

José Sarukhán Kermes

Commissioner for Human Development

José Sarukhán Kermes was born in Mexico City on July 15, 1940. He obtained a degree in biology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) in 1964. He received a master of science degree in agricultural botany at the College of Postgraduates in Mexico in 1968 and, in 1972, he was awarded a doctorate in ecology at the University of Wales.

From 1972 to 1975, Mr. Sarukhán was president of the Botanical Society of Mexico. From 1979 to 1985, he was the director of the Institute of Biology at the UNAM. In 1984, he was president of the Academy of Scientific Research and, from 1986 to 1987, he was president of the Association for Tropical Biology. In 1987, he was appointed co-ordinator of scientific research for the UNAM and, from 1989 to 1996, he served as president of the university.

Since 1992, Mr. Sarukhán has been the national co-ordinator of the National Commission for Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity. From 1992 to 1995, he was president of the Union of Universities of Latin America. In 1994, he was elected vice-president of the Ibero-American University Association for Postgraduate Studies. During the 1997–1998 academic year, he was a visiting professor at the Centre for Conservation Biology at Stanford University.

Mr. Sarukhán became Commissioner for Human Development on Dec. 1, 2000.