

**UNFF MGCY - High Level Round Table Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

**9:00am- 11:00am, 26 April 2021, New York City, USA**

The following statement is delivered by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Major Group for Children and Youth to the [High Level Round Table \(HLRT\) on Major Forest-related Developments](#)

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Dear Madam Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of Major Group Children and Youth, we would like to express our deepest condolences to all the people of the world who lost their dear ones, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The annual rate of global net forest loss decreased from 7.3 million hectares in the decade 1990-2000 to 4.7 million hectares in the decade 2010-2020. Despite the positive result, deforestation as well as forest degradation are still massive problems that need to be solved. If we want to ask how forests can be part of the solution to current global crises in the post Covid-19 era, MGCY to the UNFF believes that a focus must be laid on the systemic issues threatening forest areas globally that have not substantially changed despite the impacts of the pandemic. Hereby, increasing demand for agricultural land and water, insecure tenure rights and siloed approaches to natural resource governance, are only a few of the driving factors leading to deforestation and forest degradation that were present before the pandemic and that remain and will remain present even after this pandemic has vanished.

However, MGCY to the UNFF perceives a substantial change in our increased awareness about the interconnectivity of human and natural systems. Covid-

finance mechanisms. We urge corporates, financiers, governments and NGOs to step up their efforts to