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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF MR. HAMDALLAH ZEDAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

(Prepared by the Convention on Biological Diversity)

GEF Council, 8 November 2005: Statement on behalf of Mr. Hamadallah Zedan, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Chief Executive Officer,
Distinguished members of the Council,
Colleagues,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to address this Council today, and would like to provide a brief review of the developments under the Convention on Biological Diversity of relevance to your work since your last regular meeting in June this year.

Two major meetings were held over this period.

In June 2005, the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Protected Areas held its first meeting, in Montecatini, Italy. It was followed by a meeting of donor agencies and other relevant organizations at the same venue. The Working Group addressed three substantive issues:

- Options for cooperation for the establishment of marine protected areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;
- Options for mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas;
- Further development of “tool kits” for the identification, designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional systems of protected areas.

The recommendation on mobilizing financial resources considered by the Working Group still contains a substantial number of brackets, and will be further considered at the Working Group’s second meeting with a view to developing a final recommendation for the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention met in Montreal from 5 to 9 September 2005. The Working Group considered the progress made towards achieving the 2010 biodiversity targets in terms of existing processes, national planning and implementation, cooperation, monitoring and reporting, and adopted nine recommendations for consideration of the Conference of the Parties. With respect to Articles 20 and 21 of the Convention, the Group agreed to recommend, among others, that the Conference of the Parties:

- Conduct an in-depth review of financial resources and financial mechanisms at the ninth meeting

- Adopt a revised list of developed country Parties to the Convention
- Develop proposals for the global initiative on banking, business and biodiversity

The Group also made several recommendations related to the financial mechanism, including that the Conference of the Parties should:

- Urge donors to increase their contribution to the Global Environment Facility;
- Urge the GEF to further simplify the procedures for disbursement of resources in accordance with the provisions of the Convention so as to take into consideration the special conditions within developing countries;
- Consider clarifying the eligibility criteria for access to and utilization of financial resources through the financial mechanism;
- Examine the resource allocation framework with respect to potential implications on the implementation of the Convention;
- Advance a dialogue on ways to more effectively formulate and implement the guidance to the financial mechanism and explore opportunities for streamlining such guidance.

There remains a heavy workload to be completed before the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which will be held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006. This includes a number of major meetings, in particular:

- The eleventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, to be held in Montreal from 28 November to 2 December;
- The fourth meetings of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-Sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, to be held in Granada, Spain, from 23 to 27 January and from 30 January to 3 February 2006, respectively; and
- The second meetings of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas, which are scheduled for February 2006 in Montreal.

Finally, allow me to wish you all a successful meeting and thank you very much for your kind attention.