

PAGE NINE EEEU2435 PROTECTED

MALAYSIAN PM MAHATHIR INTENDS TO USE THE FOREST ISSUE IN RIO TO EXTRACT THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF POLITICAL ADVANTAGE FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AS POSSIBLE. IF CANADA AND OTHER G7 COUNTRIES ARE TO SUCCEED IN MOBILIZING SUFFICIENT SUPPORT AMONG THE REST OF THE G77 TO LAUNCH A FOREST CONVENTION AFTER RIO, IT IS CLEAR THAT WE WILL HAVE TO FIND A BARGAINING CHIP TO SWING THEIR SUPPORT. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT WE WILL NOT SUCCEED IN OBTAINING AGREEMENT ON A FOREST CONVENTION, NEGOTIATIONS ARE COMPLETED ON THE FOREST PRINCIPLES THAT ARE LINKED TO AGENDA 21. DUE TO THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION, AGAIN, DELS MADE EXTREMELY SLOW PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATING THESE PRINCIPLES IN NEW YORK, AND AT LEAST 25 PERCENT OF THE TEXT - DEALING WITH ALL OF THE ECONOMIC ISSUES - REMAINS BRACKETED. COMPLETING NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE A MAJOR FOCUS OF EFFORT FOR THE CDN DELEGATION IN RIO.

13. DESERTIFICATION: ANOTHER HIGH PROFILE ISSUE, WHICH COULD BE USED AS A BARGAINING CHIP TO MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR OUR POSITION ON FORESTS, WAS THE INITIATIVE BY THE AFRICAN GROUP AT PREPCOM FOUR TO CALL FOR A CONVENTION ON DESERTIFICATION IN AFRICA. THIS PROPOSAL CAUGHT MOST DONOR COUNTRIES BY SUPRISE AT PREPCOM FOUR, REMAINS BRACKETED IN THE DESERTIFICATION CHAPTER OF AGENDA 21, AND HAS BEEN LEFT FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AT RIO. MOST AFRICAN DELS CAN BE COUNTED TO MAKE THIS ISSUE THEIR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE AT UNCED, AS A MEANS OF FORCING THE REST OF THE WORLD TO CONSIDER A REGIONAL ISSUE OF CRITICAL INTEREST TO THEM AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM. THROUGH A CONVENTION, THEY HOPE TO SECURE ACCESS TO NEW AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR DESERTIFICATION PROJECTS FROM THE GLOBAL