

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General  
18 March 2004

Original: English

---

**United Nations Forum on Forests****Fourth session**

Geneva, 3-14 May 2004

Item 4 (a) (iii) of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of the proposals for action of the  
Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental  
Forum on Forests and the plan of action of the  
United Nations Forum on Forests: progress in  
implementation: social and cultural aspects of forests**

**Letter dated 5 March 2004 from the Permanent Representative  
of Switzerland and the Chargé d'affaires of Indonesia to the  
United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

We have the honour to inform you that the Governments of Indonesia and Switzerland will co-host an international meeting on the theme "Decentralization, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes" (the Interlaken Workshop), a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests in Interlaken, Switzerland, from 27 to 30 April 2004. The Workshop will also be co-hosted by the Center for International Forestry Research and co-sponsored by the Governments of Brazil, Canada, Ghana, Japan, the Russian Federation, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Technical support will be provided by the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the National Forest Programme Facility of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Program on Forests of the World Bank, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Worldwide Fund for Nature and the World Resources Institute.

The objectives of the Interlaken Workshop are as follows:

- To analyse the implications of decentralization in key aspects of forest management for the development of national forest programmes and to identify strategies that would allow such programmes to effectively address this issue;

---

\* E/CN.18/2004/1.

- To share the experience of countries that decentralized their forestry systems some time ago with countries currently undergoing rapid processes of decentralization, including the transitional aspects of decentralization;
- To derive the lessons learned from countries that have implemented decentralization, for use, where suitable, in other countries in the process of decentralization;
- To prepare reflections and proposals for the consideration of the United Nations Forum on Forests related to decentralization, federal/centralized systems of forestry and their implications for national forest programmes.

The Interlaken Workshop will be held in the week preceding the fourth session of the Forum. Therefore, only the unedited text of the report will be available at the session to facilitate the Forum's work on related issues. The final report will be submitted at a later date as a document of the fifth session of the Forum.

We should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the fourth session of the Forum.

(Signed) Jenö C. A. **Stachelin**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations

(Signed) Rezlan Ishar **Jenie**

Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations

---