



**High Level Segment of the eleventh session of the
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**Statement by
Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time. Science shows that human activity is largely responsible, with greenhouse gas emissions from energy, transport and deforestation among the primary drivers. Global deforestation alone accounts for more than 20 per cent of the world's CO₂ emissions. Therefore, global action on forests is crucial to meet the challenge climate change presents, and REDD+ is key to unlocking forest mitigation potential in many developing countries.

Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have recognized from the beginning that sustainable management of forests helps fulfill the objective of the Convention.

The Agreement to be signed at the Conference of the Parties in Paris this year provides an opportunity to advance recognition of this role and action on forests. The Paris agreement is poised to be a blueprint for climate-safe development, requiring every country to come together, build on the good work done to date and set our global compass towards a long-term vision of a stable, secure future. Forests play a crucial role in accomplishing this goal.

At the UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw in 2013, governments agreed to a set of decisions on incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation – the “Warsaw Framework for REDD+”. These decisions provide much-needed methodological guidance for the implementing REDD+ on the ground. They also outline eligibility requirements for accessing payments for REDD+ actions.

Seven years of work culminated in these decisions and they represent a clear breakthrough for meaningful climate change action. This was a turning point that began a new phase for REDD+ and countries moved forward with this guidance.

It is now time for developed countries to demonstrate their engagement with REDD+ by scaling up financial support for results-based actions.

To date, the six developing countries of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Guyana and Malaysia have submitted forest reference emission levels for technical assessments, opening the opportunity to seek results-based payments for REDD+ action. This leadership is welcomed as a further signal of developing countries' commitments to address the drivers of climate change at the domestic level.

To ensure this momentum is carried forward, the UNFCCC secretariat will continue working with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and its member organizations. We appreciate all the work done by CPF members on forests and recognize their role in climate change mitigation and adaptation. We encourage strengthening efforts that enable countries to continue this crucial action on climate change.

We also need coherence and coordination between different processes, and remain committed to working with UNFF as a united UN system. The Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) plays an important role in coherent and coordinated delivery of climate finance, and specifically finance for forests. We therefore encourage continuing collaboration with the SCF in this key moment for operationalizing the Green Climate Fund and building on the strong foundation put in place by the Global Environment Facility.

Climate change is a global challenge that can only be met with national and local level solutions. The UNFF plays a significant role in enabling these solutions. This is a crucial year for the UN process to address climate change. I ask you to continue your cooperation on this issue and take advantage of the opportunity we have today. Plant forests firmly in the solution space by encouraging local action that meets our global climate change and sustainable development goals.

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