



Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats of the Convention on Migratory Species

Distribution: General

UNEP/GA/MOP3/REPORT ANNEX VI

17 October 2019

Original: English

THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES
Entebbe, Uganda, 18-20 June 2019

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CMS SECRETARIAT

Opening Statement to the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement On behalf of Amy Fraenkel, Acting Executive Secretary, CMS 18 June 2019, Entebbe, Uganda

The Honourable Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities of the Government of Uganda, Godfrey Kiwanda,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Ms. Amy Fraenkel, I would like to welcome you to the Third Meeting of the Parties of the Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats.

CMS has been engaged in efforts to protect gorillas since 1979 when CMS Parties listed Eastern Gorillas on Appendix I, the same year the Convention was signed.

After the listing of Western Gorillas on CMS Appendix I in 2005, the Gorilla Agreement was concluded in 2008.

The fundamental principle of the Agreement is to take co-ordinated measures to maintain gorillas in a favourable conservation status or to restore them to such a status.

The importance of cooperation can be seen in the example of the increase in the Mountain Gorilla population in the Virunga Massif, as reported last year. Without the joint efforts of the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Uganda, this success would not have been possible.

But many gorilla populations still face increasing threats, such as those from habitat degradation, infrastructure development and illegal hunting. Today, gorillas continue to be threatened with extinction.

Therefore, we must do better to protect gorillas and their habitats.

The conservation of gorillas has been at the heart of CMS from its beginning and CMS stands ready to support Gorilla Range States in the implementation of the Gorilla Agreement and associated concerted efforts.

In this regard, I am happy to note that we have worked with the GRASP Secretariat to increase our collaboration.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The international community is now looking to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to set the agenda on biodiversity for the next decade.

This is a good time for the Gorilla Parties, non-Party Range States and other stakeholders to look back the journey we have made and to strategize on future actions to further improve our conservation efforts.

It is my hope that the three non-Party Range States will accede to the Agreement soon and to join us on in this effect.

I would like to close these opening remarks with the quote from Dr. Jane Goodall:

“There is still so much in the world worth fighting for. So much that is beautiful, so many wonderful people working to reverse the harm, to help alleviate the suffering. And so many young people dedicated to making this a better world. All conspiring to inspire us and to give us hope that it is not too late to turn things around, if we all do our part.”

I wish you all a successful meeting.

Thank you.