

Remarks by UNFF-8 Bureau Chairman

H.E. Dr. Boen M Purnama

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The Republic of Indonesia**

**On the Occasion of the Meeting between the Chairpersons of the
Functional Commissions
and ECOSOC Bureau, New York**

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Mr. President,
Distinguished members of the ECOSOC Bureau,
Distinguished Chairpersons of the sister Functional Commissions of the Council,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be participating in this joint meeting, in my capacity as the Chair of the UNFF-8 Bureau. I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to this important responsibility. I wish you all success, and assure you of the support from the UNFF Bureau.

I would like also to congratulate you on convening this very important meeting, which provides a unique opportunity for all the Chairpersons of the functional commissions and the Council Bureau to share their experiences and expectations, to create an understanding for the way forward in the collective agenda of the “development” side of the UN. I would like to assure the Council that the Bureau of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is fully committed to assist the Council in its delivery of its new functions, in particular, regarding the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

Although each subsidiary body has its own specific mandate and focus, there is a common thread that runs through all bodies and the Council – a pursuit for making the lives of billions of people better and in keeping our planet Earth healthy. In this regard, I am pleased to inform the meeting that the UNFF is well-placed to contribute to the work of the Council and the coming AMR and DCF events.

The theme of the 2008 Review, *"Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development,"* is at the centre of the Forum's mandate.

Mr. President,

At this opportunity, it would be appropriate to briefly inform the meeting participants about three recent developments related to the Forum and forests.

Based on the outcome of the seventh session of the Forum last April, and supported by the Council, the General Assembly adopted the ***“Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (NLBI)”*** on 17 December 2007. Its adoption was a historic achievement and marked a new era in sustainable forest management and international cooperation.

One of the primary purposes of the Instrument is to “enhance contribution of forests to the achievement of the millennium Development Goals, in particular with respect of poverty eradication and environmental sustainability”. Thus, the

Instrument will not only be a vehicle to promote SFM and achieve the four ambitious Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) but is also a significant medium to help achieve MDGs, in particular in the developing countries.

Even though it is labelled as non-legally binding, this instrument is a manifestation of the international community to strengthen political commitment to address forest issues at global and national levels in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

Second important development is that the Forum adopted its new Multi-Year Programme of Work last year, for the period 2007-2015. This new programme of work is also designed along environmental, economic and social aspects. As such, the next session in 2009 will consider “Forests in a changing environment”, in particular in the context of climate change, biodiversity and desertification/deforestation. The following ninth session in 2011 has an overall theme of “Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication.” And the tenth session in 2013 has the theme of “Forests and economic development”.

Third significant development related to forests is the recognition of the role of forests in the outcome of the last December’s Climate Change Conference in Bali, over which the Government of Indonesia had the honour to preside. The decision to include “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)” in the Bali Roadmap was a major breakthrough. It was an important first step in what needs to be done in the future, in appreciating the value of forests toward mitigating the effects of climate change, as well as in creating markets for the environmental services that forests provide I would like to assure you that both the UNFF and UNFCCC will work synergistically and collaboratively in this matter.

Mr. President and fellow Chairpersons,

On the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and Development Cooperation (DCF), the Forum advised its Secretariat to report on activities and decisions of the ECOSOC and its functional commissions related to the Multi-Year Programme of Work and to prepare a summary of relevant decisions of the Forum to contribute to the work of the Council, as needed. *Although there is no separate stand-alone agenda item on ECOSOC matters in its programme of work*, the Forum has internalized the relevant IADGs into its work, will be following up on them through its normative functions, and will be encouraging countries, regional bodies, IGOs and major groups to implement them.

On the practical aspect of coordinating preparations and contributions to the annual substantive sessions of the Council, we support organizing a panel discussion during the commissions’ annual session to discuss how they may best

support the Council's work, especially the AMR and DCF, as well as in other areas of the Council's work. We had convened such panels successfully in the past, and would continue to do so in the coming sessions. We also welcome the proposal of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies to present their respective bodies' work in support of the AMR and Coordination segment of the Council. The suggestion of considering some common issues of the functional commissions at the Council sessions would not only provide necessary high-level political support to those issues, but also provide a direct link between the Council and the Commissions. We also welcome the two-way information flow and addresses by the Council President to the Forum sessions.

The Forum has strongly supported close working relationships with other Functional Commissions to enhance the understanding of our mutually inter-related concerns. It has a long tradition of sharing information with the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, by Chairs of each body periodically addressing other's sessions, and we would welcome increased collaboration with other Commissions. The Forum has planned to provide relevant input to the Commission on Sustainable Development when it addresses forests in 2012-2013. Recently, the secretariats of the Forum and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice have begun coordinating their respective works in combating illegal international trade in forest products. There is no doubt that working together on related issues from different perspectives (and mandates of respective bodies) enhances effectiveness in resolving problems.

To conclude, I wish to reiterate our appreciation for organizing this important meeting, and to assure you that the UNFF Bureau stands ready to work together with the Council and with all subsidiary bodies on our common mission of sustainable development.

Thank you for your kind attention.