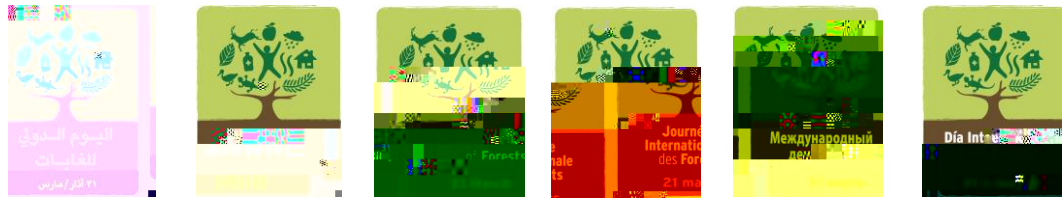


Vice Chair of the 13th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the UN

Celebration of the 2018 International Day of Forests
21 March 2018 | UN Headquarters, New York

For many people, the connection between forests and cities can seem tenuous at best. But forests, parks and trees provide tangible benefits for city dwellers, by providing cleaner air and freshwater, habitat for wildlife, reducing energy costs and mitigating climate change.

In 2000, Kenya's forest cover stood at 5.90 % [3,492,116.2 Ha] but by 2010, it had increased



Throughout Africa, women are the primary caretakers, responsible for tilling the land and feeding their families. Tree planting became a natural choice to address some of their most basic needs. To date, Green Belt Movement communities have planted over 50 million trees in Kenya, helping to restore degraded watersheds and improve the livelihood of the local communities.

The 2018 International Day of Forests, through its theme of forests and sustainable cities provides an opportunity to not just celebrate the importance of forests to sustainable cities and communities, but also to raise questions like - how can we strengthen engagement between forest managers and local governments? Cities stand at the forefront of innovation and climate action, as they tackle the complex infrastructure needs of building, transportation, water and waste while increasing sustainability and economic efficiency.

Global observances like the International Day of Forests are an opportunity to get informed, and translate our knowledge into action. In that spirit, I hope that the 2018 International Day of Forests will inspire