



## **DECLARATION OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION**

**We**, the Heads of State and Government, gathered in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, on 5 July 2024 at the First International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (ICAR1), in the presence of international and regional and sub-regional organizations, the scientific community, technical and financial partners, civil society, local communities and indigenous peoples, private sector and many other actors, hereby:

### **Recalling:**

- **The United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests** (2017-2030) and the need to halt the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including through forest protection, regeneration, afforestation and reforestation, and to redouble efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to global action to combat land degradation and climate change;
- **The Paris Climate Agreement**, in particular in its Article 5 on taking measures to conserve and, where appropriate, strengthen sinks and reservoirs of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs), including forests to capture GHG emissions and preserve ecosystems, as well as the conclusions of the first global review of the implementation of this agreement;
- **The Bonn Challenge**, a global effort to reforest degraded and deforested land with the objective of reforesting 350 million hectares by 2030, thus being part of the global climate effort, but also of other sustainable development objectives;
- **The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** (2021-2030) adopted by the General Assembly on 19 March 2019 (Resolution 73/284), aimed at preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems on all continents and in all oceans, as an important step towards achieving global restoration targets including through afforestation and reforestation interventions,

- **The commitments** to halt and reverse deforestation and land degradation by 2030, declared by leaders in Glasgow on forests and land use at COP26 in Scotland in 2021;
- **The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100)** and the Kigali Declaration on African Forest Restoration;
- **The "World Decade of Afforestation "** launched by His Excellency Mr. **Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO**, in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on November 7, 2022, on the occasion of COP27;
- **The Kuning-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties on Biodiversity (COP15), in December 2022, which sets out an ambitious action plan for a world to live in harmony with nature,
- **The decision of the African Union and African Heads of State** for their unwavering support and their decision number 846 of the 36th session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, held from 17 to 18 February 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to endorse the African and World Decade of Afforestation and Reforestation, and to have recommended the holding of the 1st International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (ICAR1);
- **Communiqué Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU)** at its 1184th meeting, held in Addis Ababa, on 06 June 2023, on the Continental Assessment of Climate-related Security Risks in Africa, the nexus between climate change, peace and security as well as the findings of the Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the study on the nexus between climate change, peace and security in Africa;
- **The One Forest Summit:** The Libreville plan resulting from the One Forest Summit aimed at establishing a fair agreement between forest countries and the international community to reconcile environmental ambition and economic development;
- **The African Union Biodiversity Strategy and its 2023-2030 action plan**, to operationalize the Global Biodiversity Framework;
- **The High-Level Declaration of the 19th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests;**

- **The many other initiatives underway around the world** related to afforestation, such as the Great Green Wall Initiatives in Africa and China, including the new African Strategy on the Great Green Wall and the Decade of the Implementation Framework (2024-2034).

**Considering** that:

- Sub-regional and international cooperation in the management of natural resources can generate significant results in the fight against: (i) the unbridled depletion of these resources, (ii) desertification and (iii) the loss of biodiversity;
- The international community recognizes the benefits of united and concerted action to combat the adverse effects of climate change.
- afforestation, reforestation and restoration of degraded ecosystems are nature-based solutions based on ecosystems, accessible to all, and essential to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, preserve biodiversity and ensure the well-being of local communities and indigenous peoples,

**Concerned** about the magnitude of the impacts caused by deforestation, land degradation and biodiversity loss, compounded by demographic and economic pressures and climate change,

**Concerned also** that in some parts of the world, the supply of wood energy to large cities is one of the main causes of deforestation and forest degradation, and recognizing that the sale of wood energy is a significant source of income for local communities and indigenous peoples,

**Noting** that despite the commitments made by States under the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 2°C or even 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, climate change is accelerating, and that such a threat is likely to jeopardize the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the preservation of forests in general and tropical forests, in particular, reputed to be the lungs of humanity,

**Noting further, with deep concern,** that meeting the needs of a growing and urbanized world population is leading to the deforestation of 10 million hectares of forests every year, with disastrous consequences for the climate, the planet and human health, hampering the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

**Acknowledging** the efforts of previous international initiatives to conserve biodiversity and restore degraded ecosystems, such as those of the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030,

**Taking** into account the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), on the role of afforestation and reforestation in the rapid transition needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C, and the need to sequester carbon dioxide in the 21st century, favoring nature-based solutions, taking into account the circumstances of each state,

**Also taking** into account the need to strengthen institutional and organizational frameworks at the global and regional levels dedicated to afforestation and reforestation and their socio-economic and ecological challenges,

**Emphasizing** the significant lack of financial resources for sustainable forest management, afforestation and reforestation and the low economic value of the ecosystem services provided by forests to humankind,

**Reaffirm** our determination to work together for a sustainable future where forests, as lungs of the planet, will continue to support the life and well-being of all species,

**Salute** the resolute commitment at our side, technical and financial partners, the African Union, regional civil society organizations, the private sector, administrations and local authorities, scientists, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples,

**Propose** the establishment of a biennial prize called "DAMAR", dedicated to the United Nations Decade on Afforestation and Reforestation, to be awarded to a natural or legal person who has distinguished himself or herself in the activities of afforestation, reforestation and the fight against deforestation,

**Support and approve** the list of sectoral programs with a high socio-economic and ecological impact, in connection with the fight against climate change and deforestation, as well as with the development of bioenergy, and carbon sequestration in the context of the development of the green economy,

**We also support and approve** the concept of a technopole on the development and promotion of the economy of afforestation and reforestation as well as its political, diplomatic and socio-economic stakes.

**We are committed to:**

#### **A - Governance of the global system on afforestation and reforestation**

1. **Recommend** the adoption of a resolution by the 79th United Nations General Assembly to formally endorse the African and World Decade of Afforestation and Reforestation, recognizing its critical importance for the planet.
2. **Support** the institutionalization by the United Nations General Assembly of the International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation through its biennial and rotating organization from one continent to another.
3. **Support the creation of a specialized body dedicated to natural and planted forests.**
4. **Support initiatives on the fight against deforestation and climate change, to prevent and guarantee Peace, Security and Stability.**
5. **Strengthen** engagement and cooperation between States, international organizations and partners, NGOs and local communities and indigenous peoples, including the private sector, civil society organizations and research institutions, for the efficient implementation of large-scale afforestation and reforestation programs and projects within the framework of the African and Global Decade of Afforestation and Reforestation.
6. **Encourage and support** the implementation of existing initiatives in reforestation and afforestation, landscape restoration around the world.

#### **B- Regarding the global afforestation and reforestation strategy**

1. **Adopt** the strategic thrusts proposed by the Conference for the development of the global afforestation and reforestation strategy.

2. **Mandate the implementing body to finalize the development** of the global afforestation and reforestation strategy by the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, on the basis of which regional, sub-regional and national strategies will be developed.

### **C- Social inclusion**

1. **Strengthen** the participation of women, youth, people with disabilities, local communities and indigenous peoples in afforestation and reforestation efforts to contribute to improving the well-being of these populations and creating jobs and wealth.
2. **Support** through appropriate technical and financial mechanisms the establishment and implementation of global, regional, sub-regional, national and local programs with a high socio-economic impact on Afforestation and Reforestation, for the benefit of Women's Associations, youth, local communities and indigenous populations.
3. **Support** the initiatives of civil society organizations involved in afforestation and reforestation.

### **D- Regarding the involvement of the private sector in afforestation and reforestation**

1. **Promote** a business climate that is attractive to private investment.
2. **Encourage** the private sector to massively support afforestation and reforestation initiatives, develop local capacities and transfer technologies.

### **E- Communication, promotion and awareness-raising on afforestation and reforestation**

**Support** educational programs and awareness campaigns to inform and mobilize citizens around the world on the importance of afforestation and sustainable forest management;

## **F- Knowledge, research and development and innovative technologies**

1. **Recommend** strengthening the consideration of afforestation and reforestation issues in the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and other relevant bodies.
2. **Invest** in scientific research and the development of innovative technologies, including through scholarship mechanisms, to improve the effectiveness of afforestation and reforestation projects.

## **G- Financing and partnerships**

1. **Ensure** public financing mechanisms for national afforestation and reforestation programs.
2. **Ensure** sustainable financing of afforestation and reforestation through traditional and innovative financial mechanisms: payments for environmental services, carbon markets and non-market approaches and debt swap mechanisms.
3. **Develop and implement a strategy for mobilizing** the resources needed for afforestation and reforestation, integrating all sources of financing.
4. **Support** the organization of a first Roundtable on the financing of the Decade on Afforestation and Reforestation on the sidelines of the COP 29 on climate and at any other relevant international event.

## **H- Regarding the implementation of the Declaration of the International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation**

1. **Mandate** the Republic of Congo, in collaboration with all signatory countries and interested partners, to mobilize all stakeholders necessary to achieve milestones related to:
  - a. The process of endorsing the Decade through the adoption of the resolution at the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly;
  - b. The organization of the round table on the sidelines of COP29;
  - c. The establishment of the monitoring and evaluation committee for the implementation of the Declaration of the First International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation;

## 2. Call on the Republic of Congo:

- a. To include this declaration as a common African position at the 6th biannual coordination meeting between the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and the Regional Mechanisms, to be held on 21 July 2024, in Accra, Ghana, for its endorsement;
- b. To present with the African Group in New York, a draft resolution for an African and World Decade of Afforestation and Reforestation, at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

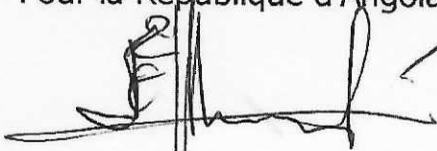
**We call** on Development Banks and other financial institutions, as well as the private sector and technical and financial partners around the world, to mobilize the necessary resources for the operationalization, as soon as possible, of the Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation Committee of the Declaration of the First International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation.

**Congratulations** to His Excellency Mr. **Denis SASSOU NGUESSO**, President of the Republic of Congo, Chairman of the Congo Basin Climate Commission, a specialized institution of the African Union, for his visionary leadership and commitment to the development and promotion of Afforestation and Reforestation.

Done in Brazzaville, July 5, 2024.



Pour la République d'Angola,

  
TETE ANTONIO

Pour la République de l'Inde

Pour la République de Burundi,

  
Ir. Prosper DOAIKO


Pour la République de Kazakhstan

Pour la République du Cameroun

Pour la République de Madagascar

Maxime  
MAX FONTAINE - MINISTRE  
DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DU  
DEVELOPPEMENT DURABLE  
Pour la République du Mozambique,

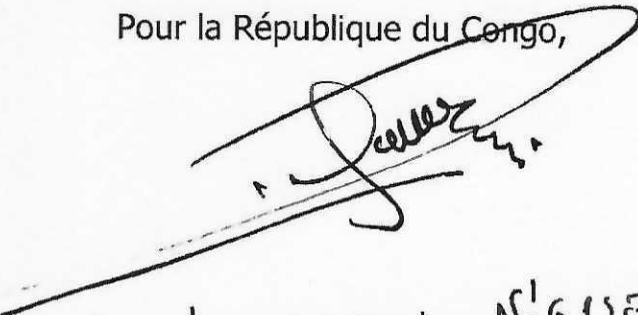
Pour la République Centrafricaine,


  
Pr. Faustin Archange  
TOUADERA PRCE

Ivete Maibaze  
Minister of Land &  
Environment

Pour la République du Congo,


Pour la République de la Namibie

  
Denis SASSOU - N'GUESSO

  
Pohamba Shefeta  
Minister of Environment,  
forestry & Tourism

Pour la République de Côte d'Ivoire

République Fédérale du Nigeria

  
BALARAM ABBAS LAWAL

Pour la République du Cuba

Pour la République d'Ouganda

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Beatrice Atim Anywar

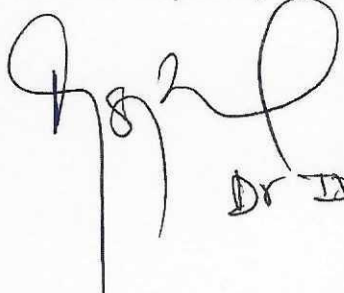
République Démocratique du Congo

Pour la République du Rwanda

~~Valentine Uwambira~~  
Dr. Valentine UWAMBIRA

Pour la République Fédérale  
Démocratique d'Ethiopie

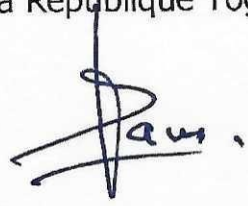
Pour la République du Tchad

  
DR IDRIS SAÏED BAÏCHAR

Pour la République Gabonaise

Pour la République Togolaise

  
Gal Oligui NGUEMA BRIN  
Chaire.

  
KOSSOU ADEDEZE

Pour la République du Ghana

NANA AKUFO-ADDO  
PRESIDENT

Pour la République de Guinée Bissau

Pour la République de Guinée Equatoriale

Pour l'Union des Comores

Pour la République du Zimbabwe