



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH M. ALSAIDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, IN THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY (New York, 22 September 2010)

Honourable Heads of State and Government,
Honourable Ministers,
Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations,
Mr. President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour and privilege to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. This is the first time in the history of United Nations Organization that the issue of biodiversity is addressed at the level of heads of state and government. Our meeting today not only provides a unique opportunity to highlight the challenges we face, but also the opportunities that managing the resources of biodiversity offers, in particular in what relates to eradicating poverty and improving livelihoods of millions of peoples. Biodiversity is a key element for development.

2. As the natural wealth of the poor, biodiversity is critical for developing countries. The poorest and the most vulnerable in developing countries depend on biodiversity for a range of services, from health and nutrition to serving as a safety net when faced with climate variability and natural disasters, and even their livelihoods. At the same time, developing countries are a treasure trove of biodiversity and home to the some of the rarest and most unique species that in turn hold valuable genetic resources. Today species are disappearing at up to 1,000 times the natural background rate of extinction, undermining nature's ability to provide us with the goods and services we so greatly depend on. It is the poor of the world who will suffer the most if we do not stop the loss of our biological resources, since the poor depend disproportionately on biodiversity for their day-to-day livelihoods.

Mr. President,

3. Continued biodiversity loss, including through unsustainable use, threatens to increase poverty and undermine development. Biodiversity can no longer be seen as an issue separate from efforts to tackle poverty and improve the health, wealth and security of present and future generations. This can only happen if we finally give biodiversity the priority it deserves.

4. Now more than ever, the Group of 77 and China calls for the urgent implementation of the three objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, in a mutually supportive manner. Indeed conservation of biological diversity cannot be achieved without the sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefit arising from genetic resources. All three pillars of this convention are not only important to the development of developing countries, but provide important tools in our fight against poverty. In doing so, an effective international framework must be in place to ensure an enhanced implementation of the three objectives of the main multilateral instrument on this matter, the Convention on Biological Diversity - namely conservation, sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of biodiversity.

5. We must strengthen global partnerships and international commitments to ensure that the owners of the biodiversity resources and the traditional knowledge associated to them, which are mainly developing countries, receive the benefits arising from the use of those resources. Furthermore, developing countries will not achieve MDGs without addressing along with developed countries the international threats to biodiversity, in particular misappropriation of genetic resources and biopiracy.

6. To this end, the adoption of the Protocol on Access and Benefit sharing at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held next month in Nagoya, Japan is of a strategic importance. The adoption of the protocol will be key to the success of the new biodiversity strategic plan for 2011-2020 to be also adopted in Nagoya. This new biodiversity vision for 2050 as well as 2020 biodiversity target requires the urgent mobilization of new and additional financial resources. The success of the Aichi Nagoya summit will be the best gift to this year's celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity and a good omen to the success of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. However, the challenges of the continued loss of biodiversity compounded by climate change requires the full engagement of all stakeholders as well the active engagement of all governments without exception. The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its call to the sole remaining country who has yet to accede to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity to do so as soon as possible. Indeed a universal participation to the convention on life on earth is an idea whose time has come.

Mr. President,

7. The CBD will hold its 10th COP in Nagoya, this October. The G77 and China takes this opportunity to underscore the need for great mobilization and political will such that we will be able to adopt the protocol on access and benefit-sharing and to ensure that the post-2010 targets are able to be met through new, additional and sufficient financial resources and the transfer of technology to developing countries.

8. At the CBD COP 10 in Nagoya, Parties are expected to boost the implementation of the Convention. The success of our commitments from now on to the cause of biodiversity rests on ensuring a balanced and effective outcome of Nagoya that will provide the tools for addressing the challenges facing biodiversity. In this regard, agreements in two broad areas are key to lead to a successful implementation of the CBD: (i) the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, and (ii) the successful conclusion of the discussions on the post-2010 Strategic Plan of the CBD and a Resource Mobilization Strategy. The level of ambition in establishing targets for reducing biodiversity loss in this plan should be matched with equal targets for the means for implementing such commitments.

Mr. President,

9. The G-77 and China is committed to finalize the draft Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development as mandated by COP-9 and calls on all Parties to demonstrate commitment and support for its adoption at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-10). In this context, we welcome the convening of the First Forum on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity to be held in Nagoya, Japan, on 17 October 2010. We also express our appreciation to the CBD Secretariat for establishing a strategic partnership with the G-77 and for the support provided in elaborating the Multi-Year Plan of Action, which provides a unique opportunity to enhance the solidarity and global cohesion of the Group in support to the new biodiversity strategy.

10. More than ever, the establishment of a global alliance for protecting life on earth is required. This unique event offers us a unique opportunity as leaders of the world to provide leadership and led by example for the benefit of life on earth. The G-77 and China is fully committed to play its role and call on its partners as well as the UN system to support the new biodiversity strategy for the next decade so as to ensure that our children will continue to benefit for the vital services provided by our planet.

11. Finally, Mr. President, the G77 and China looks forward to a successful outcome of Nagoya's meeting and reiterates that the post-2010 Strategic Plan, along with a strategy for resource mobilization, and a new international regime on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from their use, are indivisible components of an improved global policy framework for biodiversity policy that conserves biodiversity, uses its components sustainably and ensures that the benefits from the use of the genetic resources of our planet are shared equitably.

I thank you.

