



**Rt. Hon. Grand Chief Sir Michael T. Somare MP GCL GCMG CH CF KStJ**

Prime Minister, Papua New Guinea

*Oslo Forest Climate Conference*

26 May 2010

Your Royal Highness, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, distinguished delegates, let me thank Prime Minister Stoltenberg and President Sarkozy for leadership and vision in orchestrating the Paris-Oslo process resulting in the 'Interim REDD+ Partnership Agreement'.

Prime Minister Stoltenberg, on behalf of Lady Veronica and me, Norway's beauty, hospitality, efficiency and warmth of the people will never be forgotten.

Before I begin, I must express how gratifying this meeting is for me personally.

When PNG first launched the UNFCCC REDD+ Initiative, everyone told us that we would fail – large countries, small countries, international agencies, NGOs – everyone! In the beginning, REDD+ was truly a very lonely and difficult road. Only a small group of countries were brave enough to join us in Montreal. Looking around today, what a difference five years can make!

Looking back, attempts to resolve deforestation have been suffocated by misunderstandings. The North told us the causes were issues like corruption and land rights. But, these are largely symptoms, not drivers. Developing countries understand that economics drive deforestation -- pure and simple! The real problem is an international market failure. Today, markets value forests more destroyed than standing.

Together, we must find ways to value forests more alive than dead! Year by year, more and more people begin to understand this reality. Candidly, I am not sure we would be here today without the 50 tropical countries working together as the Coalition for Rainforest Nations. This shows that tropical countries must continue to lead the way!

PNG is ready to act! But, leadership will be required from both rich and poor countries to defeat climate change. To succeed, heads of government and state must make the tough decisions. Transforming our global economy is a complex undertaking! Nothing in human history provides a clear roadmap. Therefore, my government has developed a strategy for climate-compatible development and set up a new, lean and professional Office of Climate Change and Development.

In PNG, deforestation and degradation contribute over 90% of our total emissions. And many other REDD+ countries have a similar profile. For all of us, forests are our heritage, history and culture. But, development options, like logging and agricultural expansion, create tremendous pressure on our remaining forest reserves.

However, PNG is committed to change direction. Clearly, we cannot win the battle against climate change unless we first defeat deforestation.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

But, this cannot be about forests alone. To succeed, developing countries must receive support for three overarching goals – first development, then mitigation and adaptation. Let me explain:

- First, my Government seeks to triple GDP per capita over the next 20 years.
- Second, we plan to cut emissions between 50 – 75 percent by 2030 and become carbon neutral before 2050.
- Third, we must adapt our economic growth by reducing vulnerability to climate risks.

We must achieve all three targets simultaneously. REDD+ can only succeed over the long-term when operating from within this full climate compatible development strategy.

While PNG is committed to solving this global problem, like all REDD+ countries, we require international support to meet our objectives. Therefore, PNG's 'fast start program' seeks to reduce emissions:

- by over 110 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e between 2011 and 2015
- in order to begin a low carbon pathway leading to 1.1 - 1.5 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e reductions before 2030.

To achieve this, PNG's abatement program requires US \$715 million to US\$ 1 billion in resources from 2011-2015 broken down into:

- US \$71 million for readiness payments
- US \$118 million for pilot program costs
- US \$526 – 811 million for performance-based payments

Overall, this would average around \$7 or \$8 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Of course, in all of our development, mitigation and adaptation actions, PNG subscribes to principles of transparency, equitability, safeguards and professionalism. We believe PNG's approach to Fast Start Funding can be used as a model for all REDD+ countries and we are happy to share our experience with anyone interested.

However, the international mechanisms to deal with REDD+ have largely failed: meeting after meeting, promise after promise, but nothing tangible delivered in our countries. The World Bank and the United Nations tangle us in endless process and conditionality's. Therefore, the 'Interim REDD+ Mechanism' must break from the past and deliver both finance and results!

In conclusion, we believe the 'Interim REDD+ Partnership' could become a watershed for humanity. Never before has \$4 billion been pledged toward forest conservation over three years focused on tackling market failures. For the first time, the world's forests have a fighting chance to survive. Maybe, by learning how to save our forests, humanity will relearn how to save ourselves!

Thank you!