DRAFT REMARKS

SBSTTA CHAIR

SBSTTA 25 reception

15 October 2023

Distinguished Delegates,

We have had a fruitful day today and made significant progress with our extensive programme of work.

I am happy that we can take a little time now to relax and informally engage with each other.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation on your behalf to UNEP and the Secretariat for hosting this reception for us.

In particular, I would like to join in the celebrations of 20 years of implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

I was personally here in Nairobi on 15 May 2000 when President Arap Moi was the first signatory to this unique international instrument that contributes to sustainable development and straddles the worlds of biodiversity, biotechnology and trade.

During my tenure as the Chair of SBSTTA, I was pleased to oversee the important discussions on Risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms following their referral to SBSTTA by the COP-MOP. SBSTTA was able to adapt and handle these complex issues alongside synthetic biology in order to respond to the request by the COP of ensuring a coordinated approach on these matters and thereby ensuring sound recommendations to COP and COP-MOP.

I am pleased to note that COP-MOP-10 has showed further confidence in the role of SBSTTA on supporting the programmes of work under the Protocol by referring a second topic to SBSTTA- Detection and identification of living modified organisms.

As a result, SBSTTA-26 will consider two items related to biosafety and make important recommendations to COP-MOP-11.

I am also happy to join in the celebration of the 13th anniversary of the adoption of the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety!

It certainly is a remarkable achievement for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety!

I wish us all a pleasant evening and good work this week!