

Organization: Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU)

Intervention: High Level Segment

Requested date: Wednesday 17th October between 3-6PM or Thursday 18th October between 3-6:PM



BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY

Awakening Biodiversity Consciousness

Statement at the High Level Segment

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

Eleventh Meeting, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, India

October 8-19, 2012

Madam President: Greetings of peace.

As I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment as the President of the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. How appropriate it is to hold this conference in the land of Bharat – an ancient land known for its richness in diversity, wisdom, and capacity to search for creative solutions. Let us use this opportunity to refine our thinking to achieve the Aichi Targets for a more bio diverse and sustainable future for our world.

Since 1936 our organization, the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, has been dedicated to helping people understand and explore their inner resources as a basis for developing the highest level of personal integrity. As an international NGO in general consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, with centres in more than 110 countries, we offer a spiritual perspective to global concerns and education in the living application of human, moral and spiritual values. We have been actively participating at both MOP/COP 6 and COP11. We have been carefully listening to the deliberations of the broad spectrum of biodiversity – the myriad problems therein, and options for solutions.

In alignment with the Aichi Targets: Strategic Goal A, addressing the underlying causes of the loss of biodiversity and its Target 1 – and I quote: *“By 2020, at latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably”* – end quote, the Brahma Kumaris understand that nothing will change if we don’t consider the problem at the most fundamental level of people’s behavior, lifestyles, and value systems. It is crucial that these value systems correspond to the principles and values associated with a biodiverse and sustainable world.

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Madam President,

Real change in any social or environmental system must begin and be sustained in the minds and hearts of human beings. We recommend as a foundational solution, an awakening of a biodiversity consciousness. This means reminding ourselves that the biodiversity crisis is not external to us, and that it can only be changed if we change our awareness and so our entire thinking around this issue.. To heal the living system of nature, we must first bring a change in our awareness and heal the living system of our thinking.

Madam President, with this in mind, we are considering three areas for further development and collaboration:

1) It is a well-established fact that thoughts and intentions affect matter. Therefore communities and governments at all levels must harness the capacity of human minds and hearts in order to bring positive change.

2) Attitudes among people, from those in large cities to small-hold farmers, must change from one of 'rights,' where nature is used as a commodity, to one of 'reverence' where what is taken from nature is appreciated, used with care and returned in some way.

3) At the core of the Brahma Kumaris' work is expertise in the interconnection between awareness, attitude, vision, action and the world. All real change – from big changes in the world to small changes in a single life – occurs as a sequence of subtle shifts, beginning with a change in awareness. We wish to offer this expertise to further empower those who are working towards conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Finally, if we continually maintain the attitude of 'my' organization, 'my' country, 'my' needs, nothing will change. Like any ecosystem, we are all part of a greater whole. The attitudes we have and the choices we make, do not just affect us. They affect each and every part of our global living ecosystem.

I thank you, Madam President