. I trust that the good spirit that prevailed during the contact group meetings will continue this week, and a final text of the procedures and mechanisms will be adopted by this meeting as required by Article 30 of the Protocol.

Our agenda for this week includes a new topic that was not considered by the ICNP: the efficiency of structures and processes under the Convention and its Protocols. This includes a proposal to establish a subsidiary body on implementation that would serve the Convention as well as both the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol. It also includes a proposal to organize the meetings of the Parties of the two Protocols concurrently with the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in a single two-week period. Already, we are innovating with convening this meeting concurrently with COP-12 and our experiences this week can help to inform how we move forward in the future.

As always, one of the most difficult issues we have to consider is the matter of the budget, and the budget contact group has already been hard at work the first week of COP. I urge everyone to bear in mind the importance of stable and secure financial and human resources in order for the Protocol to fulfil its promise. The entry into force of the Protocol places additional demands on the Secretariat. Adequate and secure financial and human resources are required in order to carry out the activities you expect from us and in order for the Protocol to flourish. After all the years of negotiations and preparation, it is in no one's interest to have a Protocol that does not function because of lack of resources for the work that needs to be done.

For all these reasons, I urge you all to continue your work in the spirit of cooperation and compromise that has enabled us to reach this point.

Dear colleagues,

The opportunity before you is a unique one. This first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol is a chance to lay the groundwork for the future of the Protocol. I urge you to

approach the task at hand from the perspective of not just your national positions but also what is in the best interests of the Protocol. In this way, we may collaborate to achieve enduring results that will benefit everyone and also contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

I thank you for your attention.