



*Office of the President  
of the Economic and Social Council*

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Nestor Osorio  
President of ECOSOC 2013  
Opening Session of the Ministerial Segment  
10th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests  
8 April 2013, Istanbul, Turkey**

**Prime Minister Erdoğan,  
Minister Eroğlu,  
Chairman Ruales,  
Under-Secretary-General Wu,  
Director McAlpine  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is an honour for me to address the Ministerial Segment of the 10th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF10). I wish to express my gratitude to the Government of Turkey for hosting this important meeting in the historic and beautiful city of Istanbul.**

**The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is a Charter body of the United Nations established to coordinate the economic, social and environmental work of the Organization. The Council works through**

an impressive system of interlocking subsidiary bodies –such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) – which is the only existing institution in the multilateral field that aims to integrate economic, social, and environmental objectives into consensual intergovernmental policymaking.

The institutional relations between the Council and its subsidiary bodies are intended to be complementary and mutually supportive. Over the years, however, the need to strengthen such relations has been increasingly recognized, in order to increase coherence, and synergies in the work of the United Nations on economic, social and environmental issues.

The UNFF - established through Resolution 2000/35 of ECOSOC to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, and to strengthen long-term political commitment for this purpose - is a unique subsidiary body of ECOSOC. It is the only one with universal membership. It is also the only body within the United Nations that holds regular debate on the most critical issues related to forests, and provides policy advice and recommendations to the UN system, governments and other stakeholders.

The Forum's work has resulted in the adoption of significant policy recommendations and decisions on various issues related to sustainable forest management at all levels. A significant contribution of the Forum was the agreement on the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (forest instrument) and its four global objectives on forests, unanimously endorsed by the

Council and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007.

The Forum has also contributed to strengthen system-wide collaboration and coordination on forest issues across the UN system through a network of fourteen forest-related international organizations, conventions and UN programs. Through the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the UNFF has also strengthened the role of the Council in promoting system-wide coordination with regard to the socio-economic and environmental services of forests.

Because of its uniqueness, the UNFF is well positioned to support the Council in bringing together the three dimensions of sustainable development while addressing the intersection of these dimensions with forests, under the framework of an inclusive and participative focus.

**Distinguished Delegates,**

The Rio+20 Outcome Document on “the Future We Want” lays out a strong vision for the achievement of a sustainable future, where the management of forests and other natural resources feature prominently.

The Document has also given the ECOSOC a key role in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development, providing the Council with an opportunity to play the lead in this area and to

contribute significantly to the definition of a post-2015 development agenda. The Council's extensive experience in monitoring and reviewing progress towards the MDGs and the in-depth work of its subsidiary bodies on a broad range of relevant cross-cutting issues provide a solid base for the work of the Council in this context.

Taking into account the evident cross-cutting nature of forests, the UNFF, in particular, has a central role to play in the way the Council responds to the sustainable development challenge by bringing together the economic, social and environmental aspects of one of the most critical natural resources: forests.

The Forum has advanced understanding on the critical issues related to forests, including financing sustainable forest management, as well as on the interconnection between forests, poverty eradication, environmental degradation and economic development. In recent years, the Forum has also been especially successful in integrating the issue of forests into the broader United Nations development agenda and into the sustainable development process. At the same time, the Forum should promote solutions that would finally lead societies to adopt sustainable patterns of production and consumption in both developed and developing countries, ensuring a successful and responsible use of world's resources.

As the President of ECOSOC, I am particularly pleased to see that the Forum has decided to discuss the inter-linkages between the Rio+20 outcome, the post-2015 UN development agenda and the future of forests during this session, including at a ministerial roundtable tomorrow. The outcome of such deliberations will

certainly enrich the Council's contribution to the special event to be held during the 68th session of the General Assembly in 2013, to follow-up on efforts toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Forum could provide an even more strategic contribution to the Council's efforts to promote sustainable development if enabled to do so by a stronger and more inter-connected ECOSOC system.

Member States have long discussed the need to strengthen the role of the Council to fulfil its Charter's mandates. At the ECOSOC Special Ministerial meeting held in September 2012 to follow-up to the Rio+20 Outcome, they have expressed support for a major system-wide reconsideration or "rethinking" of the ECOSOC agenda setting, working methods and multi-stakeholder engagement to enable the Council to respond more effectively to new and emerging challenges.

We need to identify ways and means to make the Council more nimble and more focused on the real issues affecting the world's citizens and to provide a space where global leaders, policy makers and development practitioners come together to solve problems and spread solutions.

The UNFF, for example, addresses a full suit of issues related to forests that cut across all three dimensions of sustainable development. It is thus critical to ensure that the outcomes of UNFF deliberations inform the deliberations of other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous People and other ECOSOC bodies in a more deliberate

and systematic way; and that the UNFF is able to draw on the deliberations of these bodies as input for its work.

**Excellencies,**

The work of the ECOSOC system, including its subsidiary bodies like UNFF, plays a crucial role in the pursuit of our goal of making the world a better place. So let's take the task that has been entrusted to us with the utmost commitment and spirit of cooperation and respect during this session. This Forum is designed to take key decisions on critical issues to build a better future and prosperity for current and future generations.

Thank you very much.

---