

**United Nations Forum on Forests
Bureau of the Sixth Session (UNFF 6 Bureau)**

Minutes of the fourth meeting

The UN Headquarters, DC 1 – 1235, New York
25 – 26 January 2006

Participation

Bureau members: H.E. Prof. Judith Mbula Bahemuka; Mr. Majdi Ramadan, Mr. Jose Antonio Doig and Mr. Franz Perrez. Mr. Tono Kruzic sent regrets and Ms. Irena Zubcevic from the Croatian Mission participated on his behalf.

UNFF Secretariat: Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Mr. Mahendra Joshi, Mr. Jorge Illueca, Mr. Peter Csoka, Ms. Njeri Kariuki and Ms. Barbara Tavora-Jainchil.

Secretary of the Forum: Ms. Vivian Pliner-Joseph

Others: Mr. Fredrick Matwang'a, Kenyan Mission

The agenda of the fourth meeting of the Bureau were the following:

1. Adoption of agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of the third meeting, held on 28-29 November 2005
3. Welcome to the new Vice-Chairman of the Bureau representing GRULAC
4. Review of the preparations for the sixth session
 - a. Outcome of the briefings to negotiating groups (29 Nov – 2 Dec 2005)
 - b. Organization of work of the Sixth Session
 - c. Division of responsibilities among the Bureau members
 - d. Documentation
 - e. Travel support to participants and donor contribution to the trust fund
 - f. Major group participation
 - g. Special events/side events
 - h. Press/Media
5. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests
6. Other matters
 - a. Programme on Sunday, 12 February 2006
 - b. Scheduling of the Bureau meetings during the session
 - c. ECOSOC-related matters
 - d. Accreditation of IGOs

Opening of the meeting

H.E. Prof. Judith M. Bahemuka, Chair of the Bureau called the meeting to order at 10.00am on 25 January 2006 and welcomed all members of the Bureau and their representatives as well as the members of the Secretariat.

1. Adoption of agenda

The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda that had been circulated in advance, with additional items under "Other matters".

2. Adoption of the minutes of the third meeting, held on 28-29 November 2005

The Bureau adopted the minutes of the third meeting.

3. Welcome to the new Vice-Chairman of the Bureau representing GRULAC

Chair welcomed Mr. Jose Antonio Doig (Peru) as the new member of the Bureau from GRULAC. Mr. Doig in turn also expressed his appreciation to the Chair and other members of the Bureau, and stated full commitment to the work of the Bureau.

4. Review of the preparations for the sixth session

a. Outcome of the briefings to negotiating groups (29 Nov – 2 Dec 2005)

The Bureau reviewed the informal briefings conducted by the Chair and the feedback received from the delegates. It was the view of the Bureau that the briefings provided good opportunity for exchange of views with member State delegates on how to prepare for the session and what aspects need greater attention in planning. It was well understood that the member States from all groups considered the draft text from the fifth session as the basis for work, they did not consider a need for holding informal consultations prior to the session but emphasised on securing better logistic facilities and utilizing the time more efficiently. The Bureau took those suggestions into consideration while preparing for the organization of work for the session.

b. Organization of work of the Sixth Session

The Bureau considered in great details in refining the draft organization of work. The revised draft would be posted in the UNFF website to assist member States prepare in advance their participation in the session.

c. Division of responsibilities among the Bureau members

In conjunction with the consideration of the organization of work, the Bureau discussed and decided the following division of responsibilities among its members:

Ms. Judith Bahemuka, Chairman: Plenary sessions;
Mr. Franz Perrez, Vice-Chairman: Co-Chair of Working Group 1, and Rapporteur;
Mr. Jose Antonio Doig, Vice-Chairman: Co-Chair of Working Group 1;
Mr. Majdi Ramadan, Vice-Chairman: Co-Chair of Working Group 2; and
Mr. Tono Kruzic, Vice-Chairman: Co-Chair of Working Group 2.

d. Documentation

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the two official documents, namely, (i) Provisional Agenda; and (ii) Note by the Secretariat with background and additional information, and transmitting the draft text from fifth session, have been produced in all official languages. In addition, the report of the Berlin country-led initiative was also being processed as the part of the official documentation. The documents have been posted in the UNFF Website.

e. Travel support to participants and donor contribution to the trust fund

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that there was an overwhelming interest in participation of delegations and resulting requests for travel support, summing up to \$370,000, which exceeded

the allocated funds by more than \$250,000. The Secretariat received generous contribution from a small number of donor countries but the difference between the demand and available resources was unsustainably big. The Bureau members would approach respective groups and encourage the members to contribute to the UNFF trust fund.

f. Major group participation

The Bureau expressed its desire and support to provide major group representatives adequate opportunities to contribute to the work of the session. The Chairman would chair the special side event organized by the major groups on Monday, 13 February 2006, and would also participate in the major group caucus on Sunday, 12 February 2006. The Bureau would encourage member States to actively attend the major group events.

g. Special events/side events

The Bureau expressed satisfaction at the arrangements made with the overall side events through out the two-weeks. The nine side events scheduled during the session represent diverse issues and stakeholders which were of prime relevance to the work of the Forum.

h. Press/Media

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the preparations for the press coverage and outreach activities during the session. Necessary arrangements with the Department of Public Information (DPI) and other related agencies are in place for press releases, interviews and radio/TV coverage.

5. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests

The Secretariat informed of the work of the Partnership and scheduled meetings, including those planned for on Sunday, 12 February 2006. There would be a joint meeting between the Bureau and CPF on that day.

6. Other matters

a. Programme on Sunday, 12 February 2006

The Bureau would meet on Sunday, 12 February 2006 to oversee the final preparations for the session. It would also meet with CPF and major group representatives.

b. Scheduling of the Bureau meetings during the session

The Bureau would meet everyday before and after the meetings of the Forum (9:15 – 9:45 AM, and after 6 PM), and more if necessary.

c. ECOSOC-related matters

The Chair informed the Bureau about a letter from the President of ECOSOC that explained about the priority works of the Council for 2006, its themes for high-level and coordination segment and request for more coordinated actions from its functional commissions. The Bureau appreciated the interest shown by ECOSOC on UNFF.

The Bureau also decided to request ECOSOC Bureau for holding a joint Bureau meeting to discuss the issues of mutual interest. Such joint meetings have been the practice and were found

very helpful in developing better understanding between the two bodies. The Bureau proposed to hold such a meeting on a day in the middle of the second week of the session. The Secretariat would coordinate with the respective Bureaus and Secretariats in scheduling the meeting and developing an agenda.

d. Accreditation of IGOs

The Secretariat of the Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC) with its headquarters in Yaoundé, Cameroon and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) with headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia have requested for granting "Observer" status to the Forum. The UNFF Secretariat reviewed the mandates and activities of these intergovernmental organizations and recommended them to the Bureau for granting the observer status. The Bureau decided to recommend to the Forum accordingly.

Closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked the Bureau members and the Secretariat for their active participation in the meeting and adjourned the meeting at 1.00 PM on 26 January 2006 (second day of the meeting).