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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION:
ENVIRONMENT

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 18 July 1991 from the representatives of
Germany and Indonesia to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the Joint German-Indonesian Statement on Cooperation on Environmental Protection, issued on 4 July 1991 on the occasion of the State visit of His Excellency President Soeharto of the Republic of Indonesia to Germany (see annex).

It is to be noted that this statement constitutes the first of its kind issued jointly by an industrialized country and a developing country.

We would be grateful if you could have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 78 (e) and 79 of the preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the forty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly.

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* A/46/50.

ANNEX

Joint German-Indonesian statement on cooperation in
environmental protection on the occasion of the
State visit of His Excellency President Soeharto
in Germany, 2 to 7 July 1991

1. The Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the Republic of Indonesia are convinced of the need to strengthen international cooperation in the field of the environment in the context of the pursuit of sustainable development. They expressed their concern with the increasingly serious global environmental problems and their impact upon humanity's well-being and upon development efforts. Overcoming those problems is an equitable shared responsibility of all countries. It will require an unprecedented level of both national and international efforts.
2. Both sides noted with satisfaction the progress made in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), due to take place in June 1992. They expressed their willingness to continue the active participation of their respective countries in the UNCED preparatory process and to further their cooperation in this process in order to ensure the success of UNCED.
3. They further agreed to strengthen their environmental cooperation to enable the achievement of environmentally sound and sustainable development. Also, that such cooperation should be in line and in harmony with the principles and positions agreed upon by their Governments in international forums.
4. They further agreed to continue their support of ongoing international efforts to establish international agreements on:
 - (i) A climate convention which must chiefly tackle the problem of both reducing emissions of CO₂ and safeguarding the biomass necessary for its absorption. Both those aspects pertain to the use of energy and the safeguarding the forests of all kinds and in all climates.
 - (ii) A convention for the preservation of biodiversity with priority given to preserving biodiversity on the spot. Such a convention must appropriately take into account the concerns and needs of biodiversity repository countries.
5. Both sides recognized that along with the oceans, forests constitute the most important complete ecosystem and are instrumental in maintaining climate and water balance and in preventing soil erosion, while also serving as the major repository of biodiversity. Moreover, forests form one of the indispensable sources of mankind's existence and, in various cases, a direct source of livelihood and a human habitat. Equally indispensable is the function of forest as a renewable resource of development in general and as

the origin of a wide range of commodities of great economic and developmental value.

6. For widely differing reasons the existence of boreal, temperate and tropical forests is under serious threat. Therefore, suitable steps must be taken to achieve sustainable forest management with a view to allow for both their preservation and economic utilization. The environmental and economic functions of forests must be made compatible.

7. While in this respect international action programmes such as the Tropical Forest Action Plan are of great importance, a more comprehensive framework ensuring global cooperative action needs to be developed: a framework which encompasses the environmental functions as well as the economic and developmental functions of forests throughout the globe.

8. Both sides acknowledge that a number of vital principles be upheld in developing such a framework for global cooperative action on forests, and these include:

- (i) Such a framework must pertain to all types of forests in all climates and must duly consider the expanse of the different types and their respective environmental and economic functions as well as criteria for their sustainable management.
- (ii) It must give due consideration to the legitimate needs and concerns of the developing countries in their pursuit of sustainable development and their efforts to eradicate poverty. Sufficient consideration should be given to economic, developmental and to social structures as well as ecological requirements in order that in developing countries sustainable management and development of forests and their resources will promote and not hamper development.
- (iii) At the heart of these and other principles is the notion that while all countries, including the developing countries, will assume their respective responsibilities in safeguarding the global environment, such responsibilities and efforts must be equitably shared by all.
- (iv) Further aspects of the needed framework for cooperative action of forests, including the proper legal form of the framework, will be negotiated once there is agreement on the basic guiding principles.

9. Such negotiations should take place under the auspices of the United Nations with the support of competent international organizations. Both Governments expressed the hope that at UNCED 1992 at the latest an agreement can be reached on basic principles and a decision can be formulated in order that the United Nations can mandate a negotiating process, establish the negotiating entity and provide it with its appropriate terms of reference.

10. Both sides recognize that in order to implement the commitments resulting from various agreements on the global environment many developing countries

would require additional financial and technical assistance and technology cooperation. They agree to urge industrialized countries, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions concerned with the financing or development, in addition to their activities for development, to provide greater and additional support for forest preservation measures and environmental efforts in general.

11. Both Governments also agreed on the urgent need to continue and increase ongoing national and international efforts to combat world-wide forest degradation and destruction while such international agreements are being negotiated. In this context, industrialized countries should intensify their efforts to control more effectively their air pollution affecting their forest resources. All countries should undertake every effort to eliminate, as soon as possible, unsustainable and destructive forms of forest utilization incompatible with national legislation and internationally accepted guidelines.

12. Both sides also agreed to extend their support to efforts seeking to establish equity among nations in assuming their respective tasks safeguarding the global environment and in that context promote the better exchange of information, resources and technology between nations.

13. Noting the high level of their commitment to the environment and the progress achieved, while remaining aware of Indonesia's need to achieve sustainable development, both Governments reiterate their desire to enhance their cooperation. Furthermore, wishing to symbolize the necessary partnership between industrialized and developing countries, Indonesia and Germany are prepared to jointly assume assignments that may be asked of them by the United Nations to facilitate the negotiating processes leading to an international agreement on global forests.

14. Both sides finally agreed to further intensify the bilateral cooperation between their countries in the field of the protection of the environment, also with a view to implementing ideas contained in this joint statement.
