

FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

Agenda item 7. Waste

Intervention by Albania¹

Dear Mr. Co-Chair, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to give you a very short presentation of the solid waste management situation in Albania.

Transition years in Albania have been accompanied by a strong increase of consumption that had the consequence of significant increase of solid waste generation. Internal migration together with sharp development of construction industry, poor solid waste management schemes heredities from the centralized economy, insufficient public awareness knowledge regarding environmental issues in general characterize the situation in our country. In Albania are generated around 1.250.000 ton yearly waste. But this is certainly only a start. We certainly expect a strong increase of the solid waste generation due to economic development.

Facing this situation Albania government has endorsed policies that bring low cost solutions. Given socio - economic situation it looks not bearable that expenses for new technology solid waste management systems can be put on the population. We have covered by state budget financing the construction of different landfills promoting the recycling of solid waste by the private sector specially plastics, paper etc. Doing that, we have had the support of Italian, Dutch and German Governments, as well as of the World Bank, that are helping our government in mitigating solid waste challenge.

I would like to take advantage to thank all the states and agencies that are helping us in tackling this situation but I would like to draw their attention as well that at least for a short term period more attention and financing should be directed by our partners to improve the situation of solid waste management in Albania. Together with a stronger mobilization of the internal stakeholders and financing resources, the foreign financing will help Albania meet the requirements derived from the European Integration process.

Coming to the questions I think that in Albania for the moment the most effective way to change the business perception about waste is the plain implementation of the rule "polluter pays". Although the business pressure for development remains strong, the environmental impact assessment should be considered as crucial in any decision. While the civil society should play a greater role in public awareness strengthening not only through workshops, seminars etc but as well as taking leadership and play its role in environmental issues that impact our life quality.

Thank you.

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¹ The text is presented as received from the author.