

Minutes of the

Second meeting of the UNFF 4 Bureau

UNFF Secretariat, New York

Monday, 29 September 2003 (10:00 am – 1:00 pm)

Attendee

Bureau Members: *Mr. Yuriy N. Isakov (Chairperson-designate), Mr. George W. Talbot (Guyana), Mr. I Gede Ngurah Swajaya (Indonesia), Mr. Xolisa Mabhongo (South Africa) and Ms. Stephanie J. Caswell (United States of America)*

UNFF Secretariat: Pekka Patosaari, Jorge Illueca, Mahendra Joshi, Susan Braatz, Kyaw Kyaw Shane and Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist

ECOSOC Secretariat: Ms. Sangeeta Sharma

Others: Mr. Oleg Shamanov, PM of the Russian Federation

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

Adoption of the agenda

Nomination of a Bureau member from GRULAC

UNFF-related resolution and decisions of the substantive session of ECOSOC, held in July 2003

Preparations for the ad hoc expert groups meetings

First and second ad hoc expert groups meetings

Third ad hoc expert group meeting

Other business

Opening of the meeting

Mr. Yuriy N. Isakov 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.

Nomination of a Bureau member from GRULAC

Mr. Patosaari briefed the Bureau members that the Latin American and the Caribbean Group has recently communicated to the Secretariat of its nomination of Mr. George Talbot of the Permanent Mission of Guyana to the UN in New York for one of the vice-chairs of the Bureau. Mr. Talbot attended the meeting as a member of the Bureau.

The Bureau expressed its satisfaction at the completion of nomination of all members. The Chairman, Mr. Isakov, expressed satisfaction that the Bureau would from now on be able to work at full strength.

On behalf of the Bureau, the Secretariat would send its compliments to GRULAC Chairman and Guyana Mission for the nomination.

UNFF-related resolution and decisions of the substantive session of ECOSOC, held in July 2003

The Secretariat briefed the Bureau members on the outcomes of ECOSOC regarding its consideration of the UNFF 3 report. In particular, it drew the attention of the Bureau to the draft resolution concerning the UNFF trust fund ((2003/63) which was forwarded by the Council to the General Assembly (Fifth Committee), and on the resolution that stipulated that the date of the third expert group meeting would be decided by the resumed session of ECOSOC on 31 October 2003 (2003/299).

The Bureau recognized the significance of those and other decisions and resolutions. It decided that the members would consult with their respective regional groups to provide appropriate inputs when UNFF matters are addressed at the ECOSOC resumed session as well as the second and fifth committees of GA.

4. Preparations for ad hoc expert group meetings

4.1. First and second ad hoc expert groups meetings

The meetings of the following two ad hoc expert groups would be held in Geneva in December 2003: (i) approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting (8-12 December 2003), and (ii) finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, will be held back to back (15-19 December 2003). Several issues concerning the meetings of the first two ad hoc expert group meetings were discussed. The Bureau recognized that the ad hoc expert groups should function independently. However, the Bureau could provide advice to the expert groups to discuss and produce outputs that are contextual and relevant to the work of UNFF. Concerning the workloads and modality of the expert group meetings, the Secretariat would prepare a note analyzing different aspects of planning for making the meetings efficient and productive. The note would be presented to the Bureau at its next meeting.

4.2 Third ad hoc expert group meeting

The third ad hoc expert group is on "consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests". The date of the meeting will be decided at the resumed session of ECOSOC, which will meet in New York on 31 October 2003. There are several preparatory tasks that the member

states, CPF members, Bureau and the Secretariat have to address in the next six months, including the nomination of experts, providing country and CPF member views, on a set of issues outlined in ECOSOC resolution 2003/299; the compilation of such views for informal consultation by the Bureau with member states and a short note outlining these preparations for UNFF 4.

The Bureau recognized that the issues mandated to the third expert group are politically sensitive. The Secretariat would present to the Bureau the suggestions concerning the submission of views by the Member States on the matter. The Secretariat recommended that the available and best-suited date for the meeting of this group will be in August/September 2004.

The Secretariat will present to the Bureau members a draft note addressing various aspects of planning for the meeting of this expert group by 13 October.

5. Other matters

The Bureau members decided that the next Bureau meeting would be held on Tuesday, 18 November 2003 in New York.

The Secretariat also conveyed a message from the Chair of CPF, Mr. Hosny El-Lakany from FAO, assuring CPF members' commitment to support UNFF. The Bureau expressed its appreciation to Mr. El-Lakany and CPF members for their excellent support to the work of UNFF.

During the course of the meeting, Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo, new USG of economic and social affairs, met briefly with the Bureau and exchanged ideas and information about DESA and UNFF. Mr. Ocampo reassured the Bureau of DESA's support to this important UN body. He suggested a need to look at forests and forest issues through a holistic and cross-sectoral manner, and linking forests to the economic and social priorities such as poverty reduction. He viewed the three ad hoc expert groups extremely important to the work of UNFF. He also emphasized the need to address the externalities and "global public goods" aspects of forests; the importance of transfer of technology and knowledge sharing and creation; and the need of monitoring assessment and reporting as a means to ensure accountability and mutual lesson learning. Finally, he emphasized that UNFF is now in a critical juncture and the Bureau has a heavy responsibility.

At the end of the meeting, the Bureau met with the rest of the Secretariat members and exchanged views.

Closing of the meeting

Mr. Isakov expressed satisfaction with the discussion held at the meeting and thanked the members of the bureau and the Secretariat, and concluded the meeting.