

MR. ACHIM STEINER: Thank you, Helen. Thank you very much. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

There is not much need to summarize a meeting that has been clear in terms of four or five messages almost uniformly endorsed through their statements.

First of all, the role of forests, beyond a doubt, is one of the central pillars in terms of an ability to address both the climate change need as much as many of the co-benefits that would go with it. Therefore, REDD as a concept, as an idea, as an aspiration that began well over a decade ago and which was overlooked – as some of you called it – in Kyoto has finally come to a mature state. Therefore, REDD, REDD+, however it may evolve, has become a reality, ready for Copenhagen.

There have been references to the Forest Carbon Partnership, to UN-REDD, but particularly also to the initiatives of individual countries this afternoon, whether from the financing side and the extraordinary leadership that Norway provided or from indeed a number of countries that spoke about their forest initiatives already this afternoon. These also demonstrate that the concept of REDD is ready.

But, as we also heard, there is growing mistrust. And, again, it is a reflection of the state of negotiations. When countries are ready – and countries are ready to make commitments – and

countries have made commitments – as we have heard this afternoon, and there is no follow-through, then what happens next?

I think it was you, Excellency, President of Guyana, who referred to the fact that here is a country ready to put into play, into international partnership context the entire forest cover of your nation, but if there is no financing, then – I think you used the term political capital – sometimes it is seen in the debate that political capital is only on the side of donors in terms of investing in REDD. And I think we heard this afternoon that it is, in fact, in many of the forested countries the tremendous political capital that has been invested in the notion that a global service should be part of an international agreement based on a national asset.

There was also a very clear message that the time for pilots and initiatives is over – that it is time to not only move beyond pilot stages but to scale up, to accelerate, and, therefore, to have things fall into place.

A number of you addressed the fact that – call it MRV, measurement, whatever it may be – clearly, there has to be a basis for transaction; otherwise, you cannot measure how you manage, how you transact. So, clearly, the question of measurement, of reporting accountability, is the technical foundation.

But, let's not get too technical. Things also develop as we move along. It is true for all sectors and, therefore, there also has to be caution that this should not be a reason for not empowering and enabling REDD in Copenhagen. On the contrary, Copenhagen should be the incentive to accelerate the work.

That is how I interpret, perhaps, the consensus around this issue this afternoon.

There will be risks. But, clearly, from everything that has been said this afternoon, the potential, the opportunity, is real and present, and it is enormous. And it comes, perhaps, even as some of you have said, at a bargain price.

But, clearly, at the level of financing that has been accompanying the evolution of the concept of REDD, there is no hope for REDD beyond Copenhagen if it does not change the scale that is envisaged through the potential that has been outlined.

I think this afternoon many Governments have indicated, whether from a forest management country perspective or a forest financing perspective, that that is the litmus test for Copenhagen.

Thank you, Madam Chair.