

Joint Statement
Tropical Rainforest Countries' Leaders
New York, 24 September 2007

We the Heads of State and Government and the high-level representatives of Brazil, Cameroon, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and Peru, met in New York on 24 September 2007, resolving to enhance cooperation among countries blessed with a wealth of tropical rainforests.

We resolve to promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development and eradication of poverty while intensifying our collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, along with achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Rio Conference's Declaration on Forests, Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals.

While reaffirming and upholding the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the sovereign rights of countries over their natural resources, we recognize the primary responsibility of industrialised nations for the current atmospheric interference leading to global warming and its consequences, including the resulting mitigation and adaptation challenges. We note with concern the recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which indicate that forests may be among the main victims of climate change resulting in dire impacts on the environment, ecosystems and the livelihoods, particularly of those populations that depend directly on forests.

Noting that all types of forests, including tropical forests, play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance as sinks, sources and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, we emphasize that the tropical rainforests within our countries, which comprise about half the world's tropical rainforests, serve as sources of livelihood and repositories of the cultural heritage of vast numbers of people, while the ecosystems of these rainforests serve as habitat for diverse biological species and as storehouses of genetic resources for food, medicine and various goods and services that can help sustain present and future generations of humankind.

We also undertake to engage with relevant stakeholders and countries to work constructively on other equally important issues. In this regard, we support the efforts to address the retreat of glaciers which threatens the supply of water to sustain human life and agricultural needs of large populations in some developing countries.

While recognizing that many developing countries can contribute to combat climate change through reducing emissions from deforestation, forest

degradation and land-use change, we understand that the challenge to reduce emissions from land use change is complex and cumbersome for developing countries as for developed countries reducing emissions from industry and energy sectors. We are committed to cooperating among our nations to slow, stop and reverse the loss of forest cover and to promote the rehabilitation of degraded forest lands, forest management and conservation.

We call for the fulfillment of commitments, including those of Annex I countries under the UNFCCC, to support our voluntary efforts through capacity building, research and development, transfer of appropriate environmentally sound technologies.

Further, we call for mobilization of new and additional financial resources sufficient to implement non-restrictive policy approaches and positive incentives, under the UNFCCC, and other international fora, to support our voluntary efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions as well as enhancing sequestration through sustainable forest management and forest conservation, and increasing carbon sinks through afforestation and reforestation, including support for early action from 2008-2012 along with expanded activities post-2012. Furthermore, we call for protected areas to be given special consideration by the international community.

We commit ourselves to working together for the success of the 13th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be hosted by Indonesia in Bali from 3 to 14 December 2007. In this regard, we will work to ensure that a roadmap for relevant forest issues will be addressed in climate change frameworks, in a manner that is fair, equitable and in the common interest of the tropical rainforest countries.

Fully cognizant of the value of intensified and sustained dialogue and cooperation, we commit ourselves to strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation among the Governments and peoples of the tropical rainforest countries and invite other tropical rainforest countries to actively participate in this cooperative endeavour.

We also reaffirm our support for United Nations forest relevant processes and frameworks including the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Forum on Forests and United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation.