EUSTAFOR's Address at the Opening of Kupres 2017 Conference:

The Need for Sectoral Education on the European Path of BiH

9 – 10 February 2017, Kupres, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to address you on behalf of the European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR) at this important conference addressing "The need for sectoral education in forestry on the European path of Bosnia & Herzegovina".

The forestry and forest-based sector conferences organized in Kupres by Hercegbosanske Šume and Hrvatski Drvni Klaster, as well as other partners, have become a well-known tradition now. I am particularly delighted that I can provide my contribution on behalf of the Brussels-based association, EUSTAFOR, which has included the goal of working towards strengthening the links between the European Union and forestry and forest-based sectors across the continent into the scope of its objectives.

Connecting people, in particular those representing state forest management, with other actors of the forest-based sector, both within and outside the European Union, is one of the main objectives of EUSTAFOR. This role is of particular importance in view of the past several years which have been marked by many divisions of political opinion on the way forward not only for Europe, but on bigger global issues which threaten to undermine our climate and destabilize our societies and economies. Like other sectors of the economy, forestry has remained under the strong influence of these developments and for this reason we need to be able to deliver our clear and concise messages on current policy developments, such as those related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, the Energy Union, developing a bio-based and circular economy, while ensuring environmental integrity and social inclusion.

EUSTAFOR has, over the past 10 years, accomplished its work on a consultative basis because it is precisely by promoting exchanges between its members, using their broad and diversified knowledge and experience, that EUSTAFOR is able to provide reliable, practical and

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comprehensive information on issues of concern to managers of state forest resources across the whole of Europe.

I am very glad that Hercegbosanske Šume, a EUSTAFOR member, and other partner organizations are successfully developing their work in the Balkan region towards consolidating the forest-based sector and preparing it for a wider opening to the EU and the whole of Europe. I am sure that this experience can also be brought to other EUSTAFOR members and can enrich our activities at a policy level in Brussels.

The program prepared by the organizers of this conference is impressive. I wish you all a multitude of productive discussions and constructive outcomes from this important conference.

Thank you for your attention.

Piotr Borkowski
EUSTAFOR's Executive Director

Kupres, 9 February 2017

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