

**Supporting statement:**

*Desertification with its threat of reduced food production and potential famine has long been and continues to be a growing global problem. One-sixth of the world's population is affected by the degradation of dryland and desert encroachment.*

*Article 6 of the Convention which now has 40 signatories, establishes the basic obligations of developed countries to respond to the needs of affected countries, "particularly in Africa, by providing substantial financial resources to help develop and implement plans and strategies; exchange technology and knowledge; and encourage the financial participation of the private sector and the non-governmental community".*

*In many areas where wood is the principal source of energy, in order to survive, agriculture, forest and water sources have been exploited. Ways to combat fuel shortages could include reforestation (a long term goal), and the use of more efficient wood burning stoves. However, well-researched, alternative resources such as solar and wind energy should be easily obtainable where appropriate. Women who are the main users of the fuel for their cooking tasks, often walk further and further each day for this essential item. It has been well demonstrated that if they are involved in the decision-making process, in planning and in the teaching of different methods, great progress will be made. Culturally sensitive dissemination of alternative technologies is of great importance and must be considered.*

**Action plan:**

1. NFAs to urge ratification of this convention in their respective countries;
2. NFAs to educate members and others about alternative sources of energy and how they are being used in the NFA's own country;
3. NFAs to contact other affiliates in which desertification is a problem to learn how the problem is being dealt with and provide their national governments with information.

15) **RESOLUTION ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY**  
*Proposed by the Canadian Federation of University Women*

The 26<sup>th</sup> Conference resolves:

**that NFAs urge their respective governments to make a commitment to the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity, Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Statement of Forest Principles* by:**

- **supporting programs in reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded forest lands that are relevant, environmentally sound, and culturally acceptable;**
- **requiring and enforcing the use of appropriate, environmentally sound, sustainable methods of harvesting wood while maintaining the forest base;**
- **pursuing through the Global Forest Dialogue the successful negotiation and implementation of the global forest convention, whose goal is the protection and sustainable development of the world's forests.**

**Supporting statement:**

*In tropical, temperate and boreal forest zones around the world, forest and forest products are essential for the survival of communities. Whether we use the wood directly for fuel and building materials or whether we harvest the animals, plants and medicines, we all depend on the world's forests. Our dependence is not limited only to forest products; increasingly research shows us that the world's forests play an integral part in regulating our global and regional climates and ecosystems. Trees play a vital role in absorbing carbon dioxide and filtering other pollutants, thus contributing to cleaner air and reducing global warming. Tree roots prevent soil from being eroded and washed away particularly into lake and river systems where sediments can interfere with fish reproduction.*

*Global Forest Loss: What are the dimensions of the problem? Historically more than half of the earth's land consisted of forest, today less than one third is forested. Despite our dependence on the world's forests they are currently cleared and degraded at a rate of 300,000 hectares every week. Forest loss and degradation have not occurred overnight, nor are they caused by one factor. The most obvious cause of forest loss is deforestation. In many developing nations trees are being cut down in order to clear land for agricultural settlement and to provide wood for cooking, heat and shelter. In developed nations trees are being cut down to feed the seemingly insatiable hunger for wood and wood products. Forests play a crucial role in regulating the world's climate and in establishing and maintaining biological diversity. When forests are destroyed or degraded the negative consequences are felt not only in the natural world but also in the social world of human communities. The economic development potential of wood and wood products as well as non-timber forest products and non-consumptive tourism are lost.*

*Role of Women in Forest Communities: Women can be seriously affected by the loss of forest communities. In many developing countries women are the primary agricultural producers responsible for crop production for local and regional markets. When women are involved in the design and implementation stages of forest sustainability programs, they have a vested interest in achieving the goals of such programs.*

**Action plan:**

1. *take action to prevent the continuing destruction of the world's forests;*
2. *promote sustainable forest management;*
3. *redress, through appropriate rehabilitation programs, the degradation of forests that has already taken place;*
4. *protect those areas set aside as parks and wilderness reserves.*