

< Check against delivery >

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Cho Hyun, Permanent Representative,  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations**

**Sixth Committee, 75<sup>th</sup> session of UNGA**

**Item 182 (Observer status for the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization  
in the General Assembly)**

**6 November 2020, New York**

---

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

I would like to introduce a draft resolution entitled “Observer status for Asian Forest Cooperation Organization in the General Assembly” circulated as document A/C.6/75/L.7 on behalf of 17 co-sponsors, namely Afghanistan, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Germany, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, and my own country, the Republic of Korea. After the issuance of this draft resolution, Bangladesh, Qatar and Turkey have also cosponsored it.

Mr. Chairman,

Habitat destruction, such as deforestation, resulting from climate change and other factors is increasingly forcing disease-carrying wildlife closer to humans, allowing more zoonotic pandemics to thrive. This is one of the very reasons we request observer status in the General Assembly for this intergovernmental

organization with the mandate of sustainable forest management amid the spread of COVID-19.

AFoCO fully meets the two requirements for observer status in the General Assembly as set out in General Assembly decision 49/426. First, AFoCO is an intergovernmental organization. The negotiated text of the Agreement establishing AFoCO was adopted by 14 countries in 2015 and entered into force in 2018. With an international legal personality, AFoCO is accountable to the parties to the Agreement. The Agreement reaffirms that AFoCO was established as an intergovernmental organization.

Second, AFoCO's activities cover matters of interest to the General Assembly. AFoCO was established to strengthen cooperation among members and with partners in the forest sector and to promote action-oriented sustainable forest management practices through policy support, capacity development, and inclusive partnerships to address the adverse impacts of climate change.

If granted observer status in the General Assembly, AFoCO would be able to engage more efficiently with the international community with a view towards greater relevance and impact alongside global and regional partners. This would greatly facilitate ongoing efforts to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by building durable solutions to present and future challenges in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, I would like to reiterate the collective hope of the co-sponsors that the Committee would give favorable consideration to our request, which will only add value to and enrich the work of the General Assembly. We look forward to broad support from Member States for this draft resolution and its adoption by consensus. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. /End/