

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

Minutes of the first meeting via Telephone Conference

Tuesday, 17 August 2004
10:00 – 10:50 AM *New York Time (EST)*

Participation

All four members participated in the first meeting of the Bureau by telephone conference. They are Mr. Manuel Rodríguez-Becerra (Bogotá, Colombia), H.E. Mr. Denys Gauer (Paris, France), Mr. Adam Craciunescu (Bucharest, Romania) and H.E. Mr. Francis K. Butagira (Uganda) speaking from Durban, South Africa, where he was attending a meeting.

From the UNFF Secretariat, Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Ms. Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist, Mr. Mahendra Joshi and Mr. Peter Csoka participated.

A tentative agenda was circulated by the Secretariat beforehand to facilitate the discussion.

Mr. Pekka Patosaari, Coordinator and Head of the UNFF Secretariat greeted and thanked everyone for participating in the telephone conference.

1. Bureau affairs - Chairmanship and representation from Asia

The Bureau members nominated Mr. Manuel Rodríguez-Becerra (Colombia) to be the Chair of the UNFF 5 Bureau. The Forum will formally elect him at the opening of its session on 16 May 2005 in New York. Mr. Rodríguez-Becerra accepted the invitation to chair the Bureau and thanked the Bureau members for their trust in him.

On the issue of the pending nomination from Asia, the Bureau members advised the Secretariat to continue following this matter up with the Asian Group.

The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting (face-to-face) in New York, on 8 September 2004.

2. The meeting of the Third Ad hoc Expert Group (“Parameters”) in September 2004

Mr. Patosaari briefed the Bureau on the preparation for the Meeting 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, which will be held in New York from 7 to 10 September 2004.

All official documents have been made available in time for the meeting. So far 67 experts have been nominated by member-States. The Secretariat has been informally informed of the proposed two Co-chairs for the meeting: (1) Mr. Tim Rollinson (UK) and (2) Ms. Linda Mossop (South Africa).

The Bureau members expressed their satisfaction with the preparations and confirmed their participation to the meeting as “observers” in conjunction with the second Bureau meeting, to be held in New York on 8 September 2004.

3. Preparations for UNFF 5

Mr. Patosaari highlighted the significance of the fifth session and briefed the Bureau on the status of preparations for the session, which will be held in New York from 16 to 27 May 2005. The Secretariat has already begun the process of documentation and the Questionnaire and Guidelines for review of the effectiveness have already been sent out to the member States and other relevant entities.

The Bureau decided to further consider on the preparations for UNFF 5, including the high-level segment at its next meeting on 8 September 2004 in New York.

4. Outcome of the meeting of Chairpersons of the functional commissions with ECOSOC on 19 July 2004

H.E. Mr. Francis K. Butagira, who participated at the meeting on behalf of the Bureau on 19 July, then briefed the members of its outcome. He informed that the main focus of the meeting was to consider ways and means to improve coordination and harmonization of work between the functional commissions themselves, as well as between the functional commissions and ECOSOC. He further opined that there are areas where UNFF can enhance coordination with other Commissions.

The Bureau members agreed that UNFF should continue its efforts to enhance coordination and cooperation with other functional commissions and with ECOSOC.

5. Next bureau meeting

For the next Bureau meeting to be held on Wednesday, 8 September 2004 in New York, the Bureau decided to focus on the preparations for UNFF 5. The preliminary agenda items identified included: (i) organization of work; (ii) review process, (iii) high-level segment; and (iv) country- and organization-led initiatives.

The Secretariat, in consultation with Mr. Rodríguez-Becerra, will prepare the provisional agenda for this Bureau meeting, and make them available to the members in advance.

Closing of the meeting

Mr. Rodríguez-Becerra thanked the Bureau members and the Secretariat for the telephone conference and closed the meeting.