

**Statement by the representative of the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Authorities of Kenya during the opening session of the Africa Regional Training Workshop on Community Protocols, Indicators on Traditional Knowledge and Customary Sustainable Use of Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)  
25 - 29 January 2016 Nairobi, Kenya**

Representative of UNEP  
Representative of the CBD Secretariat, Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It's a pleasure to join you at this opening session of this very important Africa Regional Training Workshop on Community Protocols, Indicators on Traditional Knowledge and Customary Sustainable Use of Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity. I take this opportunity to warmly welcome you to Kenya and Nairobi in particular. The Government of Kenya feels greatly honoured to be hosting delegates from over twenty two African countries as well as staff of the CBD secretariat in Canada as well as participants from other parts of the world.

I wish to thank the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for identifying Kenya as a suitable host and for its support in organizing the workshop. We are happy that this is the second time that we are hosting this kind of training workshop. We also thank other partners who have been supporting the process all through. Your kind and tireless support is greatly appreciated.

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is gratifying to note that this workshop aimed at enhancing the capacity of stakeholders in Africa to implement critical provisions of the convention on Biological Diversity. The choice of the specific theme of Community Protocols,

Indicators on traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use, of the convention on Biological Diversity is very well fitting for the African continent. The training received at this workshop will give opportunity to participants to acquire more knowledge, information and share experiences that I believe will enable them champion the theme in their respective countries.

I know that the African region has been very active in the implementation of the Convention on Biological diversity. Most of the areas of discussions have been very successful because of the rich input by the African countries. One of the example was the process of the Access and benefit sharing where we have the Nagoya Protocol. Africa worked well together through the ABS African Initiative and did not leave indigenous Peoples and local communities behind. This was a landmark for Africa and to date Africa is still working together through the same solidarity.

In Kenya the government recognizes the vital role played by indigenous communities at all levels of development and their traditional knowledge customs. Indigenous and traditional values that are positive to the country's development are well protected. The constitution of Kenya obliges the state to protect and enhance the intellectual property in, and the indigenous knowledge of, biodiversity and genetic resources, of communities. The Government has developed a Bill on Traditional knowledge where Indigenous Peoples and local communities were fully involved and the document is now in a very advanced stage. We are optimistic that the bill will successfully go through the required processes and become part of the laws of Kenya as soon as possible.

As a government we look forward to your discussions during this training and hope that you will get time also discuss on how you can mainstream Climate change response measures into your initiatives to implement activities related to the theme of this workshop. No part of the globe is safe from the negative impacts of climate change and unsustainable use of

our biodiversity. Africa is highly vulnerable to the potential negative effects of climate change and damages of unsustainable use of biodiversity therefore, the need to always bare this in mind in all our endeavours.

I wish to appreciate the strong political will shown by African leaders to support efforts to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity and the need to utilize and integrate indigenous knowledge in national development planning and decision making. I urge you take advantage of this goodwill and use the knowledge you get from this training to influence decision making and implementation of relevant programmes and projects in your country.

In conclusion I want to comment and thank personnel of the indigenous information network organization for their tireless effort in organizing the logistical aspects of the workshop and for doing so effectively. I know it has not been easy but you have done a great job. The same goes to the staff of the CBD secretariat for working throughout the holiday season to ensure the technical and financial aspects are well taken care of.

The Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Authorities and indeed the Government of Kenya will continue to fully support the activities of the CBD secretariat to the best of our ability. We look forward to further collaboration in future. To delegates from Africa, I assure you that Kenya will continue to work with the rest of Africa to promote actions that enhance sustainable utilization of biological diversity and ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits accruing thereof.

On behalf of the Ministry, I wish you successful training and a wonderful stay in Nairobi Kenya. Feel free and enjoy the hospitality of the people of Kenya.

With those remarks I have the pleasure to declare this regional workshop officially open.

Thank you  
Asante sana