

'World governments have a choice: Trees now or tanks later', commented Nairobi-based Peter S. Thacher, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme). 'Loss of tropical forests at the present rate will undermine future economic development and threaten social and political stability in many countries.' Mr Thacher was speaking at a press conference** in Bali, Indonesia, to launch a global WWF/IUCN campaign aimed at focusing world attention on the threat to the tropical forests and seeking funds for special action programmes.

Other key panellists included: HE Dr Emil Salim, Indonesian Minister of State for Development Supervision and Environment; Dr Lee M. Talbot, then Director-General of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), and Charles de Haes, Director-General of WWF (World Wildlife Fund), who are both based in Switzerland; Dr Gerardo Budowski, Head of the Natural Renewable Resources Department of CATIE (Regional Tropical Agricultural Center for Research and Training) in Costa Rica; and Dr Kenton R. Miller, Director of the Wildlands Management Center, School of Natural Resources, University of Michigan, and Chairman of the IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA). Nine top scientific experts from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, also attended the press conference to answer technical questions.

'Saving the tropical forests is not a luxury, but a priority for world action', noted WWF Director-General Charles de Haes. 'Unfortunately, this problem remains a well-hidden time-bomb generally known only to a scientific elite. Mobilizing public opinion is our highest single priority in this campaign. Unless the public is made aware of the seriousness of the situation, and brings pressure to bear on governments and industry, there may be serious and irreversible consequences. These could include economic disruption, political instability, famine, drought, and disruption of our basic life-support systems. Already much is being done to avoid eliminating what remains of one of the world's most essential resources, but it is clearly not enough. The governments must be made to realize their obligations to future generations before it is too late.'

Tropical rain-forest loss in recent years has resulted in: disastrous floods in India, drought in Indonesia, reduction in water-levels supplying the Panama Canal, clogging of Thailand's traditional waterway transport systems, reduced efficiency of hydroelectric systems in Philippines, and the devastation of Haitian farms—among other [often widely serious], consequences. The latest satellite studies now indicate that, at the present rate of destruction, several Central American nations will lose their entire forest cover by the end of the century.

'The problem of the tropical forests is the world's most important conservation priority', Dr Talbot, then Director-General of IUCN, noted: '... leading scientists in the US *Global 2000 Report* and the *World Conservation Strategy* all make it clear that the tropical rain-forests, the oldest and most diverse ecosystems on Earth, moderate climate, ensure a constant supply of fresh water... and provide fibre, food, fuel, building materials, and medicines. They are an important source of food in

areas of the world where increased population puts added pressure on food supply, a major source of revenue for many tropical countries, and provide western nations with an incredible variety of essential products—including many of our most important pharmaceuticals.' Yet tropical forests are being destroyed at an alarming rate: The estimated annual destruction is equal to three times the area of Switzerland!

The Head of the Natural Renewable Resources Department of Costa Rica's famed CATIE Research Institute, Dr Gerardo Budowski, said the United States 'Hamburger Connection' was destroying large portions of Central America's tropical rain-forests: 'Vast areas of productive tropical rain-forest are being cut down to provide pastures, productive for 5–7 years at most, for cattle that provides less than 2% of America's beef. The US doesn't need the small amount of cheap beef they get in this way, but the countries of Central America *do* need their valuable forests.'

What can be done? Mobilizing public opinion on a world scale is being given highest priority in the WWF/IUCN campaign. In addition to strategic educational and public awareness projects in both tropical forest countries and the developed world, WWF will launch an aggressive television-and-print advertising campaign that will take the case for protecting the tropical forests to those countries which are still rich in forest resources. Over a million dollars in donated space in publications and air-time on television and radio stations is expected in more than 40 countries.

Indonesia was chosen as the venue for the launching of this Tropical Forest Campaign because of its imaginative government conservation programme and the fact that it has 10% of the world's total tropical forest resource, being in this respect second only to Brazil. Another key reason for holding the launch in Indonesia is to tie-in with the once-a-decade World National Parks Congress, which opened the following morning at the same venue.

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The Race Against the Arms Race*

We protest the global arms-race as American citizens and citizens of the world with a deep concern for human well-being, for ecological balance, and for true national and international security. We do so because our current [national] reliance on military power as the main instrument of foreign policy, and the accompanying nuclear weapons-race, bring us ever closer to a nuclear conflict that will decimate the human population, destroy its social fabric, and wreak havoc upon our global environment.

We seek an end to the arms race because it diverts human and natural resources from pressing social and environmental needs. As a major portion of the economic surplus of most nations, military budgets represent a

** Held on 10 October 1982, before the opening of the World National Parks Congress (see the 'Important Prospect' on page 170 of our Summer issue and the report in a forthcoming one).—Ed.

* Collective statement of about 24 persons who comprised Working Session No. 1 of the Conference on the Fate of the Earth, held in New York, NY, USA, 19–21 October 1982, which was co-chaired by the undersigned three co-authors.—Ed.

significant potential source of resources for alleviating these needs. Moreover, the arms race fosters a dehumanizing and debilitating psychological climate which stymies the human potential for creating an ecologically sustainable and peaceful world. Continuation on our present course can only decrease our national security.

We recognize that true and lasting national security can only be attained through international security: a nation can attain security only when its potential antagonists no longer feel insecure. To this end, we call for open communications, exchanges, and trade, in order to re-establish at least the minimal level of cooperation and trust that is required for the successful negotiation and ratification of an arms agreement [first of all] with the Soviet Union.

In the final analysis, however, we recognize that true and lasting national security can only be attained by a society that is in harmony with Nature—a society with a stable population and a stable economy that depends upon the sustained-yield management of its agriculture, its forestry, and its fisheries, and that has developed renewable-energy security.

We realize as well that if the community of nations is to transcend the nuclear age and reach a stable and sustainable society, it must address the root causes which are leading to nuclear confrontation, resource competition, environmental degradation, and violence. Intensified international cooperation is needed both to understand the global nature of our problems and to seek their solution. A new willingness by the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nations, to transcend national prejudice and international anarchy and to work through international law for a peaceful, sustainable Earth, must be achieved if the human species is to survive its own destructive capabilities.

As an immediate first step to end the nuclear arms-race, we endorse a bilateral freeze on the further production, testing, and deployment, of nuclear weapons and missiles, and of the aircraft primarily designed to deliver nuclear weapons. Although a substantial majority of the American people is known to favour such a freeze, we recognize that this important first step will only be achieved through concerted efforts aimed at the Executive branch and the Congress of the United States. We therefore call upon all those who support an end to the nuclear arms-race to assert forcefully their collective strength within the political system in order to elect national, state, and local, officials who will work towards this goal, and in order to end the political careers of those who do not. For years we have broadcast that the nuclear arms-race threatens the survival of the planet. We must now make unmistakably clear our intention to assure that continuation of the arms race also threatens the political survival of our elected officials.

In pursuit of these objectives, we call upon the President of the United States to declare a moratorium on the further production, testing, and deployment, of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, and of space-based weapons. He should invite the Soviet Government to respond with a parallel declaration of purpose, which could then result in a mutual moratorium while a detailed permanent treaty is worked out.

Specifically, we further call upon our U.S. Government to forego immediately the production and deploy-

ment of provocative weapons having first-strike potential—Pershing II, MX, and Trident missiles—and the deployment of hard-to-verify ground- and sea-launched cruise missiles. We similarly urge both the American and Soviet Governments to renounce fraudulent civil defence measures such as the civilian hardened nuclear bomb-shelter and crisis relocation (i.e., evacuation) programmes. These attempts at mass self-deception are provocative and otherwise dangerous. We call upon the United States Congress to reject funding requests for these purposes, and for the development and deployment of enhanced radiation (neutron) weapons which are expressly designed for limited nuclear-war fighting.

During the moratorium which we have proposed, we urge our Government to resume active negotiations with the other nuclear powers towards consummating a verifiable comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

Moreover, as an important first step towards our ultimate goal of the total abolition of nuclear weapons, we urge our Government unequivocally to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, and to retire the large inventory of battlefield nuclear weapons that are now deployed for this purpose.

We recognize the inseparable link between nuclear reactor facilities and the potential for nuclear weapon proliferation. For this and other social and environmental reasons, we urge reliance upon non-nuclear sustainable energy sources.

We call upon governments, communities, and citizens everywhere, to establish regional, national, and local, nuclear-free zones as an important step towards the goal of a nuclear-free world, and as a concrete means of limiting the number of potential flashpoints for rapid escalation to nuclear war.

We urge all organizations and individuals who support our goals to maintain and increase the momentum of their public education and research efforts, which are indispensable for broadening the movement for a peaceful and sustainable world community and for enlarging our understanding of the steps by which we can progress along that path.

In conclusion, we seek national and international security not through weapons and policies that are likely to destroy ourselves and our environment, but rather by achieving sustainable societies for ourselves and our neighbours in conjunction with non-nuclear and non-provocative defensive armed forces. The very fate of the Earth depends upon the success of this, our race against the arms race.

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