



**National Workshop on
the preparation of Indonesia's national position on the
UN Forum on Forests deliberations**

**Statement of
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Please check against delivery

Excellencies;

Dr. Toni Suhartono, Director for Center for Forestry Planning and Statistics for the Ministry of Forestry;

Mr. Salman Alfarisi, Director for Economic Development and Environmental Affairs with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Ladies and Gentle men,

It gives me great pleasure to be here this morning, in this beautiful city of Cianjur in West Java and to be at the National Workshop on Global Forest Policy Issues. Let me also express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting this important meeting – but I would also like to express my sorrow and condolences after learning about the sad and unfortunate events recently in Yogyakarta, one of the historic locations in your forest-rich country.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on two points. First, I would like to briefly inform the Workshop about the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the outcome of its recently concluded sixth session. Next, I would like to comment on the topics of this session that are of great relevancy to the UNFF process.

As you are aware, the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) was established in 2000 as a main body of the new international arrangement on forests, with an overall goal to promote sustainable forest management (SFM) worldwide. All member States of the United Nations are also members of UNFF. The UNFF Secretariat is based at the UN headquarters in New York.

The UNFF is supported by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) – which is a unique voluntary partnership of fourteen international organizations, institutions and convention secretariats that have substantial programmes on forests. The CPF includes the FAO, ITTO, World Bank, GEF, CIFOR, ICRAF, IUFRO, UNDP, UNEP, the Rio Convention Secretariats and the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, which also represents the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the United Nations.

Forest policy supports development

The decision makers want to hear convincing results based on evidence from field research projects, such as concrete recommendations aiming at finding solutions to alleviate poverty. We need:

Coherent and predictable forest policies which would recognize all forest benefits. Supportive policies and enabling environments are instrumental in attracting the private sector and in creating the much-needed forest markets and revenues from forest products and services.

Forests and forest products can be used in support of social development, environmentally sound management and conservation, and economic growth in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to the overall development of society as a whole. Also, policies that bring stability and expand the capabilities of individuals and communities can diversify their income base, and are essential for long-term sustainability.

We need efficient and effective land tenure systems and access to forest resources. These are crucial for local and indigenous communities, and provide an economic incentive for sustainable forest management. When people have better control and ownership of forests, then they have greater opportunities to capitalize on forest assets, and even greater incentive to sustain the resources.

A crucial basic tenet of sustainable forest management is that of good governance and adequate law enforcement. A lack of economic opportunities combined with weak law enforcement often leads to illegal activities which would deprive the local forest-dependent community of the possibility of sustainable livelihood, pushing forest-dependent people further into extreme poverty.

We have seen recently that internal conflicts and illegal harvesting of forest resources go hand in hand. Illegally harvested timber is exported to finance violent activities. Such crises are often beyond the coping ability of national governments, and require intergovernmental support, supporting, particularly, scientific evidence.

The policy process should be holistic, but it is still very complicated

Achieving the MDGs and other international commitments requires new, more holistic thinking on the interaction and linkages between people and the precious natural resource base.

Forests are deeply entwined with other sectors of society, and their management requires coordinated efforts and inter-sectoral approaches.

There is a need for a broader, more inclusive vision to create mechanisms that would allow for interaction between various stakeholder groups and sectors that influence forests and the forest-dependent poor.

In many countries, national forest programmes provide a framework for dialogue to address macro-level and cross-sectoral issues critical to sustainable forest management. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are increasingly used as a roadmap for development and, more recently, as a plan for country-level achievement of MDGs. Thus, it is of utmost importance that PRSPs be aligned with national forest programmes and strategies.

We need targeted and tailored translations of results

As I mentioned, the United Nations Forum on Forests was established in 2000 particularly for discussions, policy development and norm-setting on these interlinked forest-related issues, and to foster cooperation on such cross-sectoral priorities at all levels. As a high-level body under the UN ECOSOC, which is the main UN body for all economic, social and environmental policies, and with universal membership, UNFF pulls together various forest-related international and regional processes, institutions and instruments, as well as stakeholders from civil society.

The task of the substantive Secretariat of the UNFF is to support intergovernmental negotiations, and to translate the decisions and background information into official UN documentation. The UNFF Secretariat functions as the Secretariat of the present International Arrangement on Forests by servicing this UN body and by supporting the collaborative partnership of intergovernmental and international organizations.

CPF was formed to support the work of the UNFF as a voluntary partnership. It receives guidance from the member States through the UNFF. By definition, this partnership supports the UNFF and its member States in the implementation of the decisions made by UNFF and the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including through their technical and financial resources. It also coordinates joint action between members of the partnership, in a collaborative manner.

Increasing mutual understanding of the role of policy-making processes

At UNFF 5 we faced particularly difficult political and practical problems. There were three major challenges:

First, how to continue the advancement of the implementation of actions already agreed on by the UNFF and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

The second challenge was to assess the performance and effectiveness of the Forum in its first five years, and within five years, for UNFF to consider with a view to recommending to the ECOSOC, and through it to the General Assembly, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

And the third one was to chart the way forward for the Forum – to consider its future within the institutional position in the UN system, including the specific agenda items that it might address – and its future method of work and structure, including the specific agenda items that it will address.

UNFF 5 confronted these tasks from within a broad and compelling political context. This context is also framed by the policy decisions and targets set out in the Implementation Plan of the Johannesburg Summit; by the Millennium Development

Goals; and by the agreements reached at all the UN conferences since the 1990s that have helped to produce consensus on the wider UN development agenda.

There were intense discussions around how to address means of implementation, working modalities with the incorporation of regional meetings, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework and the establishment of global goals or targets.

However, different expectations among countries on how and what is required to strengthen the arrangement might have contributed to the resulting lack of agreement. As such, deliberations on the future arrangement continued in February 2006, at UNFF6. The sixth session of the UN Forum on Forests, held in February this year, was undoubtedly a milestone in the international cooperation on forests. It agreed upon a draft resolution, which will be adopted by its parent body - the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

This draft resolution - designed to further strengthen the international arrangement on forests - provided a sharper focus to its work by setting four clear Global Objectives on Forests, broadened the scope of the arrangement with additional functions and decided to develop a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests.

The four Global Objectives would seek to:

Reverse the loss of forest cover and prevent forest degradation worldwide;

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;

Increase significantly the area of protected and other sustainably managed forests, and increase the proportion of forest products derived from sustainably managed forests; and

Reverse the decline in official development assistance and significantly increase new and additional financial resources from all sources for SFM.

Taking into consideration new challenges, the draft resolution also expanded the scope (i.e., principal functions) of the international arrangement on forests to:

Enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of internationally-agreed development goals;

Encourage and assist countries to implement forest conservation strategies and increase the area of forests under SFM; and

Strengthen interaction between the Forum and regional and sub-regional organizations and major groups.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UN Forum on Forests also agreed to develop and adopt a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests at the seventh session of the Forum next year.

This decision is clearly the biggest leap forward in the international forest community in a long time. This instrument is expected to mobilize more political commitment to achieve the Global Objectives on Forests; raise new and increased financial resources; generate more actions at global, regional and national levels; and enhance cooperation and coordination from all sides.

To facilitate the preparation of the instrument, an *ad hoc* open-ended working group will be convened later this year. In this regard, we request your Governments, through you, to kindly submit their proposals on possible elements of a non-legally binding instrument by 30 June this year.

As I mentioned above, the Forum's interaction with forest-related entities at the regional level will be one of the core elements to be taken into account when developing a new Multi-Year Programme of Work next year. In this regard, we would like to request regional and sub-regional organizations and processes to support this effort to appropriately integrate regional collaboration into the work of the Forum.

Indeed, UNFF has been promoting inputs from regions to its deliberations. I would like to mention here that, at the fifth session in May 2005, the Forum convened a highly significant panel discussion on the Asia-Pacific region's experiences of SFM. This year at UNFF6, among other events, a side event was organized by the Asia Forest Partnership. Those of you who were present at these events would agree that such events provided exposure to the world body of the advances made, lessons learned and the challenges ahead for the Region.

The draft resolution of the sixth session reaffirms the role of the UN Forum on Forests in continuing to provide guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests for enhanced collaboration and policy and programme coordination among members for SFM. The resolution also invites the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to further harmonize processes for voluntary monitoring, assessment and reporting.

In addition, the sixth session of the Forum agreed on a draft ECOSOC decision to recommend that the General Assembly, at its sixty-first session, proclaim 2010 as the International Year of Forests.

In conclusion,

I would say that at UNFF6 the international community made some critical and far-reaching decisions for forests and society. What is needed now is to translate words into actions – real, concrete and measurable actions to achieve the Global Objectives on

Forests, by promoting sustainable forest management and contributing significantly to poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and broader economic development.

The UNFF is about each and every country of the world. It is a platform for addressing the common concerns of forests and for acting collectively to sustainably manage forests for the benefit of our planet and future generations. The Forum is also for the constructive engagement of intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders. The UNFF Secretariat looks forward to working closely with Indonesia, to strengthen the link between the region and the UNFF process for further advancement of policies and programmes for SFM, and for improving the livelihood of people.

I wish you a very successful Workshop session.

I thank you for your attention.