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Opening Statement

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As the distinguished speakers before me have highlighted, the UN Strategic Plan for Forests builds on the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It sets a shared global vision and mission on forests, as well as 6 ambitious Global Forest Goals and 26 associated targets, including ground-breaking targets to increase forest area globally by 3% or 120 million hectares, and to eradicate extreme poverty for all forest dependent people, by 2030.

The Global Goals and targets also cover combating climate change, increasing forest protected areas, mobilizing financing and inspiring innovation, promoting governance, and enhancing cooperation across sectors and stakeholders.

It is important to emphasize that realizing our shared vision and mission and achieving the Goals Forest Goals and targets will depend entirely on the voluntary actions by countries, partners and stakeholders at all levels.

Enshrined in the Plan is the concept of Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs) as the framework for countries to communicate their individual commitments to the Global Forest Goals and targets, taking into account national circumstances and capacities.

Forests, His Excellency Mr. Peng Youdong, Vice-Administration indicated that China plans to communicate a Voluntary National Contribution in support of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests.

The past two years have seen unprecedented action and decision-making by the UN Forum on Forests to define a vision for forests in 2030.

As foresters, we know that many of the drivers of deforestation lie outside the forest sector, rooted in challenges related to reducing poverty, urban development and land use policies that favor sectors with higher and more rapid financial returns, such as agriculture, energy, mining and transportation. At the same time, the health and productivity of forests are also impacted by threats such as illegal or unsustainable logging, illicit trafficking in wildlife and forest products, pests, fragmentation and impacts of climate change.

To create a better, greener future, we need the right enabling environment - from governance systems that combat illegal deforestation, to policies that ensure equitable sharing of benefits from forests. The effective implementation of sustainable forest management is critically dependent upon adequate resources. To this end, the launch of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network is helping provide a bridge between the financing needs of countries and