



STATEMENT BY

MR. AHMED DJOGHLAF

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE 13th REGULAR SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

**18 JULY 2011
ROME, ITALY**



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



Life in harmony, into the future
いのちの共生を、未来へ
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to be given an opportunity to address this 13th Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. As you know, we have worked closely with the FAO since we signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in 1997. Since that time the FAO has provided us with invaluable support, for example through technical and policy advice and analysis, documentation and secondment of staff, as well as technical assistance to countries.

The FAO has also assisted us in implementing many of our thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work, including agricultural, forest and marine biodiversity, particularly key initiatives on pollinators, soil biodiversity, biodiversity for food and nutrition, and fisheries and aquaculture.

In 2005 our partnership with the FAO took an important step forward when we signed a revised Memorandum of Cooperation that recognizes the Commission as the international forum where governments address all components of biodiversity relevant to food and agriculture. At the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP) in 2008, our Parties requested the Secretariat of the CBD to work with the Commission to prepare a joint work plan in order to streamline our efforts and build further synergies. The importance of the resulting 2009-2011 joint work plan was noted by the Commission at its 12th Regular Session in 2009 and by the tenth Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2010.

COP-10 also requested us to work together in designing a second phase of the joint work plan. This task has now been completed, with a revised joint work plan covering the 2011-2020 period. Its overarching goal is to synergize the implementation of the Commission's Multi-Year Plan of Work with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which was adopted last fall at COP-10.

Of the 20 Global Biodiversity Targets included in the new Strategic Plan, two are particularly relevant for food and agriculture and the work of the Commission:

- Target 7: By 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.
- Target 13: By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

With these global targets in mind, COP-10 invited the FAO and the Commission to refine specific targets for agricultural biodiversity, including at the ecosystem and genetic resources levels, as well as indicators to monitor progress toward them. As the Commission is considering targets and indicators in relation to its own work in the current session, including indicators for the implementation of Global Plans of Action on animal and plant genetic resources, this is an excellent opportunity to start building on our joint plan of work in this area.

COP-10 also requested us to collaborate with international organizations, including FAO, to continue to facilitate capacity building in updating and revising National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. NBSAP revisions provide an important opportunity to ensure that genetic resources for agriculture are given adequate consideration in national agendas. These revisions will benefit in particular from recently published reports on the state of the world's

plant and animal genetic resources and from Global Plans of Action for plant and animal genetic resources.

COP-10 further requested us to collaborate with FAO in the preparation of The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources. With complementary efforts underway to prepare Country Reports on forest genetic resources, these combined processes should similarly be used to facilitate NBSAP revisions.

I would like to emphasize that work in all of these areas is extremely urgent, for time is of the essence: any delay in producing updated NBSAPs will augur poorly for the achievement of the Aichi Targets. That is why, with support from the Japan Biodiversity Fund and funds from GEF-5, a first round of NBSAP workshops is already underway to help countries revise their NBSAPs before COP-11 in Hyderabad in 2012.

To keep us moving in the right direction, our new joint plan of work also asks us to collaborate in promoting and supporting the entry into force, development and implementation of another major outcome of COP-10: the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

This historic agreement establishes a legal framework to translate the basic “bargain” enshrined in the Convention, into tangible and effective measures. It provides greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources by establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources and by establishing specific obligations to support compliance with domestic legislation or regulatory requirements of the Party providing genetic resources and contractual obligations reflected in mutually agreed terms. These provisions, including the monitoring of genetic resources, will contribute to ensuring the sharing of benefits with providers of genetic resources.

It is important to note that the relationship between the Nagoya Protocol, the Commission and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was duly considered by governments during the negotiations of the Nagoya Protocol. As a result, the preamble of the Protocol makes a number of key references recognising the importance of genetic resources to food security.

In particular, the Protocol recognises the interdependence of all countries with regard to genetic resources for food and agriculture as well as their special nature and importance for achieving food security worldwide and for sustainable development of agriculture in the context of poverty alleviation and climate change. It also acknowledges the fundamental role of the International Treaty and of the Commission.

It also recalls that the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing established under the International Treaty was developed in harmony with the Convention and recognizes that international instruments related to access and benefit-sharing should be mutually supportive with a view to achieving the objectives of the Convention.

In addition, the text of the Protocol also addresses the relationship of the Protocol with international agreements and instruments (Article 4).

It should be noted that the Protocol provides that it shall be implemented in a mutually supportive manner with other relevant international instruments.

Of particular relevance to the relationship with the International Treaty is Article 14(4) which states that “Where a specialized international access and benefit-sharing instrument applies that is consistent with, and does not run counter to the objectives of the Convention and this

Protocol, this Protocol does not apply for the Party or Parties to the specialized instrument in respect of the specific genetic resource covered by and for the purposes of the specialized instrument.”

Finally, the Protocol also provides that Parties shall, in the development of their national access and benefit-sharing legislation or regulatory requirements, consider the importance of genetic resources for food and agriculture and their special role for food security (Article 8 (c)).

Thanks to the financial support provided by the Global Environment Facility, the Secretariat of the CBD will be carrying out a series of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities over the next biennium to support ratification and early entry into force of the Protocol by the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties in October 2012. Specifically, the Protocol will enter into force 90 days after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

With biodiversity continuing to be lost at an unprecedented rate, I hope that the CBD and the Commission will continue to closely cooperate in order to ensure that our missions are carried out in a mutually supportive manner. As you know, the UN General Assembly has declared 2011-2020 the UN Decade on Biodiversity to follow up on the success of the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit. Now is the time to capitalize on this momentum.

The Decade is not only a vehicle to support the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets: it is a worldwide celebration of everything we stand to lose by doing nothing and everything we stand to gain by changing our ways. Over the course of the Decade, biodiversity must be mainstreamed throughout government and all sectors of society through communication, education and awareness-raising, appropriate incentive measures, and institutional change. By 2020, citizens and governments without exception should be firmly committed to the preservation of our biological heritage.

Launch events for the Decade have already taken place in Asia and the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean, with upcoming launches planned for Africa, Europe and Latin America, and a global launch set for the end of the year in Japan. We cannot afford to let this opportunity slip by: we must work together more closely than ever during this critical period to build on the outcomes of Nagoya for our mutual benefit and the benefit of all life on Earth.

With this in mind, I urge you to attend the side-event to be held at lunchtime today, where a briefing on the Nagoya outcomes will be presented.

Thank you for your kind attention.