



**Statement of Mr. Pekka Patosaari  
Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat**

**to the**

**5th Ministerial Conference of the MCPFE**

**Warsaw, Poland  
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*Your Excellency, Mr. Jan Szyszko, Minister of the Environment of Poland,  
Your Excellency, Mr. Terje Riis-Johansen, Minister of Agriculture and Food of Norway,  
Excellencies responsible for forests in Europe; Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

I speak to you at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe with a great sense of privilege and honour. At the outset, I would like to congratulate all the European countries and members of the MCPFE for the manner which you have collectively driven the Pan-European process forward during the last decade and a half.

Globally, this process has become known for its dynamic and long-term prospects on forests, its comprehensive guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management, as well as its emphasis for global-regional policy coherence, leading to their integration into national measures and technical solutions. Likewise, it is well-recognized as a cross-border participatory model, engaging relevant forest-related processes in the development and implementation of joint actions on forests. The interaction of a wide spectrum of countries, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, forest owners and local communities is truly commendable.

*Excellencies,*

In April this year, the UN Forum on Forests successfully concluded the negotiations and reached a milestone agreement on the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests, which represents over 15 years culmination of work under the global forest dialogue. The Forum also agreed on its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the period 2007–2015, incorporating its broadened functions reflecting its dynamism and new realities.

In my view, the Instrument has a great deal of potential embedded in it. It opens a new era in the pursuit for Sustainable Forest Management with a stronger focus on implementation and inter and intra-regional cooperation than ever before. It brings all sectors of society, from civil society and business, to local governments under a global umbrella offering an articulation of Sustainable Forest Management as the overarching set of principles and objectives at both national and international levels. In addition, it provides countries with a number of policy proposals intended to steer and assist in the implementation of sustainable forest management. These include guidance on such issues as:

- ◆ Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
- ◆ International Trade in Forest Products
- ◆ Protection of Forests
- ◆ Science and Research
- ◆ Public Awareness and Education
- ◆ Private Sector and Industry
- ◆ Indigenous and Local Communities
- ◆ Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting

Of equal importance is the long-standing and fundamental call for new and adequate means of implementation, in particular finance, which remains critical in achieving our goals. The agreement at the Seventh Session of the UN Forum on Forests on developing and considering for adoption a concrete global mechanism for funding sustainable forest management of all types of forests is really a bold step towards another landmark decision, scheduled for 2009. This issue has been a critical element of the international negotiations on forests! Therefore, it will definitely be a crucial topic at the Forum's Eighth Session, in 2009, and constitutes the core of our work from now till then.

A firm decision on the establishment of a funding arrangement would significantly boost progress towards sustainable forest management and further intensify international cooperation. To this end, I urge member countries of the MCPFE to be supportive of the Forum's Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting in 2008, as well as of other country-driven activities in support of the work of the Forum, preceding its preparatory meeting.

*Excellencies,*

The UN Forum on Forests' new mandate, as set in its new Multi-year Programme of Work, is a comprehensive and an engaging one. In order to achieve progress on the implementation of the four Global Objectives on Forests and the Instrument, the UN Forum on Forests needs to reinforce its links to several other processes and sectors, such as climate change, biological diversity, desertification and those seamlessly linked to the promotion and implementation of the internationally-agreed development goals.

Drawing on the Ministerial Declaration and the two Resolutions of this Conference, it is apparent that the global - regional policy coherence and action on forests is strong and well-conceived. This is precisely the kind of political message that sends a clear and collective signal to the global forest community of the importance on the Global Objectives on Forests, the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument and the strengthened interaction and cooperation between international and regional forest processes.

I strongly believe that the long tradition of cooperation on sustainable forest management between the UN Forum on Forests and the MCPFE will be even further strengthened in the years to come. The forthcoming session of the Forum in 2009 will address issues closely related to those of the Warsaw Conference, and I am positive that the proactive, visionary and collaborative nature of this process will undoubtedly contribute to the discussions of the Forum.

*Excellencies,*

The act of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, when the signatory States and the European Community take another step forward, signalling your role in the implementation of forest-related decisions, will send a strong message of the region's continuous commitment and innovative actions in achieving sustainable forest management. At the same time, your message will constitute a significant contribution to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ministerial Review of the ECOSOC under next year's theme, "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development".

The success of this Warsaw Conference will be marked by and is based on the leadership and commitment displayed by the people at this meeting. The future of Europe's forests is in your hands, and the assurance of a better quality of life for all.

Thank you.