

**POSSIBLE ELEMENTS FOR THE DRAFT DECLARATION
OF THE BELGRADE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**

SUGGESTED UK VERSION OF TEXT (REVISION 2) OF 16 FEBRUARY

Introduction

1. We, the Environment Ministers and Heads of delegation from ... countries in the UNECE region and the Representative of the European Commission, met at Belgrade, Serbia, from 10 to 12 October 2007, in the sixth of a series of Ministerial Conferences held as part of the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process.
2. The joint responsibility and role of countries in Europe, North America, the Caucasus and Central Asia for promoting cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable development in the region and its sub-regions, and for advancing the global environmental and sustainable development agenda. Commitment to a needs-driven and prioritised approach.
3. Commitment to meeting global environmental and sustainable development challenges and goals, including through national, sub-regional and regionally specific actions (referring e.g. to, the Millennium Development Goals, the regional contribution to CSD-cycle). Cooperation with other regions by sharing lessons learnt and experience gained.

I. EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

4. Specifics of the UNECE region and main features of the current state of its environment, as set out in the fourth assessment report (Belgrade Assessment). Decision on the next report.
5. Achievements since Kiev, including progress towards meeting the main international goals and targets. Opportunities for furthering environmental policies and performance in the region (economic growth, technological changes and efficiency, environmentally targeted financing). Enhanced role of the European Community in most of the region via the European Neighbourhood Programme and the Stabilisation and Accession Process.
6. Remaining concerns, challenges and implementation gaps.
7. Need to prioritise response measures, taking account of sub-regional differences (e.g., as shown by evidence in individual environmental performance reviews).
8. Evaluation of the role of UNECE MEAs and related “soft” activities under the environment sub-programme. Need for further progress on ratification, implementation, compliance, capacity building, and for proportionate funding to help address concerns and challenges. Adoption of Recommendations on Guidance to EECCA Governments on environmental indicators and on monitoring and reporting.

II. CAPACITY-BUILDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

9. Recognition of the importance of capacity-building as a cross-cutting priority area for environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable development in the region, and the role of all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations, in working in partnership to deliver further progress.

10. Progress made in the implementation of “Environmental Partnerships in the UNECE Region: Environmental Strategy for Countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Strategic framework” (EECCA Strategy) and perspectives. EAP Task Force report on the implementation of the Strategy.

11. Progress made in the implementation of the Central Asian initiative on sustainable development, and other important sub-regional partnerships.

12. Initiatives of South Eastern Europe’s (SEE) Environment Ministers, bearing in mind the Stabilisation and Association Process and its direct link to EU enlargement.

13. Main capacity building needs *[should be predominantly based on evidence emerging from Belgrade assessment, EECCA Strategy report, etc, but could include:*

- *reconciling economic growth, international competitiveness, and environmental protection;*
- *modernising policy instruments and ensuring their coherent implementation;*
- *strengthening environmental governance and institutional frameworks;*
- *increasing sustainable use of resources and changing production and consumption patterns;*
- *further integrating climate change and other environmental and sustainable development aspects into energy policy;*
- *strengthening efforts to improve water and sanitation;*
- *improving chemicals management;*
- *pursuing the contribution of environmental issues to peace, stability and security;*
- *implementing the Education for Sustainable Development Strategy;*
- *improving environmental financing, with prioritized investments and greater involvement of the private sector.]*

III. THE WAY FORWARD

14. Main instruments/delivery channels required to respond to concerns, challenges and implementation gaps *[should be based on needs and priorities identified in sections I and II, but could include:*

- *partnerships (at regional, sub-regional, national and local levels) including the involvement of NGOs and the private sector, e.g. Central Asian Partnership Initiative.*
- *retargeting of EECCA Environment Strategy (if need be, shortening and streamlining existing objectives);*
- *strengthening environmental policies and institutions, including launching dialogues with EECCA countries with a view to identifying specific actions to implement international commitments and/or build capacities;*
- *focus on implementation of existing MEA;*
- *thematic initiatives (e.g., climate change/energy efficiency, SCP, ESD, cleaner fuels, mountain regions, biodiversity, SEA, public participation) related to priorities identified in Belgrade report and EECCA Environment Strategy assessment; and*
- *further refocusing of IFI and donor assistance to meet identified priorities.]*

15. Need for all actions identified in paragraph 14 to be taken forward in accordance with clear objectives and with a focus on concrete outcomes within defined timescales.

16. Whether and if the EfE process should continue. If it does, its mandate, goals and focus for the future. Result orientation based on reliable data/indicators/assessments. Roles and responsibilities of its major driving forces (Committee on Environmental Policy, EAP Task Force, PPC and EECCA RECs). Cooperation with other processes. Financing of the EfE process.

17. Next Conference.