

Closing Plenary Intervention

Global Youth Biodiversity Network

Thank you Mr. Chair for supporting us and giving us the opportunity to intervene.

We have come here driven by the realities we have **witnessed** and experienced back in our countries.

Through our on-the ground experiences we have gained important knowledge and skills to conserve biodiversity, it is **now** necessary to **step up our game** and go beyond our local and national communities and establish an international initiative for youth engagement on biodiversity so that we can connect our on-ground experiences to the international negotiation arena and **remind** governments to take our rights and concerns into account.

We understand that our life experiences might not have been enough to fully inform us on how to engage in international negotiations and we are aware that the road ahead is a long and difficult one.

We might slip and fall sometimes, but we still stand here, clear of our convictions because we know that more than 3 billion of us back home are facing hunger, war, poverty, unemployment and exploitation **every day**.

We also know that the past environmental abuse by our great great grandparents, grandparents and parents means that the world **we** will live in 20 years from now, will be a harsher and a more unforgiving one.

We know that these negotiations under the UNFCCC, CBD, UNEP, CSD and so on, are our last chance for a peaceful solution to save our ever depleting resources on the planet. We cannot afford to give up and **we won't!**

We are here, eager to learn from you the steps of this tricky road of international processes and be an **asset to implement the Convention and its Aichi targets**. We know our strengths and we will continue to do our best in our communities but we want to keep working internationally and unleash the potential of youth as change agents. Use your power to give us the chances we need and **we will** use our **passion and energy** to help steering the world on course.

Finally we would like to express our gratitude to India for using your power to support us as important stakeholders, Norway for giving us a valuable lesson and an opportunity to grow, and the Secretariat, the ILCs, NGOs and other rightholders that have always supported us and our activities.

Thank you very much.