



**Closing statement by  
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**Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources**

**16 August 2024**

Thank you, Liu Ning, representative of the President of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties,

Distinguished delegates,

Dear friends and colleagues,

Dear participants,

Five days ago, I was standing over there, at the lectern, and to me it feels a bit longer, maybe more like five weeks ago. I think you may have the same feeling. We have spent a lot of time here together.

When we started out, I was saying, on behalf of all my colleagues at the Secretariat, how we were hoping that this week would take us an important step closer to operationalizing the multilateral mechanism and the associated global fund that the Conference of the Parties had adopted at its fifteenth meeting, in Montreal, already two years ago.

And what can I say? You have made it happen. You have fulfilled the mandate given to this Working Group by the Conference of the Parties. It took you nine sessions of the Committee of the Whole, which were intense but constructive, and four contract groups, all in a mere five days.

In sum, great efforts by everybody. A lot of dedication was demonstrated, and thank you also for dealing with a lot of sleep deprivation during this week.

But I think that the results speak for themselves. We now have a draft decision that the Conference of the Parties will consider at its sixteenth meeting, in just a few weeks.

You have managed, throughout this week, to look at a wide spectrum of technical questions and policy options, and you have also managed to narrow them down to a smaller number of issues that the Parties will now consider in Cali.

Once again, we owe these great strides to you.

We have seen you navigate those complex issues that we, in the Secretariat, like to describe as being at the confluence of science, technology, economics, social justice and so much more.

You have managed, and you have remained true to the Conference of the Parties decision by which the mechanism was established.



This process could have easily derailed. You have made sure that it actually leaped forward.

And then, and I am sure that I speak on behalf of all of you, when, once again, I express my gratitude to the Co-Chairs of the Committee of the Whole, Mphatso Kalemba of Malawi and William Lockhart of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for the remarkable facilitation job that they have done since their election.

And as William has already said, we are clapping extra hard for Mphatso, who will not be with us to see the outcome of this work in Cali, but congratulations to you, Mphatso. You have more important things to do, for yourself. So we wish you the best of luck, and we will be thinking of you in Cali.

While I am in my “thank you” part of the list of remarks, of course I would like to thank Salima Kempenaer of Belgium, Nneka Nicholas of Antigua and Barbuda, Eliška Rolfová of Czechia and Joaquín Salzberg of Argentina for facilitating the crucial negotiations that took place, sometimes late at night, and to a soundtrack, in the contact groups.

Please also allow me to acknowledge, of course, and express the Secretariat’s gratitude to the donors. which I should have started with, for supporting the participation of delegates from developing countries and from indigenous peoples and local communities, namely, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Warm thanks to all of you.

I would also like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to all those who have supported or have been involved in the informal intersessional process on digital sequence information on genetic resources, which ran alongside the formal process.

Informal capacity-building activities around digital sequence information on genetic resources by partners made the formal process accessible, understandable, relatable, appreciated and inclusive. That complemented the discussions held within the informal advisory group established by the Working Group and contributed to the quality, depth and clarity of the negotiations that you have had here over the last few days.

Lastly, of course, I am very grateful to my team at the Secretariat which, as ever, David Cooper, the Deputy Executive Secretary, has so deftly coordinated, and of course I should mention my thanks to the access and benefit-sharing team, led by Tauko.

A big thanks too to the interpreters, who survived the Chilean challenge. You have done a fantastic job, as always, as have the translators and the many dedicated logistical support professionals who have made our meeting this week possible.

Thanks to all of you, this ship has never been closer to port than it is

Now, I think that we can be proud, that you can be proud, of what you have collectively achieved. And now we must prepare for what lies ahead. So, we will say: get some rest. Get ready for intense discussions in Cali. What you will do with the outcome of this meeting in Cali could be of historic significance. This is great responsibility. Get ready for it.

Safe travels to all and see you in Cali.

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