**Remarks by United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon,**

**at the High Level Meeting on REDD**

**New York, 23 September 2009**--

In just 75 days, governments will meet in Copenhagen for the crucial 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Yesterday, I saw world leaders begin to commit themselves in a way that could lead to agreements in December on critical actionin the fight against climate change.

Today I want to focus on an area that is both urgent and promising: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD).

I say ‘urgent’ because our efforts to limit global warming to 2 degrees C above preindustrial levels will be almost unachievable without reducing the nearly 20 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions from the forest sector.

I say ‘promising’ because REDD may offer the largest and most cost-effective source of emission reductions possible within the next decade[[1]](#footnote-2) – while also financing low-carbon pathways to development for forested countries. Of course, when forests are protected, biodiversity and ecosystem services are also sustained, ensuring clean water, productive soils, buffering against floods and droughts -- and helping tropical forest countries adapt to climate change and ensure food security.

And REDD is promising because of the commendable political leadership already shown by developing countries to place REDD in the UNFCCC process and on the global agenda -- and because of the generous investment in REDD readiness by certain industrialized countries, such as Norway.

REDD is also promising and even unique because of the growing partnership not only between these developing and industrialized countries, but also between the UN and Bretton Woods systems – through the UN-REDD Programme and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, on what is needed to make REDD work. Many of these leaders are here with us today and we will soon hear from them.

The recent report of the Informal Working Group on Interim Finance for REDD tells us that ambitious action on REDD from now until 2015 could realistically achieve a 25% reduction in annual global deforestation. Total payments needed to achieve these reductions are estimated at 15-25 billion Euros over the same period.

Developing countries are clearly willing to lead in achieving this 25% emission reduction by 2015, and even 50% emission reductions by 2050, subject to the necessary partnership for financial, technical and administrative support. However, we must recognize the seriousness of the choice developing countries are taking when embarking on the REDD path. A predictable framework of partnership and support is essential if these efforts are to succeed.

It is crucial that the incentive structure be designed to generate significant economic benefits for developing countries, including respecting the rights and enhancing the livelihoods of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent communities.

Immediate action on REDD is a critical part of the climate change solution.Therefore, Copenhagen must include a REDD agreement that mobilizes the necessary finance, , while employing transparent systems distribute payments and measure results.

I believe that REDD offers a foundation for leadership and partnership to contribute to the overall success of Copenhagen. For the world community to ‘Seal the Deal’ and avoid dangerous climate change supporting the shift to low carbon, resource efficient economies — our forests are our natural ally.

1. *Source*: IPCC and other analyses indicate that REDD+ may provide as much as 30% of the total cost-effective mitigation potential in the period up to 2030 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)