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STATEMENT OF AHMED DJOGLAF,
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY
PROTECT BIODIVERSITY IN DRYLANDS

22 May
2006

ACHIEVING THE 2010 TARGET!

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STATEMENT

BY

**DR. AHMED DJOGLAF
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

TO THE

TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING

OF THE

COUNCIL OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is for me an honour to address this Council meeting in my new capacity as the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. I have served for 10 years the GEF family as the Executive Coordinator of UNEP and I look forward to continuing serving in the years to come the objectives of the financial mechanism of the Rio conventions. As the head of GEF operations in one of your three Implementing Agencies, I have enjoyed your support; and as the head of one of the three Rio conventions, I look forward to continuing benefiting from your support. In a couple of days a new phase of the GEF will commence associated with the challenges of operationalizing the new system of allocating scarce financial resources. The unprecedented challenges facing the GEF come at a time when the expectations and demands on the financial mechanism of sustainable development are increasing, and the conventions for which the GEF operates the financial mechanism are entering a new operational phase requiring sustained financial support. This is particularly true for the Convention on Biological Diversity. Indeed the Convention is entering a new and exciting phase of enhanced implementation arising from the decisions adopted by the last meetings of its governing body, which call for additional support and sustained efforts from the financial mechanism.

The third meeting of the Parties of the Cartagena Protocol and the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Curitiba, Brazil, were landmark events in the history of the Convention and its Protocol. COP-8 was the largest ever gathering in the life of the Convention. More than 4,000 delegates attended this meeting, including more than 1,200 non-governmental and indigenous and local community organizations. Its High-level Segment was also the largest ever gathering of ministers in the life of the Convention. More than 122 Ministers and other Heads of Delegations attended the first ever interactive ministerial dialogue in the life of the Convention and discussed issues related to poverty alleviation, food security, access and benefit sharing and the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target. The summary of the Chair of this High-level Segment is before you.

The International Year on Deserts and Desertification was marked by the signature of a historical agreement with six major scientific institutions and botanical gardens representing a half billion dollars capacity in support to the implementation of the Curitiba decisions. The first meeting of the heads of these institutions comprising the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, the National Museum of Natural History of France, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the Saudi Arabian National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development, and the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences will be held in Paris on 11 September 2006. Another important event took place at the same meeting aimed at establishing a Head of Agencies task force for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target. This task force includes UNDP, UNEP, UNCTAD, IUCN, IPGRI and the biodiversity related conventions. At the invitation of IUCN, the first meeting of the task force will take place in Gland on 15 September 2006. For the first time in the history of the Convention, a ministerial breakfast with more than 300 participants was held with CEOs of companies, and a decision for engaging the private sector was adopted for the first time by the Conference of the Parties.

Forty-nine decisions were adopted in Curitiba, and most of them are of direct relevance to the items on your agenda. It is the first time in the life of the Convention that the three objectives of the Convention were considered on an equal footing—conservation and sustainable use, access and benefit sharing, funding and technology transfer, which are the themes of Article 1 of the Convention, and a road map was clearly laid out. COP-8 agreed to enhance the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas, in particular with respect to mobilizing financial resources and in the field of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity including in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and set a clear deadline, that is before the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in 2010, for completing the elaboration and negotiation of the international regime on access and benefit-sharing with full participation of indigenous and local communities. Governments made plans to undertake the first ever in-depth review of the availability of financial resources, including through the

financial mechanism, at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and established an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Technology Transfer and Scientific and Technological Cooperation to collect, analyse and identify ongoing tools, mechanisms, systems and initiatives as well as to develop implementation strategies.

The first-ever programme of work on island biodiversity sets out almost 50 island-specific priority actions aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity, which will make a significant contribution to the implementation of Mauritius Strategy. With this addition, the Conference of the Parties concluded the process of developing programmes of work for all the major biomes using the ecosystem approach. Building on the outcomes of Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the programmes of work on agricultural biodiversity, dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity, forest biodiversity, inland waters biodiversity, island biodiversity, marine and coastal biodiversity and mountain biodiversity were adjusted to incorporate the goals and targets established under the Strategic Plan of the Convention. The first cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition and the first international initiative for the conservation and sustainable use of soil biodiversity were added under the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity.

Species-level work was particularly focused on the Global Taxonomy Initiative with an aim of promoting the further implementation of the planned activities in the programme of work, including but not limited to taxonomic needs assessments. In addressing the major causes of loss of biodiversity, the Conference of the Parties identified a number of particular pathways for introduction of invasive alien species that are not adequately addressed at the international level and for which threat-removal measures were considered. The decision on climate change was very much action-oriented, focusing on activities that promote biodiversity conservation, mitigating or adapting to climate change and combating land degradation. Dealing with economic dimension of biodiversity loss, Governments highlighted the importance of application of tools for valuation of biodiversity, and decided to initiate a structured, transparent and inclusive preparatory process for the in-depth review of incentive measures. They also endorsed the voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive environmental impact assessment.

The implementation framework for the Strategic Plan of the Convention was further enhanced in Curitiba. Governments decided to undertake the first-ever international in-depth review of national capacities and national policy frameworks for implementing the Convention at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism for the period 2005-2010 was updated, and an action-oriented programme of work of the clearing-house mechanism up to 2010 was adopted, so as to make the clearing-house mechanism an effective tool for promoting technical and scientific cooperation among Parties. Further to the programme of work for the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness, the Conference of the Parties adopted a ten-point list of priority activities and a plan of implementation as a coherent framework to guide the implementation of the agreed priority activities. The Conference of the Parties also recommended that the General Assembly should declare 2010 to be the International Year on Biodiversity.

Governments also decided to expand cooperation with relevant international instruments and processes on to new fronts, such as liaising with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the involvement of all stakeholders, including the private sector, in the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of the 2010 target. The fourth national reports will be aligned with the framework for evaluating implementation of the Convention and progress towards the 2010 target, and thus will provide principal source of inputs in the final review of the 2010 target achievements by 2010. Parties will be required to submit their fourth national reports by 30 March 2009, and the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, based primarily on national reports, will be prepared for publication at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In relation to your provisional agenda items 4-9 (evaluation), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to arrange an evaluation of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism in time for its ninth meeting, and also decided to undertake the review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism every four years. At the same time, the Conference of the Parties requested the GEF to consult with the Executive Secretary in its relevant review processes that affect the financial mechanism of the Convention. I look forward to promoting synergies with the GEF evaluation activities and achieving saving with maximum results.

With respect to your agenda item 12, dealing with relations, the Conference of the Parties provided additional guidance in ten subject areas, identified two actions to improve operational effectiveness, and called for some reflection on guidance itself. The additional guidance covers support for the programme of work on island biodiversity—the first ever global programme dedicated solely to the uniqueness and fragility of island biodiversity, support for the preparation of the fourth national reports, which is expected preferably no later than 1 January 2007, as well as support for biosafety, ecosystem assessment, national biodiversity strategies and action plans, technology transfer and cooperation, education and public awareness, the Global Taxonomy Initiative, invasive alien species, and protected areas. I have noticed that the call for improving guidance has been repeated in several COP decisions and in a number of evaluation reports, and with your support, I would like to propose to establish a joint working group with the GEF and interested Parties to review the formulation and implementation of the guidance to the financial mechanism. Meanwhile, I also plan to commit the resources and expertise of the Convention Secretariat to work with the Implementing/Executing Agencies and to assist recipient countries in developing projects that respond to priorities agreed by the Conference of the Parties.

The historic third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Biosafety Protocol will be remembered for the successful achievement of consensus on a longstanding and long overdue issue, i.e., requirements for documentation accompanying living modified organisms that are intended for direct use as food, or feed, or for processing. A number of other important decisions from the meeting also deserve equal attention, including, thanks to the African Group, the most comprehensive recommendation for guidance to the financial mechanism to date. The five-paragraphs COP-8 message in this regard includes: (i) assurance of continued funding to biosafety under the new allocation framework; (ii) support to the establishment of a base level of capacity; (iii) support to stock-taking studies; and (iv) a list of priorities for funding. I trust that the COP-8 guidance provides important inputs in your consideration of the provisional agenda item 14 on a strategy for financing biosafety activities.

Regarding your item 16, related to the third GEF Assembly, the 172 Parties attending COP-8 welcomed the hosting by South Africa of the third GEF Assembly and invited the Assembly to include in its high-level political discussions the opportunities and challenges of the GEF in its role as financial mechanism for the Convention.

The resource allocation framework on your agenda was also discussed in Curitiba and the results of that discussion are reflected in decisions VIII/13 and VIII/18. COP-8 has requested further information on the initial application of the RAF, and decided to undertake an in-depth review of its impact and effectiveness, in particular with respect to the GEF Benefits Index for Biodiversity.

As regards your agenda item 23, on the fourth replenishment, Parties to the Convention and the Protocol called for a timely and substantial fourth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund with a view to ensuring adequate and predictable resources necessary for advancing the various programmes of work of the Convention. I must stress that the GEF fourth replenishment period coincides with the remaining timeframe available for achieving the global target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. When 110 Heads of States and Governments agreed to the 2010 target at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002, they emphasized that the achievement by 2010

of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity will require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries. In September 2005, 154 Heads of States and Governments, meeting at the World Summit in New York called on all States to support the implementation of the Johannesburg commitments. The importance of a successful conclusion of the GEF fourth replenishment to the 2010 biodiversity target cannot be overstated.

With regard to your agenda item 24, on private sector strategy, as I have mentioned, a dialogue on business and biodiversity was, for the first time, organized on the margins of the High Level Segment of the Conference of the Parties. It attracted more than 300 participants, including 50 ministers. I am very grateful to Len Good for his active participation as a Panel member at this important event. The Convention's first-ever decision focusing exclusively on private-sector engagement addresses private sector participation in the Convention processes, the strengthening and dissemination of the "business case" for biodiversity, and the compilation and development of good biodiversity practice. Several elements of this decision are also in line with the recommended decision before this Council, and I believe there are opportunities for promoting synergies and close collaboration. I look forward to working closely with your Secretariat and the Implementing/Executing Agencies for the implementation of this important decision.

Ladies and gentlemen

From the decision of the President of Brazil to place 6.4 million hectares of the Amazon rain forest under direct environmental protection, to the "Micronesia Challenge" launched by the President of Palau and the Vice-President of Micronesia aiming at placing 30% of the marine areas and 20% of the forest across Micronesia under environmental protection, from the establishment of a ministerial women and biodiversity network to the first task force joined by 10 Heads of Agencies for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target, from the largest number of side-events to the largest gathering of children, the biodiversity message was echoed through the largest ever media coverage around the world, and renewed hopes and enhanced awareness, partnership, experience sharing and concrete commitments were the substance. A new era of enhanced implementation of the Convention was born in Curitiba.

The new enhanced phase of the implementation of the Convention and its Protocol calls for a strategic partnership between the Convention and its partners. It calls for a strategic alliance between the Convention and its financial mechanism. I would like therefore to pledge my full commitment in my capacity as the new Executive Secretary to spare no effort to establish an enhanced phase of collaboration with you as Council members, with your Secretariat and the three Implementation Agencies and the seven Executing Agencies. May I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Len Good for his contribution to the GEF and would like to wish him all the best for his future endeavours. I would like also on behalf of all my colleagues and myself to welcome your new Chief Executive Officer, Mme Monique Barbut and look forward to working with her in the years to come in advancing the objectives of the GEF as the financial mechanism of the Convention on life on Earth.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.