UNECE

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Statement by

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on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

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Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro*¹ and Iceland**², the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

The discussion on the Institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD) has generated significant momentum. Initiatives like the Rome/Belgrade/Nairobi/Helsinki process have provided key insights to this discussion and we like to thank again those who made it possible. Various options are on the table, and signs of convergence are beginning to emerge. The aim of the IFSD discussion is clearly to make a contribution to integration, implementation and coherence of sustainable development. Governance arrangements in all three pillars of sustainable development need to be strengthened, better coordinated and made more coherent. We do not need to start from scratch, but should build further on the basis of the guidance contained in the IFSD chapter of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

We need to ensure that the economic, social and environmental dimensions work closely together. We need high-level visibility and political clout for sustainable development topics, as well as transparency, accountability, flexibility and the meaningful participation of all major groups and stakeholders.

As indicated in our contribution to UN DESA one of the main outcomes of the Rio+20 should be a package of reforms that should include the transforming of UNEP into a specialized agency for the

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¹ *Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

² **Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.*
environment and lead to a strengthened international environmental governance as part of a more balanced and effective IFSD.

Despite the commonly recognized inter-linkages between poverty, natural resources use and ecosystem degradation, our action is still hampered by fragmentation of the UN system and lack of co-ordination between UN agencies and the international financial institutions (IFIs). Implementation should be streamlined into the various options for reform, in particular by facilitating the implementation of national and sub-national sustainable development policies and strategies through policy exchange or voluntary peer reviews, as well as practical and action-oriented guidance and advice and capacity building by the UN System and by bilateral, and multilateral donors. Local governments, business, international financial institutions, the major groups and civil society all play a key role in the implementation phase and can be promoted by establishing partnership and networking platforms in the Rio+20 process.

The Rio+20 Conference needs to provide the enabling conditions for scaling up and building on the valuable work that is already taking place at local, national and regional level notably with regards to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategies at all levels, the work of sustainable development councils, the work of local governments and the work of intersectoral coordination structures. We should identify ways for enhancing their contribution to a streamlined and effective implementation of sustainable development. We should also look into the role played by the UN regional commissions in facilitating technical assistance, regional coordination, mobilizing financing and implementation.

We would like to emphasize that the IFSD discussion needs to be closely linked to the discussion on Green economy. Properly functioning global markets also need effective multilateral institutions. The strengthening of international governance structures for sustainable development will also help the transition to a green economy. Long-term economic resilience is dependent on sustainable use of natural resources. We need to reflect on which UN agencies and bodies and by what means could best support the transition towards a Green economy in the framework of the broader UN reform.

The Rio+20 Conference provides a unique opportunity for forward-looking IFSD discussions contributing to better implementation and greater integration of sustainable development at all levels and in all countries. This integration is very important when we want to accelerate our actions towards poverty eradication and shift towards a green economy. We are looking forward to
engaging constructively in discussions on IFSD both at this session and at the forthcoming Second Intersessional Meeting of Rio+20.

Thank you for your attention.