



Rome, 31 October 2011

Dear Friends of the Mountains,

The United Nations' *Mountain Partnership* Secretariat invites you to join us in supporting Aspen in its efforts to create a North American Hub for the *Mountain Partnership*. This exciting opportunity will fill a critical void in representation for the important region of the world.

The *Mountain Partnership* is a voluntary alliance of almost 200 international members, including 50 countries, committed to working together with the common goal of improving the lives of mountain people and protecting mountain environments around the world. The dynamic core of the *Mountain Partnership* is action and initiatives on the ground, which are guided by the recommendations of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (2002). They cover specific themes, such as policy and law, sustainable livelihoods, watershed management, gender, education, sustainable agriculture, rural development, ecotourism and sports, and private sector investment in mountains. The *Mountain Partnership* also is a focal point for collecting data on issues affecting mountain communities and for disseminating that data at international summits that inform the world's policymakers.

The *Mountain Partnership* Secretariat is the organizational entity that supports and serves its members. The Secretariat's current structure consists of a central Hub in Rome and decentralized Hubs in Latin America, Asia/Pacific, Central Asia, and Europe. The Secretariat helps to link existing activities in mountain development, foster synergies to promote closer collaboration, avoid duplication, and achieve greater coherence and better results in terms of sustainable development.

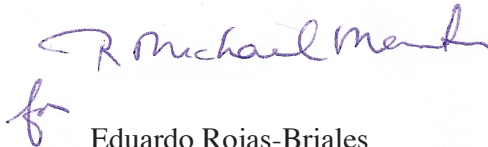
Establishing a North American *Mountain Partnership* Hub in Aspen will help its members, which include the City of Aspen and Town of Basalt, connect and interact with one another and with the rest of the international membership. It also will allow their positions to be better represented in critical international policy discussions and give the North American mountain region more prominence in the world. Furthermore, it will offer public and private entities unique opportunities to network within the vast international mountain community.

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The Aspen International Mountain Foundation (AIMF) brings over a decade of experience addressing issues facing mountain communities. As a member of the *Mountain Partnership*, AIMF has now launched a campaign to establish the North American Hub. The *Mountain Partnership* Secretariat enthusiastically endores AIMF's efforts. We are confident that the City of Aspen and the entire Roaring Fork Valley, with their leadership role in promoting sustainable living in mountain communities, would provide an extraordinary venue for the *Mountain Partnership's* activities.

I urge you to generously support AIMF's efforts and help make Aspen the North American home to the Mountain Partnership.

Yours sincerely,



for Eduardo Rojas-Briales
Assistant Director-General
Forestry Department

Karinjo DeVore
Aspen International Mountain Foundation
P.O. Box 0-3
Aspen, CO 81612
Colorado, USA

cc: Her Excellency
Ertharin Cousin
Ambassador to FAO
United States Mission to the United
Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture
Permanent Representation to FAO
Rome, Italy