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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

**REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE BUREAU**

Geneva, 5 December 2006

Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson

**Introduction**

1. The UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, at its first meeting (13-14 December 2005) elected its Bureau and entrusted it with various substantive tasks. The Bureau serves as an intermediate implementing body between the Committee's meetings and reports on its work to the Steering Committee. The Bureau held its third meeting on 5 December 2006, and the fourth meeting is scheduled to take place on 19 February 2007 (see the report of the second meeting of the Steering Committee ECE/CEP/AC.13/2006/3). These two meetings are specifically dedicated to the preparations for the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (10-12 October 2007).

2. The following members of the Bureau participated in the third meeting: Mr. Gerald Farthing (Canada); Mr. Michel Ricard (France), accompanied by Ms. Michelle Jouhaneau (France); Ms. Nino Kizikurashvili (Georgia); Mr. Andreas Karamanos (Chairperson, Greece), assisted by Mr. Michael Scoullos (Greece); Mr. Paolo Soprano (Italy), accompanied by Ms. Monica Giasanti (Italy); Ms. Jyldyz Duishenova (Kyrgyzstan); and Ms. Natasa Mujagic and Mr. Miroslav Tadic (for Ms. Vesna Fila (Serbia)).

3. Participating as observers were Ms. Victoria Elias (European ECO-Forum), Mr. Günther Franz Pfaffenwimmer (Environmental and School Initiatives (ENSI)) Ms. Aline

Bory-Adams (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) and Ms. Tatyana Shakirova (Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC)).

## **I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

4. The Bureau adopted its agenda as set out in the informal document SC-ESD/BUREAU-3/2006/2.

## **II. SESSION ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (BELGRADE CONFERENCE)**

5. The Bureau discussed the organization of work for the session on education for sustainable development (ESD) to be organized at the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in October 2007 in Belgrade. It was proposed that the session start with a presentation of the major findings contained in the report on progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD, followed by a discussion from the floor. To ensure a constructive discussion, the Bureau suggested dividing it into two parts that would address: (a) challenges, and (b) the way forward, with a focus on implementation in phases 2 and 3. The secretariat was requested to prepare a guidance document for interventions, based on the original proposal for the ESD session prepared by the Bureau (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/7), and to send it to delegations prior to the Conference. Delegations would be asked to provide a written outline of their intervention(s) indicating whether the intervention referred to topic (a) or (b).

6. The Bureau discussed the modalities of the organization of the informal panel discussion and requested the interested Governments and ECO-Forum to submit by 1 February 2007 their candidates for panellists (three representatives of Governments and two representatives of stakeholders) along with an outline of the proposed presentations. The outline should reflect (a) which aspect of the energy-related content would be covered, and (b) how the issue would be addressed by ESD. Thereafter, the Bureau, at its meeting on 19 February 2007, would consider the proposals and decide on the final composition of the panel. European ECO-Forum suggested that a more prominent role (e.g. that of co-chairperson or rapporteur) be assigned to a representative of non-governmental organizations. Norway communicated to the Bureau its interest in participating in the panel.

## **III. ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

7. Further to the decision taken by the Steering Committee, the Bureau stressed that the idea of an assistance programme should be reflected in the work plan for phase II. In this context, the Bureau discussed the nature of the future work of the Steering Committee. Some proposals were

made to include on the agenda of future meetings items related to the practical implementation of ESD, in addition to policy-oriented items.

#### **IV. FIRST REPORT ON PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

8. The Chairperson's assistant informed the Bureau that *Europe's Environment: The Fourth Assessment* (the Belgrade report), to be prepared by the European Environment Agency, would contain a chapter on ESD. He stressed the importance of ensuring that the Belgrade report was consistent with the report on progress in the implementation of the Strategy. The Bureau requested that the report on progress in the implementation of the Strategy include an executive summary.

#### **V. FUTURE WORK OF THE BUREAU**

9. The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting on 19 February 2007 in Geneva. The meeting will consider the following issues: a compilation of country-specific needs prepared by the secretariat on the basis of submissions by countries; the draft ministerial statement for finalization and submission to the Belgrade Conference; a first draft of the report on progress in the implementation of the Strategy, prepared by a consultant; and a proposal on the list of panelists for the informal panel discussion at the Belgrade Conference.

10. To ensure the continuity of work, the Bureau considers it important that its present composition be maintained until the likely next meeting of Steering Committee<sup>1</sup> in 2008.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to the extension of the mandate of the Steering Committee by the session on ESD at the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, October 2007).