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Helen Clark: Remarks at the REDD+ Conference**Oslo, Norway**

Your Royal Highness, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank the Government of Norway for hosting this conference on REDD+ and for the leadership which you and others represented here have given on the REDD agenda.

At the United Nations, we fully recognise the historic significance of this conference.

The partnership being advanced here offers the first major "fast start" finance to flow to developing countries at this juncture in the climate negotiations.

And, it bring progress in an area which we know offers some of the quickest and most dramatic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions – by reducing deforestation and forest degradation.

This partnership, as Norway's Prime Minister has stressed, is not in competition with the all important negotiations taking place under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Rather, we can see the partnership at this time as an important confidence building measure, through which developed and developing countries make common cause to preserve the world's remaining forests – which act as the lungs of our planet.

This marks a turning point, away from an era where the concept of development virtually implied deforestation for other land uses.

Put simply, it paid to deforest.

The beauty of the REDD+ initiative is that it will now pay to keep the world's forests, with their rich biodiversity. The resources which flow from keeping them can be put at the service of development.

This is critical – not only because in this big year for reviewing the Millennium Development Goals, the focus is on how we can support speeding up development; but also because climate change itself – aided by deforestation, has emerged as one of the biggest challenges to development.

As we look for win-wins to promote development and fight climate change, this REDD+ partnership is an outstanding opportunity to achieve that.

Of course there are still many details to be determined.

The interests of the indigenous people who dwell in the forest must be recognized and protected.

There are the issues of how the resources which flow from the partnership can be absorbed and deployed.

There are the issues of building strong national institutions and systems to monitor, report, and verify reductions in deforestation.

In all these efforts, the multilateral system is here to support the parties to this partnership.

UN REDD itself is a partnership between UNDP, UNEP, and FAO. We in turn are working closely with the World Bank to offer integrated solutions for REDD+.

We stand ready to support national capacity building, institutional strengthening, and policy design to make investment in REDD+ a reality – and to support the partnership in any way we can.

We wish the partners in REDD+ every success – and hope that the spirit shown in this collaboration can also be reflected in the forthcoming rounds of negotiation for a new climate agreement.