

SAMOA



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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia
Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations
and on behalf of the Asian Group Members States on the Occasion of the
adoption of the Non-Legally binding Instrument on All Types of Forests
17 December 2007**

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,**

The General Assembly has just successfully adopted the "Non-Legally binding Instrument on All Types of Forests", a truly momentous occasion worthy of commemoration.

The member States of the Asian Group on whose behalf I take the floor are pleased to be part of this Special Event to mark the formal adoption of this landmark agreement in the context of international forest policy and cooperation. The instrument is the culmination of many years of hard and dedicated work. Appropriately, we would like to acknowledge the outstanding results achieved at the seventh (7th) session of the UN Forum on Forests with the adoption of both the non-legally binding Instrument on All Types of Forests and the Forum's Multi-Year Programme of Work.

Mr. President,

The Instrument, despite its non-legally binding and voluntary nature, still provides a comprehensive basis to strengthen political commitments and action at international, regional and national levels to implement global sustainable management of all types of forests and to achieve the four shared Global Objective on Forests, together with the need to enhance the

contribution of forests to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, particularly in respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. The Instrument focuses on all types of forests worldwide and calls for a more holistic, instead of sectoral approaches.

The adoption of the Instrument is timely. It provides a platform where none existed before for all stakeholders to come to work together to ensure that our forests are managed sustainably for current and future generations. Moreover, it provides an avenue to address a whole range of issues on forestry and timber in a comprehensive manner. This is particularly urgent considering that forest resources play vital economic, environmental and socio-cultural roles in sustainable development, including an increasingly recognized role in the provision of ecosystem services, including climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Mr. President,

Forests the world over face intensifying threats to their sustainability, productivity and in some cases their very survival. Moreover, forest loss and degradation also threaten livelihood security and well-being of dependent households and communities.

The adoption of this historic agreement moves us closer to the achievement of the UN Forum on Forests principle objectives of enhancing international cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues and strengthening political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

In closing, let me on behalf of the Asian Group Congratulate all those who has a role to play in facilitating the early adoption of the non-binding Instrument on all types of forests.

Thank you.