Ref: ECE/ENV/2011/465

3 October 2011

Excellency,

It is my pleasure to invite a Minister or high-level official of your Government to participate in the Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM) for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – Rio+20 (UNCSID Rio+20) which will take place in Geneva on 1-2 December 2011.

The objective of the Regional Preparatory Meeting is to elaborate the contribution from the UNECE region to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development - Rio+20 to be held on 4-6 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro.

In particular, the Regional Preparatory Meeting will aim at identifying the specific challenges and priorities of the UNECE region with regard to the Rio+20 Conference, including policy recommendations and good practices. The results of the meeting, in the form of a non-negotiated outcome (co-Chairs’ Summary) will be transmitted to and presented at the Second Intersessional Meeting for UNCSID to be held in New York, on 15-16 December 2011.

The objectives of the Rio+20 Conference are to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, to assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of major summits on sustainable development and to address new and emerging challenges.

Substantive discussion will focus on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

To: UNECE Ambassadors
In the light of the global importance of the Rio+20 Conference and the cross-cutting nature of the issues addressed, I would like to encourage you to broaden your country’s representation in the Regional Preparatory Meeting beyond your Ministry of the Environment so as to include other relevant Government bodies, such as economic and finance ministries.

The Regional Preparatory Meeting will be divided into three thematic segments:
- Assessment of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and address new and emerging challenges
- A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication
- The institutional framework for sustainable development

The meeting will be co-chaired by two ministers from different parts of the ECE region. The first segment will take the form of a multi-stakeholder panel discussion followed by presentations by the panelists and a question & answer session. The second segment will be divided into a one-hour plenary session and a two-hour multi-stakeholder round table. Finally the third segment will revert to the form of a multi-stakeholder panel discussion followed by presentations by the panelists and a question & answer session. The consolidated results of discussions from the round table and the two panels will serve as input into the co-Chairs’ Summary of the meeting.

The provisional annotated agenda of the RPM is enclosed with this letter. A draft organization of work for the meeting will be elaborated by the secretariat in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other organizations and bodies working for sustainable development in our region.

I would appreciate it if you could kindly inform the secretariat if your Government is interested in co-chairing the meeting, delivering a keynote address in one of the sessions or proposing a panelist. Please provide the secretariat with the expression of your interest at your earliest convenience, but no later than 17 October 2011.

Regarding the registration process for this event, kindly note that the relevant form is attached to this letter and is also available online at http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/RPM2011/first/RegistrationForm.doc

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) is providing travel costs only for the participation of countries from the ECE region that are currently members of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD): Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Israel, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America.
In order to ensure broad participation from all parts of the ECE region, I very much hope that your Government will be able to provide a financial contribution, in particular to fund countries that are eligible for financial support according to the criteria established by the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy in 2009 (ECE/CEP/155) and that are not covered by UNDESA, and from NGOs and civil society. It is estimated that a total of approximately US$ 25,000 will be needed for travel and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) of one representative from each of the eligible member States.

For the above and any other issues related to the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development - Rio+20, please contact:

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Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

[signed]

Ján Kubiš

cc: United Nations Environment Programme / Regional Office for Europe (UNEP/ROE)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Europe & CIS, Bratislava

Attachments:
1. Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) - E/ECE/RPM/2011/1
2. Registration Form for the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)