

# Dr M calls for forestry task force un

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By Adlin M. Zabri

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called for the establishment of an inter-governmental task force on forestry under the aegis of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD).

He said it was imperative that such a task force be formed to undertake preparations and consultations for a review of the UN's programme on sustainable development scheduled for 1995.

This would be a more constructive way to push for the effective implementation of the post-UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) agenda on global forestry

decided in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, last year, he said.

At the opening of the 14th Commonwealth Forestry Conference here, Dr Mahathir said the initiative for the establishment of an independent world commission on forests and sustainable development appeared to have faltered due to lack of support.

"More than a year has passed since the forest principles were adopted. Apart from the decision taken by the UNCSD to review forestry-related matters under its multi-layer thematic work programme in 1995, there has been no significant implementation of the UNCED decisions on forestry.

"Given the heavy and wide-ranging work programme of the UNCSD and that forests have

emerged as an issue which demands our urgent attention and action, it is imperative that an inter-governmental task force on forestry be established."

He also suggested that an initiative be launched to streamline the implementation of the UNCED forest principles within the Commonwealth.

These initiatives should emphasise:

- acceptance by all that States that have the sovereign right to exploit and manage their forest resources on a sustainable basis, taking into account the need for social and economic development as well as the protection of the forests and the environment;

- sustainable forest management with the sustainability criteria being

made applicable to all types of forests and timber;

- efforts towards greening the world being made the main responsibility of those countries with low forest cover, to be pursued in the context of increas-

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ing the world's forest cover to 30 per cent of its land area by the year 2000;

- developing countries being provided with new and additional resources and access to environmentally-sound technologies and being given access to such technologies on favourable terms in order to enhance their capacity to manage, conserve and develop their forests;

- the promotion of a supportive international

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- the cons sustainable u cal diversity for in the co biological di cognisance o tance of fore larly the trop the main rep restrial diver:

Dr Mahathir said despite effort and adopt a n framework gl cal forests c face unfair s developed cc were subject