



1350 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 403
Washington, DC 20036

August 28, 2012

Dr. Don Koo Lee
Minister of Korea Forest Service
Seoul, Korea

Dear Minister Lee:

My congratulations to you for arranging the Agreement between the ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea on Forestry Cooperation, the first-ever intergovernmental commitment to sustainable forest management in Asia.

The Agreement took effect at a crucial moment when the international community is striving to find common ground between developing and developed nations in addressing the issues of climate change. The Agreement promises to be an effective platform for promoting Asian forest cooperation and setting up the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization, AFoCO.

I look forward to watching how this initiative evolves to help resolve a range of international forestry issues, such as desertification, excessive logging, and carbon sequestration.

I'm confident the Republic of Korea is well-prepared to take the initiative. As I mentioned in *Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*, Korea is in many ways a reforestation model for the rest of the world. When the Korean War ended, 60 years ago, the mountainous country was largely deforested. As a result of a consistent reforestation effort, forests today cover 65 percent of the country. I remember driving across South Korea in November 2000 and thinking how wonderful it was to see the luxuriant stands of trees on the colorful mountains that had once been almost denuded. We can reforest the earth!

As all the ASEAN Member States, many rich with forests, join hands with Korea, my hopes are that AFoCO becomes a center for building a sustainable future in Asia, planting trees in the Mongolian deserts and saving Indonesia's tropical rainforests.

Again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

Lester R. Brown
President