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**STATEMENT  
by Mr. Ivan Sovetnikov,  
Head of the Federal Forestry Agency of the Russian Federation,  
at the High-Level Round Table  
of the 17th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

9 May 2022

Distinguished Madam Chairperson,

Distinguished colleagues,

The UN Forum on Forests is a key global platform for intergovernmental cooperation that has been hosting an open multilateral discussion on forests and related issues for more than two decades.

The UNFF agenda allows us to address topical issues of global forest policy and promote the forest agenda at high-level political arenas of the United Nations.

Today, the UN Forum on Forests is the result of many years of joint work of all stakeholders of multilateral international negotiation process. At the same time, I am convinced that the Forum has considerable potential for further progress.

1. One of the key functions of the UNFF is strengthening scientific cooperation. Research activities are stipulated in the Global Forest Goals. However, at present, the scientific component of the UNFF, in our opinion, is not strong enough. We invite the Forum to consider options for strengthening international scientific

cooperation on forests and related themes under the aegis of the UNFF. This would ensure scientific basis for strategic decisions by the Forum.

2. The goal of strengthening communication and outreach activities is also reflected in the Strategic Plan on Forests. It is obvious that the annual sessions of the UNFF are not enough for information exchange. I stay confident that launch of a UNFF online platform for continuous and open exchange of experience will contribute to the success of the Forum.

3. Wider use of all the official languages of the UN, of course, will help better cooperation on forests.

4. We also believe that it is necessary to enhance the intersessional work of the UNFF. The virtual format tested during the pandemic may help to make more efficient use of financial and time resources.

Regarding the mid-term review of the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests, I would like to share the following views.

The Russian Federation supports the initiative to establish an open-ended intergovernmental expert group on the mid-term review the International Arrangement on Forests and work on the options for further implementation of the Strategic Plan on Forests. We support the open-ended membership of this expert group which will ensure the participation of all interested members of the Forum. We believe that a formal status would be advisable for this expert group on the mid-term review of the International Arrangement on Forests.

The Russian Federation is of the standpoint that the UN Strategic Plan on Forests remains relevant and of great importance to global development. Without any doubt, the work on the Global Forest Goals contributes to the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, the goals of the Paris Agreement and the objectives of Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use.

The Federal Forestry Agency of Russia has respect and pays due attention to the decisions of the UN Forum on Forests. Forest policy of the Russian Federation takes into good consideration and evolves in line with the Global Forests Goals. The priorities of the forest policy of Russia include restoration and protection of forests, social aspects of forest sector, forest industry and science, as well as consideration of climatic factors in forestry.

I thank you for your attention and wish you effective and fruitful work at the 17th session of the UNFF.