

**United Nations Forum on Forests
Bureau of the Fifth Session (UNFF 5 Bureau)**

Minutes of the second meeting

Wednesday, 8 September 2004

12:00 – 3:00 PM New York Time (EST)

Participation

Bureau members: Mr. Manuel Rodríguez-Becerra (Chair), H.E. Mr. Denys Gauer, and H.E. Mr. Francis K. Butagira. Mr. Adam Craciunescu sent regrets and on his behalf, Ms. Gabriela Tanjala from the Romanian Mission participated.

UNFF Secretariat: Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Ms. Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist, Mr. Mahendra Joshi, Jorge Illueca and Mr. Peter Csoka.

UNFF Secretary: Mr. Moncef Khane and Ms. Lorna Fidler.

Others: Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, Chair, CPF and ADG, FAO/Forestry Department; and Ms. Andrea Alban, Co-Chair of the ad hoc expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests

The second meeting of the Bureau considered the following agenda items:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Preparations for the fifth session of UNFF
3. Meeting of the ad hoc expert group on “parameters”
4. Nomination of a Bureau member from the Asian Group
5. Other business

Opening of the meeting

Mr. Manuel Rodríguez-Becerra chaired the meeting. He welcomed all the members to the first face-to-face meeting.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda provided to the members by the Secretariat in advance.

2. Preparations for the fifth session of UNFF

Mr. Patosaari briefed the Bureau members on the preparations for the fifth session of UNFF, which will be held from 16 to 27 May 2005 in New York. The issues discussed

included: (i) ministerial high-level segment, (ii) organization of work, (iii) review process, (iv) documentation, and (v) country- and organization-led initiatives in support of UNFF.

Ministerial segment

It was decided that the high-level segment be organized with specific objectives and in such a way that the ministers responsible for forests would be involved in decision making. Accordingly, the focus of the segment would be on the future arrangement on forests and UNFF's contribution to the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration as well as the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, as mandated by ECOSOC and GA resolutions. Efforts will be made to make the segment highly effective and attractive to the ministers responsible for forests and the Heads of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) members.

The Bureau decided to schedule the high-level segment on Wednesday and Thursday of the second week of UNFF 5 (25-26 May 2005).

Organization of work

Bureau expressed satisfaction with the overall draft plan for the organization of work over the two-week period. It advised the Secretariat to further work on the plan in order for the Bureau to finalize it at its next meeting.

Review Process

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the on-going activities for the review of the effectiveness of the IAF, which would take place at UNFF 5. The requests for submission of information from member States and CPF members have already been sent out. The member States were requested to submit their country information by 31 October 2004, as per the UNFF 4 resolution. The Bureau members agreed to follow up on this matter with their respective constituent States.

Documentation

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the preparation of official documents for UNFF 5. The documentation is based on the provisional agenda for UNFF 5 as adopted by UNFF 4. One of the reports by the Secretary-General would be on the consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. The Secretariat would work with the Bureau on this politically sensitive issue.

Country- and organization-led initiatives in support of UNFF

The Bureau expressed support for the country- and organization-led initiatives in support of UNFF. Such initiatives had proved to be very effective in advancing the understanding of critical issues and facilitating the deliberations at the UNFF sessions.

3. Meeting of the ad hoc expert group on “parameters”

The third ad hoc expert group of UNFF on “consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests” in progress at the time of the bureau meeting in New York (7-10 September 2004). The Bureau members expressed satisfaction with the progress of the meeting, and hoped that the meeting would produce a valuable output that would facilitate the decision making process at UNFF 5 on the same subject. The Bureau members also agreed to remain active during the meeting to interact with experts, government delegates and other players, in preparations for UNFF 5.

4. Nomination of a Bureau member from the Asian Group

The nomination from Asian Group had not yet been made. The Bureau and Secretariat would continue to work for an early nomination of a representative from the Asian Group.

5. Other business

The Bureau members decided that the next Bureau meeting would be held in early December 2004 in New York. The exact date would be finalized after consultation for a most suitable date for all members.

The Chair of CPF, Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, briefed the Bureau members on the outcome of the recently held CPF meeting (6 September 2004) and assured the Bureau of the CPF members' commitment to support UNFF and its Secretariat. The Bureau expressed its appreciation to Mr. El-Lakany and CPF members for their excellent support to the work of UNFF.

Closing of the meeting

Mr. Manuel Rodríguez-Becerra expressed satisfaction with the discussion held at the meeting and thanked the members of the Bureau and the Secretariat, and concluded the meeting.