



**Economic and Social
Council**

Working Paper No. WGSO/EXECOM-2/2006/2
20 February 2006

ENGLISH ONLY

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials
"Environment for Europe"
Executive Committee
(Second session, Geneva, 24 February 2006)

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE WGSO*

The second session will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
Starting at 3 p.m. on Thursday, 29 June 2006**

Introduction

The Committee of Environmental Policy, at its eleventh session, established the Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO) for the preparation of the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", to be held in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, in the first half of October 2007. The WGSO held its first session on 12-13 October 2005.

Following the request from the first meetings of the WGSO and of its Executive Committee, the Secretariat in consultation with the Chairman of the WGSO has prepared several papers for the second meeting of the WGSO. The draft papers were firstly considered by the Executive Committee at its second meeting (24 February 2006). Thereafter, the amended papers, taking into account the comments provided by the Committee, are submitted to the WGSO for discussion and approval.

* This document was not formally edited.

** New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the attached registration form, also available from the web site of the UNECE / ENHS Division (<http://www.unece.org/env/cep/welcome.html>), and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat, at the latest two weeks prior to the meeting, by fax (+41-22-917-0107). Before the meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Villa Les Feuillantines, 13, Avenue de la Paix (a map is attached) to pick up their identification badge. In case of difficulty, please contact the UNECE secretariat by telephone (extension 71204).

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group is invited to adopt the provisional agenda of its second meeting (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/1).

Item 2. Draft paper with an overview of activities relevant to the agenda of the Belgrade Conference

The Working Group is invited to consider the draft paper with an overview of activities relevant to the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/4). This paper was prepared on the basis of the report of the first meeting of the WGSO, the input provided by partners of the EfE process and taking into account the comments from the 2nd meeting of the Executive Committee. While considering the relevant activities, the Working Group should ensure consistency between the possible themes for the Conference and the proposed activities.

Item 3. Overview of high-level and other relevant events taking place before the Belgrade Conference

The Working Group is invited to consider the paper ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/7 providing an overview of high-level and other relevant events scheduled to take place before the Belgrade Conference. This paper was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of Internet search and with the input from partners in the “Environment for Europe” process. The comments received from the Executive Committee were also taking into account.

Item 4. Possible themes and expected outcome of the Belgrade Conference

The Working Group is invited to consider the revised background paper on possible themes for the Belgrade Agenda (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/3). The secretariat has amended this paper by taking into consideration the comments provided by governments and other partners in the process. The comments provided by the Executive Committee at its second meeting are also reflected in the paper.

The WGSO at its first meeting stressed that the Belgrade event should become a conference of delivery. Three major components within this context were identified: (a) assessment of the effectiveness of agreed commitments and tools; (b) analysis of problems in the implementation of existing commitments and their root causes; and (c) presentation of success stories and good practices to be built on for further progress in capacity building and in the implementation of existing commitments.

WGSO also suggested that an independent report be prepared as a basis for discussion. At its second meeting the WGSO is invited to consider the issue of the proposed report, its scope, content and format. Furthermore, when discussing the content of the report, the available time schedule should be taken into account (July 2006 – December 2006).

The WGSO is invited to consider a proposal for a high-level segment on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the Belgrade Conference.

The WGSO is furthermore invited to discuss the major outcomes expected from the Belgrade Conference. As a result of discussions at the first meeting of the WGSO many participants felt that a short negotiated document providing strategic directions would be the most appropriate option. Alternatively, some delegations proposed a Chair's summary. Should the WGSO decide on a negotiated document the time schedule should be taken into account and a drafting group be established to start the work after the second meeting of the WGSO.

Item 5. Organisational issues for the Belgrade Conference

The WGSO is invited to consider the paper on organisational issues for the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/5). This paper was prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson of WGSO and on the basis of a similar document approved by the WGSO for the Kiev Conference. The section on 'Documents' is in accordance with the UN rules for processing the documentation, hence the deadlines for documents' submission.

Item 6. The budget required for the Belgrade Conference and the preparatory process

The WGSO is invited to consider the paper on the estimated budget for the Belgrade Conference and the preparatory process (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/6). The secretariat prepared this paper on the basis of the input provided by partners and the host country, taking into account the internal UNECE budget related rules and the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) decision (ECE/CEP/127, Annex II) on eligibility for financial support of countries with economies in transition. The WGSO is also invited to give their views on the possible mechanisms for fund raising to ensure a smooth and efficient preparatory process for the Belgrade Conference.

Item 7. State of host country preparations

The host country is invited to update the WGSO on the national preparatory process for the organisation of the Belgrade Conference.

Furthermore, the host country is invited to provide information on the exact dates in October 2007. Following the request from the first meeting of the WGSO the host country will make available a video presentation of the premises of the Belgrade Conference at the second meeting of the WGSO.

Item 8. The third meeting of the WGSO and the fourth meeting of the Executive Committee

The WGSO is invited to consider the possible dates of its third meeting. It is proposed that the third meeting of the WGSO takes place in Geneva back-to-back with the 13th session of the CEP (9-11 October 2006), i.e. from 12 to 13 October 2006. Furthermore, it is proposed that the fourth meeting of the Executive Committee takes place back-to-back to the third meeting of the WGSO, either before or right after the WGSO meeting.

An updated schedule of preparatory meetings for the Belgrade Conference is available. (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/9, Annex I).

Item 9. Other business

a) The “Environment for Europe” Communication Strategy

At the first meeting of the WGSO, the chairperson informed delegations about the outcome of discussions in the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), i.e. that the CEP took note of the draft strategy (CEP/2005/2) and passed it to the Working Group for further refinement. The Chairman also asked delegations to submit their comments on the content of the Strategy and on the further process until 15 January 2006. To this date no comments were received by the Secretariat. The WGSO is invited to consider how to proceed further on this issue.

b) The WGSO is invited to discuss any other business that should be brought to its attention at this time.