

**Acceptance speech of H.E. Mr. Abdul Qader Ba-jammal  
At the 2008 Champions of the Earth award ceremony**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me and my country, the Republic of Yemen, to stand in front of you at this uplifting and distinguished ceremony, to receive one of the 2008 UNEP Champions of the Earth awards.

I am even more happy to be here in Singapore. This beautiful country with its clean, sophisticated and elegant environment provides an example of an environmental culture which has grown up and is flourishing due to good governance and pioneering leadership.

I come from Yemen, a country in West Asia. I feel keenly the great responsibility placed upon me by giving me this award. It is a responsibility to not only continue promoting environment protection and confronting challenges my own country faces, but also carrying this message throughout the West Asia region.

We should all focus our efforts on supporting and diversifying environmental activities of governmental and non governmental organizations. We must also place biodiversity and climate change at the heart of our activities in the field.

Public awareness, education and instilling values from childhood onwards can have a profound impact on public culture, by placing the environment at the center of people's thinking and their interactions with each other, and with nature. The media as well, in all its different forms and methods, provides one of the most important tools for promoting sustainable development.

Finally, the essential ingredient for environmental protection in our region and in the world is peace. It is the only way to secure sustainable and lasting development and to ensure a happy society, full of love, friendship and cooperation among everyone. The environment doesn't belong to a particular country or region. It belongs to us all, the people of the world. We are all neighbors sharing one planet.

I thank you for honoring me with this tribute.