

OPENING SPEECH BY THE PARLIAMENTARY VICE-MINISTER
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR KOJI KAKIZAWA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to open the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), in the presence of the Chairman of the Standing Committee, and all the distinguished delegations, international organizations and representatives of NGOs, from more than 100 countries around the world. I would like to express my sincere gratitude on behalf of the Host Government of Japan for the tireless efforts made by the staff of the CITES Secretariat and all others concerned, as well as for the co-operation extended by the people of Kyoto, where the meeting is being held.

Since the creation of life on this planet until this very day, human beings have witnessed the extinction of countless species of wild fauna and flora. In 1986, there were more than 10 million species of wildlife, of which, it is estimated, 3,000 species of fauna and 16,000 species of flora are now threatened with extinction. Some species may have perished due to inevitable changes occurring in the natural environment. However, there are many other species that have died out or have become endangered because of damage to their habitat or because they have been recklessly hunted down. This is a tragic fact.

When we reflect upon our daily lives, we see how deeply they are dependent on wildlife in various ways. For example, our food, clothing and shelter (that is, the necessities of life) and our economic activities can not be sustained without the utilization of wildlife. Also, it is the beautiful flower blooming in the meadow, or the song of the birds in the forests that helps us recover from weariness in our daily routines. The sight of birds on high and of wild animals scampering about brings pleasure to us all.

When we think of this close relationship between human beings and wildlife, it is undoubtedly clear that we need to commit ourselves to their coexistence. Indeed, if we do not do so, none of us will be able to continue our existence. With this recognition, CITES was adopted in order to save endangered species of wildlife through monitoring and controlling of international trade. For the nearly 20 years since its inception, CITES has achieved great success, as a result of major efforts by everyone concerned. Today, the number of Parties to the Convention has reached 112, which is proof that CITES is becoming more widely recognized. Furthermore, we expect that this Convention will play an increasingly important role in the future.

For the human race to peacefully coexist with wildlife and try to utilize the latter appropriately on one hand while protecting them on the other, we have to keep "protection" and "utilization" in good balance. This, indeed, can be called the basic concept of CITES, which tries to recognize the economic value of wildlife while working towards its protection.

We should not deviate from this concept of "Harmony between protection and utilization" for this Convention to further play a more effective role, including the co-operation of each country. Also, regulations under this Convention should be guided by studies based on scientific and objective data.

Japan, since accepting the Convention in 1980, has been making substantial efforts towards its implementation in good faith, with the idea behind the Convention being kept in mind. We are thus ready to join together with all of you here to enforce CITES effectively.

In addition, I would like to emphasize that, since the governments of many countries are directly involved in this Convention, each naturally has the direct responsibility to observe this Convention, but it is all of us everywhere who have to save wildlife from the threat of extinction. One quite often hears of people returning from abroad having souvenirs such as handbags or belts which they bought overseas confiscated by the Customs. This, I believe, would not happen if each member of the public were well informed of the object and regulations of the Convention.

What is really crucial to achieve the ultimate goal of "Harmony between protection and utilization" of wildlife is to enhance our recognition of what we can do for humankind and wildlife, and for the earth itself. Our government, for its part, is ready to do its best to educate and inform its citizens in this regard, and at the same time, we would like to ask for the generous contributions from participating NGOs and media to do likewise.

Protection of wildlife should not limit itself to controlling international trade, or to hunting and trade inside the country, but should be extended to other efforts such as the protection and improvement of the habitats of wildlife. Thus more extensive and positive measures are strongly required.

We must realize that an environment in which it is difficult for wildlife to survive will also be one with a poor quality of life for human beings.

Japan is willing to make a sizeable contribution towards this environmental issue, which is now placed as one of the most important subjects in our foreign policy. We are also making greater co-operation in the financial and technological fields.

This year marks 20 years since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which gave birth to CITES. More and more international concern is being raised toward the environmental issue, as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) is scheduled soon. It is a great pleasure, that early in this important year, Japan has been able to serve as the host country for this meeting with the aim of protecting wildlife, which is a part of the important issue of the environment.

I would like to propose, ladies and gentlemen, that we take as our guiding concept "a better world for wildlife, a better world for human beings" and, always keeping those words in mind, make yet greater efforts.

During the next twelve days, discussions will be held on a wide variety of issues. I sincerely hope that this meeting will reach a fruitful conclusion, through the efforts of all the participants. With these remarks, I would like to declare the opening of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Thank you.

WELCOMING SPEECH BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, MR S. NAKAMURA, MINISTER OF STATE

Honourable Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a Director-General of the Environment Agency, and as a Minister in charge of global environment, I would like to extend to all of you a cordial welcome on this occasion of the Opening Ceremony for the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

With the global environmental issue becoming one of the central political agenda of the world today, it is indeed a great pleasure for me that this meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, a Convention with a noble goal to protect species of wildlife from extinction, is being held here in Japan.

The Japanese attitude towards the Convention has often been subject to criticism in the past as lacking sufficient system for its enforcement. However, with the co-operation and enormous efforts made by the ministries, agencies and other personnel concerned, we have withdrawn a number of specific reservations. Also, we, as a host country of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, have relentlessly made every effort to try to ensure the smooth proceeding of the meeting.

Enthusiastic discussions are expected for two weeks from today, on management and future direction of the Convention, to protect wildlife in the world. I sincerely hope that these discussions will be guided by scientific evidence and biological knowledge, in the pursuit of appropriate protection and sustainable use of wildlife, which is an ultimate goal of the Convention.

Honourable Participants,

As human beings living on this planet, it is our responsibility to save the global environment and to hand it over to the next generation. Wildlife also needs to be protected and to live in harmony with us.

There may be differences in the positions of various countries in the world, but let us all, from both developing and developed countries, strive hand in hand. Japan pledges to make all possible efforts for the enhancement of survival of wildlife in the world.

Although Japanese land is small, it is a long archipelago from north to south, covering from the subarctic zone to the subtropical zone. We have still abundant and very much diversified nature left. Also, this City of Kyoto prides itself on its ancient history. I hope this will be a good opportunity for all of you to get in touch with nature and the traditional culture of the nation, and to deepen your understanding of our country.

Let me conclude my welcoming address with a sincere hope for the success of this meeting.

Thank you very much.

WELCOMING SPEECH BY THE VICE-MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND
INDUSTRY, MR N. HATAKEYAMA

Mr Chairman, Members of the Diplomatic Community, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the participants gathered here in our ancient city and former capital.

Representing the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the Management Authority which handles all international trade in wild fauna and flora, I would like to present our views.

As you know, it is said that there are approximately 3,000 endangered species of animals, and 16,000 endangered species of plants in the world. Unless adequate measures are taken to conserve these species, an irreparable situation will result. In order to protect these endangered species, it would be most effective to control international trade in wild fauna and flora. Therefore, I think it is necessary to make efforts to enforce the Global-Network that preserves endangered species which has been established according to the provisions of the Convention.

Since Japan joined the Convention in 1980, we have been making efforts to properly enforce our system of international trade management of wild fauna and flora. Further, as the occasion demands, we have been strictly regulating imports beyond the obligations of the Convention. For example, we certify export permits we receive by contacting the Management Authority of the exporting country. Now, on the occasion of the meeting, Japan is planning to strengthen the management system to control trade in live animals, because the treatment of live animals requires circumspection.

Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult for the importing countries to control international trade in wild fauna and flora by themselves. Therefore, it is necessary for us to obtain co-operation from the Parties and the Secretariat. For these reasons, it is of great importance for the Parties to amend the listings of species included in the appendices of the Convention, to exchange information on various matters and to standardize the construction of the Convention.

Today, Japan has become the second largest economy; as a result, we have an obligation to positively make contributions to the world. It is our fixed national policy to promote import, as we are argued to foster the stable growth of the world economy by offering our huge domestic market to the world. On the other hand, Japan is said to have been the second biggest importer of wild fauna and flora. In this field, however, instead of promoting imports, we will make every effort to strictly control imports of wild fauna and flora.

Finally, I sincerely hope that this meeting will be fruitful for all Parties and participants. I would also like to express my deep gratitude and respect to everyone who made great contributions to the organization of this meeting.

Thank you.

ADDRESS BY THE ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME, MR ANTHONY T. BROUGH

Your Excellencies, Mr Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates, Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Dr Mostafa Tolba, I wish to welcome you to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

Dr Tolba, together with Prince Philip, will address this meeting on Wednesday.

Accordingly, I do not intend to make a speech dealing with the substance of the meeting. This will be covered by Dr Tolba. He has however, asked me to convey his apologies for not being present at this opening ceremony and to welcome you all to Kyoto on his behalf.

Many of the issues with which we shall have to deal in the next two weeks are ones on which many delegations feel strongly. Inevitably though, not all delegations will see these issues in the same way. Arguments will at time become heated. Let us though participate in the debates on the basis that the different views that will be expressed are honestly and sincerely held and that solution must be found in a spirit of compromise, taking each others' views into account.

We are dealing here with important issues of sustainable development - not just conservation. Let us all listen to the range of arguments with care and sympathy. I for one look forward to these debates.

SPEECH BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE,
MR MATTHEW W. MATEMBA

On behalf of the Standing Committee and in joining hands with the Host Government - the Government of Japan, I wish to warmly welcome all of you present at this meeting. We are particularly grateful to Mr Kakizawa, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, for coming to open this meeting, and to other officials from the Japanese Government who are here to witness this memorable occasion. We feel greatly honoured by this gesture.

May I also thank Mr Brough, Assistant Executive Director of UNEP, who has kindly agreed to be with us and work with both the Standing Committee and the Parties represented here. The continued support of UNEP to the Convention is greatly appreciated by the Parties. We note with satisfaction that this support is a clear indication of the commitment of UNEP to CITES as well as an acknowledgement of the success of this international Convention.

On behalf of the Parties to CITES, I wish to express my profound gratitude to all the distinguished participants and guests who are here to join us in this very important biennial meeting. CITES has withstood the test of time. The number of Parties to the Convention continues to increase. As of today the number of the Parties to the Convention is 112, all of them joining hands for the protection of the threatened wild species against greedy over-exploitation through international trade. We warmly welcome the new members who are: Burkina Faso, Poland, United Arab Emirates, Cuba, Brunei Darussalam, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, Bulgaria, Mexico, Uganda, Djibouti and Czechoslovakia*. By the way, our new Secretary General is from Bulgaria. I will introduce him to you in another minute or so.

After the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, in Lausanne, in October 1989, our former Secretary General, Mr Eugene Lapointe, left the Secretariat in November 1990. The Secretariat operated without a Secretary General until July 1992. It is now my pleasure to have to introduce and present to you our new Secretary General, Ambassador Izgrev Topkov. On behalf of the Parties and the Standing Committee, I wish to thank Dr Tolba for his personal support and co-operation during the time of selecting the new Secretary General.

May I also, on behalf of all of you here, wish a warm welcome to Ambassador Topkov. We wish to assure Mr Topkov of our support during his term of office. May I also on behalf of the Parties and the Standing Committee thank the outgoing Secretary General, Mr Eugene Lapointe, for the good services he rendered to the Convention. We all wish him good health and success in his new life.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not express on behalf of the Parties our appreciation to Jaques Berney and all other Secretariat staff for their co-operation and hard work when the Convention was operating without a Secretary General. The Parties greatly appreciate the co-operation and support you are already giving the new Secretary General. This is highly commendable. In particular, I would like to draw your attention to Mr Berney's dedication to the Convention. He has been with CITES since the very start and has had to act as Secretary General on more than one occasion. Many individuals have mentioned to me that they believe his continuity of efficient service has been a major factor in the strength of CITES and in holding things together during difficult periods. He certainly deserves our deepest thanks.

The Standing Committee and the Secretariat have made every effort to structure this meeting so that it maximizes all opportunity to solve problems without side-tracking the main issues. At the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Lausanne, Switzerland, Parties had enormous success in their debates, including the controversial debate on the African elephant. You may have already noted that the issue has re-surfaced on the agenda. The concern over the African elephant is for all of us, regardless of ideology. Nobody wants to see the "Jumbo" disappear from the jungles or plateaux of Africa. May I urge all of you to continue to discuss the issues on the basis of knowledge and not hearsay. Above all, may I call on all of us to exercise as much restraint as possible. This is true when we are discussing and debating other issues particularly new proposals for listing in any appendices. In addition, we will be discussing proposals from African Parties, which are of fundamental importance to our Convention. These proposals seek to clarify the role of CITES in the conservation efforts of today and tomorrow. I sincerely hope that we can debate these issues in a way which will lead to a better understanding of the relationship between the Convention and our conservation objectives.

It is our sincere hope that the issues we are going to discuss in the next two weeks will be meaningful and practical in today's work.

* Djibouti and Czechoslovakia acceded to CITES on 7 and 28 February 1992 respectively. They will become the 113th and 114th Parties on 7 and 28 May. (Note from the Secretariat).

On behalf of the Standing Committee I wish you successful deliberations and an enjoyable stay in this beautiful and historic city.

ADDRESS BY THE GOVERNOR OF KYOTO PREFECTURE
MR TEIICHI ARAMAKI

On this occasion of the opening of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora to be held here in Kyoto, I would like to extend, on behalf of citizens, my heartfelt welcome as the Governor of Kyoto Prefecture.

Kyoto is scheduled to celebrate the 1200th anniversary of its foundation in 1994, and is proud of its profound history and tradition, as well as its abundant nature and beautiful greenery. It is a great privilege and honour for us to stage this international meeting on the protection and use of wildlife here in Kyoto, and to play an important role of communicating the results of this meeting to the international community.

Currently, we are facing global environmental destruction, and our immediate duty is to find and implement effective measures to conserve this global environment.

This year, in June, we are scheduled to hold the United Nations Environment Development Conference, or Earth Summit, and I have been informed that the protection of the habitat of wild fauna and flora will be one of the most critical issues.

In view of these circumstances, I strongly hope that, at this meeting of the Conference of the Parties, discussions on various issues, such as the principle of commercial use of wildlife, will make major progress, that rules will be established for the protection and sustainable use of wild fauna and flora, and that a great contribution will be made to the conservation of wildlife through its protection, as it forms an indispensable part of the global ecosystem.

In order to protect the abundant nature of Kyoto, which nurtured this capital of history and culture, and to hand it over to the next generation, we who are working at the administration of prefectural government constantly keep in our minds the desirable relation between nature and human beings, an example of which is the establishment and management of a foundation for greenery and culture, with a budget of ten billion yen.

At the same time, we are steadily making progress in our efforts, by inviting to Kyoto international research institutions working for the benefit of the global environment, and research organizations for industry and technology on global environment, thereby keeping our promise made at the Arche Summit.

We would like to take this opportunity to be further involved in the environmental issue, by enhancing awareness of and activities related to environmental protection in the prefectural administration.

Kyoto is the best place to see the manifestation of our love of nature in our lifestyles, the spirit which Japanese people have cherished from old times and the very core of Japanese culture.

It would be our greatest pleasure if, during your stay in Kyoto, you will touch upon the heart of the Japanese culture and become familiar with Kyoto of Japan, as well as Kyoto as a part of the world.

Also, to commemorate the meeting, we are holding an exhibition of the works by Japanese painters who are closely related with Kyoto, featuring brightness, beauty and value of wildlife. I hope you all will take a look at the exhibition.

Last but not least, I sincerely hope for your good health, and the great success of this meeting. With this remark let me conclude my address.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

ADDRESS BY THE MAYOR OF KYOTO CITY,
MR T. TANABE

On behalf of Kyoto City, I would like to extend a few words on this occasion of the opening of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

It is very meaningful for Kyoto City to welcome this meeting and the participants from more than 100 countries around the world.

Currently, we are engaged in activities to disseminate the concept and the purpose of this Convention widely to the citizens of Kyoto City.

We have witnessed a serious deterioration in the natural environment on a global scale including air pollution and deforestation. Protection of the global environment is the significant task for which all countries in the world are responsible.

Therefore, I firmly believe that the Convention, which tries to achieve the protection of endangered species through worldwide co-operation, fulfils a very important role for the protection of global environment in the future.

The City of Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan for more than a thousand years, has been developed as a centre of politics, economy and culture. Even today, we have many tourists from in and out of Japan, attracted by its splendid cultural heritage, traditional events and beautiful natural scenery.

Now, spring, the most beautiful season in the year, with cherry blossom, is approaching day by day.

Kyoto is the spiritual home town for Japanese people, a city we are very proud of, and I would like you to spend as much time as you can spare to look around in this city.

I would like to conclude my speech by wishing that the Convention, which has attracted worldwide attention, will bear fruits from which to develop future activities for the protection of global environment.

"COUNTING THE COST", A STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME, DR. MOSTAFA K. TOLBA

Mr Chairman, Your Royal Highness, Mr Deputy Minister of Environment of Japan, Mr Secretary General of the Convention, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I owe you an apology for failing to join you at the opening session. Conditions beyond my control deprived me of the opportunity of doing so. But it is a distinct pleasure to be here today for three reasons.

First: Sharing the podium with such an illustrious personality as HRH Prince Philip,

Second: To join former Ambassador Topkov, the new Secretary General of the Convention as he takes up the significant responsibility of serving you on behalf of UNEP, and

Third: My first visit to Japan was to Kyoto in 1974 to participate in the opening of the International Conference on Science for Environmental Management. I am glad to be back.

Let me start, Mr Chairman, by belatedly joining you all in extending deep gratitude to the Government and people of Japan, and Kyoto Prefecture and City in particular, for hosting this very important meeting.

Friends,

CITES is under threat. It is an irony - though not a very funny one - that CITES should be an endangered species.

If we are to save the Convention then this meeting must make a number of decisions about the future of CITES.

Less than three months from now the international community will be meeting in Brazil to try to establish an agenda for environment and development as we enter the next century. I can not predict you the content of that agenda, but one thing of which I am fairly certain is this: the poor nations of the world want to see a stronger and more effective partnership between environment and development. There are complaints - land complaints from a number of developing countries, that the rich are more interested in making the Third World into a natural history museum than they are in filling the bellies of its people.

That complaint also goes to the heart of CITES' mission, and as you consider the proposals before this meeting, I think it would be useful to bear in mind a number of questions about CITES' own future. What role do you see for it? How do you want it to carry out that role? The Secretariat has made its comments on documents Doc. 8.48 to Doc. 8.52. I do not intend to repeat any of them now.

As I see it, the most important questions regarding CITES future are:

- 1) CITES' role in promoting sustainable development in the Third World. Do you see CITES' principal role as preserving species, or in utilizing them for development? Is there a gap here between delegates? And, if so, are there ways in which that gap can be bridged?
- 2) CITES' focus. Should it attempt to cover a very limited number of highly visible species; or should it attempt to cover a broader range of less glamorous species?
- 3) CITES' role in the world of liberalizing trade. To what extent will the treaty obligations of Parties as regards free trade compromise the effective implementation of environmental accords such as CITES?
- 4) Parties' commitment to making CITES work. CITES is only as good as the national legislation that backs up. Are Parties committed to enacting legislation that makes CITES effective within their own borders?
- 5) The budget. Are Parties being realistic about the CITES budget? Is it feasible to keep increasing the demands on the CITES Secretariat when the international community is unwilling to adequately support the ten professional men and women who carry out CITES' mission?

First, the question of pure preservation versus the need for economic development. CITES does not provide a legal basis for turning the world into a zoo or into a museum. The philosophy that underlies it is one of conservation and utilization, rather

than outright preservation. The framers of the Convention believed that by properly controlling the trade in endangered species both preservation and development could be advanced.

This original intent of CITES should be upheld. CITES should be used to guide States towards preserving what needs to be strictly preserved of their living genetic resources and more importantly towards the sustainable utilization of these resources. Putting a species on Appendix I - which is tantamount to a trade ban - should be adopted after very careful consideration. Should this be used as a temporary stop-gap measure or as the policy option of choice? The Appendix-I listing of the African elephant, for instance, has done a great deal to significantly reduce poaching in much of Africa, as the World Wide Fund for Nature has made very clear in its recent reports. But that is not the end of the matter. Another and equally serious threat to the elephant is habitat destruction, and that is not caused by poaching - it is caused by demographic pressure and by poverty.

Banning trade alone is not going to resolve this issue.

One way or another we have to find an economic incentive to preserve that habitat.

I am aware that there are large and powerful groups - mainly in the rich, industrialized countries - who consider that banning of trade in elephant products alone is the solution. They are here today, and their voices will be heard. I understand fully their point of view and I respect it. However, there is also a large number of people - thousands of millions of them - whose voices will not be heard. They use a small fraction of the world's resources; they earn a pitiful fraction of the world's income; they bear the brunt of famine, of poverty, and of disease. They want a better life. They also happen to live mainly in the tropical and sub-tropical belts of our planet: the areas richest in biological diversity. Those people can not be denied the right to use their natural patrimony. What they are asking for is a fair compensation by the world community for the non-use of their natural patrimony. Their contribution to the endangered species is to host them. But they need to be made able to do that. One way of doing this is through eco-tourism; provided that a part - a large part in fact - of its revenues goes to the poor people in the local communities surrounding protected areas.

I stand here today to ask you to keep CITES on track. I believe its original intent was a sound one. If there is a need for a treaty for the complete preservation of species, then let it be negotiated. But CITES is not that treaty. CITES stands for sustainable development. That emphasis is important if we are to get the support of the majority of the people, the poor people, especially in developing countries, for the protection of the endangered species - all the endangered species.

That brings me to the second issue - that of the number of species which should be covered by CITES. The last meeting, two years ago, took this Convention dangerously close to being a one-species show.

Someone once coined the phrase "charismatic megafauna" to describe the hold on the imagination exercised by a few large, noble animals. I am entirely in favour of conserving those species by whatever means necessary. But we must not be mesmerized by megafauna alone. We must learn to look with equal concern at a more representative range of species. I am gratified that the status of 97 species - including a number of plant taxa - are being reviewed at this meeting, and I trust that when the time comes to debate the merits of each proposal, that a sense of proportion will be kept in mind. The megafauna may be more glamorous, and may be of more immediate appeal to the donation-giving publics of Europe and North America but, as a biologist, I am sceptical of arguments which say that they are more important than their less glamorous cousins. I believe, for instance, that the trade in birdlife has been dangerously neglected in recent years. The trade in tropical birds is, in many cases, completely unsustainable, and serious attention has to be paid to it. I sincerely hope the debate will reflect that fact, and that future proposals will reflect the broadest possible concern for the integrity of the world's biological diversity.

The third issue that has been on my mind is that of treaty obligations.

Many of you - most of you, I am sure - will have followed the debate last year about GATT and the import of tuna into the United States. A GATT tribunal rules that member States may not use national environmental standards as a rationale for restricting imports from another State. That, the argument goes, would be restricting free trade.

Whatever the merits of that particular case, one thing is very clear: efforts must be made to make sure that the liberalization of trade does not compromise efforts to improve the environment and its natural resources. The good work of CITES must not be swept away in the name of free trade.

Part of the reason that this problem has arisen lies with the Parties themselves. States frequently take seriously paradoxical stands on certain issues. They lobby fiercely for environmental agreements brokered by UNEP and others. And on the other

hand their representatives fight just as fiercely for the elimination of trade barriers, even when that could prejudice environmental agreements. There has to be some coherent attempt to address this contradiction.

UNEP is currently working with GATT to ensure that free trade does not mean the lowest common denominator for environmental protection. There is some room for optimism. The GATT Secretariat, for example, says that it sees no contradiction between UNEP-brokered agreements severely limiting the trade in ozone-depleting chemicals and technologies to produce or use them and existing trade agreements. That is heartening. Other pronouncements are less heartening. The GATT statement two weeks ago that (and I quote) "increasing trade improves our ability to invest in and protect the environment", is difficult to support. Free trade increases consumption, that is true. But to argue that increased consumption has been good for the environment is difficult to accept.

Ultimately it is only governments that can sort out this confusion. Governments must decide in which areas free trade should be expanded, and in which areas trade controls are necessary to save the environment.

My own feeling is that international trade can be greatly liberalized without jeopardizing the environment. I was in politics myself long enough to know that the great majority of tariff barriers are not erected to protect the environment or to advance any cause of genuine merit, but rather to prop up industries that should not be propped up, and to protect sectors that would ultimately benefit more from having to face international competition. So it seems logical to establish procedures for determining which exceptions to free trade are of genuine merit, and should be so listed under Article XX of GATT. It seems simple - it is - but it will not happen by itself, and it will not happen so long as governments argue one thing in one forum and another somewhere else.

My next concern: implementation.

The list of alleged infractions against CITES' provisions for the two years 1989-1991 is more than 70 pages. It makes sad reading. What is most distressing, however, is that many of these infractions are continuing due to the lack of enforcing legislation at the national level. I am not referring to any specific country - but to a whole range of countries, developed and developing.

If States make no effort to make domestic legislation fall in line with common policies agreed to in the international community, then of course there will be conflicts between the standards of one country and another.

This is an area in which UNEP can only do so much. We can put in place the international structures, but at the national level, States are on their own. We can and do provide training for national officers to identify CITES-protected taxa, but we can not give them the legal authority to act. And unless States do more to enshrine the CITES system in national law, then our work - at the international level and on training - will be useless.

I must say, however, that governments are not the only one responsible for achieving this. The non-governmental community could be playing a much bigger role. They have been quick to address some very public issues - such as the fate of the elephant and the whale - and they have done a tremendous job at this. They have been very vocal with ozone depletion, climatic change and movement of hazardous wastes. But why so much attention to these issues - CFCs, CO², wastes and the status of one species under CITES - and so little attention to trade negotiations that could sweep CITES and other environmental treaties away altogether? Why such concern for one ecosystem, but so little advocacy for concrete commitments in the currently-negotiated biodiversity convention that could save a hundred such ecosystems?

These questions need an answer - and quickly, if CITES is to survive.

Finally, let me turn to the question of the CITES budget. There is a paradox here. Governments - 112 of them, and more all the time - expect the CITES Secretariat to be doing more and more. Yet they do not pay their bills on time, or they do not pay them at all. On the 31st of December 1991, 32% of CITES pledges for 1991 were outstanding. Pledges for years gone by have not been honoured, and CITES' programmes are suffering as a result.

Let me remind those of you who are not regulars here that CITES is operated by ten professional men and women. Ten people charged with ensuring the effective operation of one of the world's most visible instruments of international law. It is hardly a bloated bureaucracy. It did a tremendous job, it still does, and deserves better treatment than it gets.

The role of the Executive Director of UNEP and the CITES Secretariat is to ensure that the Parties' policies are implemented. That applies equally to the policy guidance of the Standing Committee. As such, it concerns me that CITES' budget is in the position it is. UNEP has had to advance CITES USD 800,000 already this year to cover its bills while it

waits for contributions to flow into the Trust Fund. While this money is tied up at CITES, our own programmes at UNEP are affected.

Due to the lateness of contributions paid into the Trust Fund we have been reduced to the absurd position of having to offer CITES staff contracts of just four months (of which two have now gone by) while we wait for funds to trickle in. This not only makes life extremely difficult for the staff members concerned and their families, but also makes long-term planning essentially impossible. I hope that countries will be willing to back up their concerns during the meeting of the Parties with the financial commitments that are badly needed, and in sufficient time to enable the smooth functioning of the Secretariat.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I never meant this statement to sound negative. If I have sounded so, then it is because of my firm belief that CITES plays a vital role in the whole field of conservation of biological resources, and I believe that without your interest, your participation, and your support it would be a far weaker instrument. Even the most bitter arguments - and there have been many, and there will be many more - have the positive effect of focusing public attention on issues that sorely need attention. My concern is that we could be doing more, much more and a little attention to the five points I have raised here would go a long way. This is your Convention, and it is only you who can make it work.

Thank you.

SPEECH BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF WWF - WORLD WIDE FUND FOR
NATURE, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

First of all, Mr Chairman, I would like to say what a great honour it is to be invited to address delegates to this very important conference.

It is, of course in my capacity as International President of WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature that I accepted the invitation, and I want to take this opportunity to bring to all participants the greetings and good wishes from the whole WWF family of 28 affiliated and associated national organizations around the world.

CITES was born before I became President of WWF, but you will recall that it was conceived by IUCN and WWF, so I believe that we can feel a justifiable sense of pride in the success and achievements of our offspring.

The control of poaching and smuggling may not be the most glamorous area of action in the battle to maintain biological diversity and to prevent the extinction of species on this planet, but such control is crucial to the success of the battle.

It is one thing to raise money from the public for the conservation of endangered species; it is quite a different and a much more dangerous matter to tackle the poachers and smugglers of such species. These people are criminals and they can be single-minded and extremely violent in pursuit of easy profits. We must never forget the many wardens of protected areas, law-enforcement and Customs agents and volunteers of all kinds who have suffered or become casualties in this battle.

I know that everyone directly involved in CITES appreciates that this illegal trade involves far more than the 'front page' animals. The African elephant is big news, although the Asian elephant is probably in greater trouble. The African black rhino gets a lot of attention, but the Indian, Sumatran and Javan species are much closer to extinction. WWF adopted the giant panda as its symbol, but there are many numbers of other mammals, as well as birds, reptiles and plants in equal danger of extinction in China.

Even less publicity is given to the trade in threatened monkeys and primates, reptiles, birds and fish. Endangered plant species are hardly given any attention whatever. In most cases the trade continues because of totally inadequate scientific information about the status of the most vulnerable populations.

This is most evident in the oceans. Accurate information about wild fish stocks is virtually non-existent. Fishing in the seas beyond territorial limits is free-for-all. Even though there have been some welcome international agreements about fishing techniques, the means of enforcement hardly exist. Even the International Whaling Commission, which was the means by which international agreements were reached to halt commercial whaling, has to rely for the enforcement of its decisions on the goodwill of the sovereign States which are parties to the agreements.

That, of course, is a feature - some would say a weakness - of such international conventions, including CITES. I believe that we need to think more seriously about whether anything should, or could, be done to strengthen the powers of these international partnerships.

The sad fact is that far too many Parties to CITES have failed - and continue to fail - to accept the basic requirement of Article IV. They have not established independent scientific authorities to ensure that exports of Appendix-II species are limited to levels known to be sustainable. Gathering this essential information and enforcing the legislation are undoubtedly very expensive, but I am sure that international assistance would be available to any of the less prosperous countries which showed a positive commitment to the Convention.

Deciding which species and how many can be traded is one thing, there is also the need to ensure that the conditions of transport of these wild animals are reasonably humane.

Here again the record is not good and the level of mortality among wild animals in transport is unacceptably high. It is unfortunately the case that too many Parties to the Convention are still not enforcing the IATA regulations concerning the transport of wild animals.

Many people know about the war against the drug-barons and the huge sums of 'dirty' money that flow from the business that destroys so many human lives. I believe that the illegal trade in endangered species is just as dangerous. The trade itself has already been directly responsible for the extinction of many species and today it threatens the survival of even more. Furthermore, as in the drug trade, money from these criminal operations finds its way into bribery, corruption and violence.

CITES has a critical part to play in the unrelenting campaign against these evils and it is absolutely vital that it gets its strategy and tactics right. Emotion is a very powerful force, but it is not altogether reliable as a basis for finding practical solutions to difficult problems.

Whatever the motives that drive people to become involved with the conservation of nature, the measures and actions have to be dictated by reason and the realities of the situation. It is obviously very important to have appropriate protective legislation in place, but any proposed legislation must first be shown to be capable of achieving its purpose in practice. Even then, it is a great deal more important - and far more difficult - to ensure that it is strictly, efficiently and imaginatively enforced.

Most important of all is never to lose sight of the purpose of the legislation. Blind bureaucratic adherence to general rules does not invariably achieve the conservation of particular species.

It is also worth bearing in mind that resolutions, be they ever so pious, if they are significantly against the economic self-interest of the people most directly affected, have never been known to have much effect in practice. Indeed the wrong sort of legislation can easily become counter-productive by forcing people to turn to clandestine methods of earning a living. It can also remove significant economic incentives to conserve species. To adopt what Aristotle pointed out many centuries ago: that which has value to nobody is of no interest to anybody.

Even with the full support of the local people, the effective protection against encroachment and poaching in National Parks, nature reserves and other protected areas and the control of smuggling, demand the input of considerable human and economic resources. Taking into account the very real and immediate problems that all governments have to face in providing adequate housing, education, employment opportunities, health care and all the other services that people have a right to expect, it is hardly surprising that measures needed to control poaching and the illegal trade in wildlife products has a generally low priority. I would suggest that support for the management of protected areas in the less prosperous countries should have a much higher priority for national and international aid agencies.

As for the control of smuggling, is it wholly impractical to think of providing CITES with the means to recruit and train an international force of expert advisors who would be available to assist governments and their Customs Authorities in the enforcement of CITES regulations?

Such financial and practical support would allow the governments of these countries to allocate more of their own scarce resources for purposes higher up in their political and social priorities. It might also help to eradicate potential opportunities for corruption.

Above all, I am convinced that every effort must be made to enlist much more enthusiastic and dedicated support from the Parties to the Convention. Somehow or other, CITES has to be pushed right into the mainstream of government business.

Becoming a Party to the Convention must no longer be seen as a PR exercise and a politically convenient way for governments to demonstrate their support for the idea of conserving endangered species; it must become the basis of an active and energetic policy to control an extremely dangerous and criminal threat to the earth's biological diversity, on which all life ultimately depends.