



OPENING REMARKS BY

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

to the

**ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**Hyderabad, India
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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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

Excellency Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of Environment and Forests of India,
Excellency Mr. Kiran Kumar Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh,
Mr. Matsumoto, former Minister of Environment of Japan and COP-10 President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Through you, Excellency, I would like to express our very deep gratitude to the Government of India for its generosity and for hosting this very important gathering in Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, in such a wonderful and inspiring setting.

Our deep gratitude also goes to the authorities of the State of Andhra Pradesh and the City of Hyderabad for their very warm hospitality and the welcome extended to participants.

Excellency,

Your presence among us today is a reflection of the importance that India attaches to achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity: the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

I cannot think of a better place to hold the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Indeed, India boasts an extraordinarily rich biodiversity - as evidenced by its membership in the group of megadiverse countries - as well as one of the most ancient, vast and diversified cultures in the world. The huge body of traditional knowledge associated with biological diversity developed in India is both oral and coded, as are the texts of Indian systems of medicine, such as Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha.

Notions, values, concepts and ideas, present and past, are rooted and nurtured in traditional knowledge, and this richness and particular worldview is expressed and realized in many different ways, from languages to social structure, subsistence practices, medical and agricultural knowledge, as well as artistic and religious expressions, to mention just a few.

Yet, life in India is in many ways a blend of modernity and tradition. Let me recall, in this connection, a statement of Mahatma Gandhi.

He said:

“I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures and traditions of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible.”

Gandhi implied, of course, that there should be no boundaries between modern life and tradition, and that a borderless mind and borderless thinking alone can lead to a happy and prosperous world. I invite all delegates to reflect on these wise words in the next two weeks.

I also take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the Governments that have provided generous financial support to ensure large participation by developing countries in this meeting. They are the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Spain and Sweden. I thank them for their active and continued support for the Convention. In this connection, I am pleased to inform you that no less than 173 Parties have pre-registered for this meeting and more than 14,400 participants are pre-registered, making it one of the largest biodiversity gatherings ever.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties led to two historic achievements: the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Targets. Furthermore, at its previous meetings, the Conference of the Parties had adopted an impressive body of principles, guidelines and other decisions to implement the Convention.

We must now put all our efforts, energy and resources into implementing these decisions and agreements.

In this connection, I invite you to review progress toward the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol and ensure that all Parties receive the support needed to ratify it and to discharge their obligations under the Protocol, so as to facilitate its early entry into force and effective implementation.

Ninety-two Parties to the Convention from all regions have signed the Nagoya Protocol and, thus far, six Parties have deposited their instruments of ratification (Gabon, Jordan, Mexico, Rwanda, Seychelles and the Lao People's Democratic Republic). I am aware that many other Parties are working on their national ratification processes and are expected to ratify in the near term. I urge you all to ratify as soon as practicable, to ensure that the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol is held in conjunction with our next meeting.

In the two years since COP-10 in Nagoya, Parties have embarked on an effort to review their national biodiversity strategy and action plans (NBSAPs) to reflect the targets agreed in Nagoya. Thanks to generous support from the Government of Japan, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, and from other donors, the Secretariat has organized 21 regional and subregional workshops with more than 900 participants from 166 parties in support of the review of NBSAPs.

In this connection, I am pleased to report that 10 Parties have reviewed their NBSAPs in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and many more are in the process of reviewing their NBSAPs. Up to now, GEF has approved projects to support 109 Parties to review their NBSAPs, in accordance with the decision taken by COP-10, and 11 more are pending. Additionally, 107 Parties have submitted their protected areas action plans, contemplating both continental and marine areas and including needs assessment and new national targets.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be central to our actions in this decade. I urge you, in Hyderabad, to mobilize the financial resources needed to enable

developing countries to achieve the Aichi Targets at national level. In so doing, we will need to be creative and involve all partners.

We need to go beyond needs identification to adopt new approaches and mechanisms, emphasizing the leveraging of resources from existing sources through mainstreaming, incorporating sustainability criteria in government procurement, reviewing and adjusting of economic instruments, further engaging the business sector, etc. We will be judged by our acts, not our words.

I am pleased to report that 25 Parties have made submissions on resources allocated to biodiversity from different funding sources. These reports, though preliminary in nature, do offer a useful perspective on the baseline for the conference's deliberations on resource mobilization, as well as relevant information on the diversity of funding sources available for biodiversity.

Beyond these immediate issues and the many other items on our busy agenda, I would like to invite you to reflect on how we “do business” under the Convention. We need to rethink our approach to the Convention and its Protocols, notably to ensure that proper linkages are maintained between them and that they operate in an integrated manner.

I also believe that, at this stage, we should move towards a more pragmatic approach, with less emphasis on negotiations and more emphasis on experience-sharing in our pursuit of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. To do this, we must rethink meetings of the Conference of the Parties with a view to having a more streamlined agenda, which will leave more time for needed dialogues and sharing of experiences on issues of implementation. I hope to discuss this issue with you in the next two weeks and give shape to this new approach.

The mainstreaming of biodiversity in national development agendas remains a challenge for most Parties. Biodiversity should not be perceived only as a problem, but rather, for what it really is: a crucial asset which underpins sustainable development and is closely linked to many social and economic issues.

Let me also recall that the United Nations Rio + 20 common vision of « the Future We Want » recognized that biodiversity plays a critical role in maintaining ecosystems that provide essential services, which are the foundation of human wellbeing and underpin our efforts to eradicate poverty. In this connection, the delivery of a new framework for after 2015 towards sustainable development goals, to be discussed by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, provides a unique opportunity to emphasize the importance of biodiversity and ecosystems services for sustainable development goals, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. I invite the Conference of the Parties to seize this opportunity.

Additionally, we also need to put in place an effective and continuous monitoring system for the Aichi Targets, so as to be aware of whether we remain on track with regard to achieving the Targets and inform our decisions accordingly.

Since my appointment in January of this year, I have been reflecting, and discussing with my staff, on how to restructure the Secretariat and how to prioritize its activities so as to best serve Parties in this new era of focus on implementation. I believe that the Secretariat – working with and through partners – should strive to catalyse and provide support to developing countries by strengthening their capacity to implement the Convention and its strategic goals and targets, and that this could be best achieved through a more structured and continuous capacity development processes at regional and subregional levels. To do this, we need to strengthen our collaboration with key partners, such as our host organization, UNEP, as well as UNDP, FAO, UNESCO and others.

In this context, we should also make full use of all the mechanisms envisaged under the Convention in order to achieve our common objectives. I particularly see a need to strengthen scientific, technical and technological cooperation amongst Parties and to make better use of the

clearing-house mechanism to facilitate and recognize such cooperation. I look forward to discussions on these matters in the coming days.

I believe we need to promote stronger recognition of and support for community-based approaches to pursuing the human benefits of biodiversity conservation, including food security and poverty alleviation. While we are aware of the critical role of local communities in the stewardship and sustainable management of natural resources, we often tend to take their efforts for granted. Not only do I think that we need to acknowledge this important contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, I am also convinced that there is a lot that we can learn from their approaches.

I believe that we must also continue to work closely with indigenous communities, from whom we have much to learn with regard to the sustainable management of biodiversity. They are key partners.

We also must strengthen the engagement of other partners, in particular the business community, which stands to contribute a lot to the achievement of our common goals.

I wish to seize this opportunity to recognize the very significant contribution of cities and local authorities to our efforts to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Indeed, our actions must be coordinated at all levels, not only horizontally but also vertically. This is why I most welcome the third summit for mayors and governors, the Cities for Life Summit, the establishment of networks of cities and subnational authorities, as well as the engagement of members of the Advisory Committee of cities and subnational governments.

Finally I would like to make a strong call to all Parties, partners and stakeholders. If we really want to fully achieve the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, urgent attention needs to be given to at least half of them to ensure their full implementation, or at least significant progress, by 2015.

These are:

- Target 1, to promote public awareness and engagement;

- Target 2, to incorporate the values of biodiversity into national development and poverty reduction strategies and plans and into national accounting and reporting;
- Target 3, to implement the reform of economic incentives and the creation or expansion of financial mechanisms;
- Target 4, to promote sustainable production and consumption, where I would suggest an emphasis on the establishment of green procurement rules and promotion of an inclusive green economy;
- Target 10, to reduce the pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change;
- Target 11, where an early push for the expansion of protected areas systems should be made to allow sufficient time to reach effectiveness by 2020;
- Target 15, where significant progress should be made to establish scaled-up restoration initiatives to allow for the growth of trees and other organisms by 2020;
- Target 16, to ratify the Nagoya Protocol and adopt the necessary national legislation and governance structure for access and benefit-sharing;
- Target 17, to adopt revised NBSAPs, including national targets, as policy instruments, with full participation of all stakeholders and sectors; and
- Target 20, to mobilize the financial resources needed to support the implementation of all the other Aichi Targets.

The decision you will take in this Conference on target-setting for resource mobilization, as well as the decision on the budget for the Convention for the biennium 2013–2014, will be crucial to pushing for the implementation of the Aichi Targets. Yes, we are facing times of financial crisis, but times of crisis are the best opportunities to make substantive changes in the way we do business. Expenditures on biodiversity should not be seen as costs – they should be seen as investments that will pay back with significant environmental, social and economic benefits for all our societies.

I would like to end with an invitation to each Party and partner to this Convention to select one or more of the Aichi Targets and to become a regional or a global champion for its achievement.

With this, I wish you the best of luck in your deliberations in these two weeks, and I reiterate our deep appreciation to the Government of India, the authorities of Andhra Pradesh and the City of Hyderabad for hosting this meeting in such a wonderful and inspiring setting.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Namaste