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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials
“Environment for Europe”

Third meeting
Geneva, 12–13 October 2006

REPORT OF THE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

1. The third meeting of the Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO) for the preparation of the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (the Belgrade Conference), to be held in Belgrade on 10–12 October 2007, took place on 12–13 October 2006 in Geneva. This report has been prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson.
2. The meeting was attended by delegates from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Representatives of the European Commission also attended.

3. Representatives from the following organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system participated: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) and the World Bank.

4. Representatives of the Energy Charter Secretariat, the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Secretariat of the Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries (EAP Task Force), the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) and the Project Preparation Committee also participated.

5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: the European ECO-Forum, the European Environmental Bureau, the NGOs Network FORUM Efe07, the Association "For Sustainable Human Development", GROUP T-Institute of Higher Education, Women in Europe for a Common Future, and Youth and Environment Europe.

6. Also represented were the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), the Regional Environmental Centre for Moldova (REC-Moldova), the Regional Environmental Centre for the Russian Federation (REC-Russia), the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC-Caucasus) and the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC-CEE).

7. The list of participants is available at www.unece.org/env/efe/wgso/Belgrade/WGSOMeetings.htm#3rdMtg.

8. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Miroslav Spasojevic (Serbia).

9. Following a request from the second meeting of the WGSO and recommendations by its Executive Committee, the secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson, had prepared or revised several documents for discussion and decision, as appropriate, by the WGSO at its third meeting.

10. The WGSO had before it the following official documents: the provisional agenda (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/8), the revised possible framework for the agenda of the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/10), the revised overview of activities that could provide input to the agenda of the Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/11), the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration of the Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/14), the revised provisional estimates of resource requirements (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/12) and the draft communication plan for the Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/13). A compilation of other activities related to the Belgrade Conference that were submitted to the secretariat (Information Paper No.1), UNECE core resource requirements for preparing and servicing the Conference (Information

Paper No. 2) and the “Draft communication plan for the Belgrade Conference: concept proposal for the training of journalists from the UNECE region” (Information Paper No. 3/rev. 1) were also made available to the WGSO. A number of informal papers providing updates on the proposed activities for the Conference, and prepared by partners in the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process and by some member States, were made available to participants.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

11. The Chairperson opened the meeting, thanked all those who had contributed to its preparation and expressed the hope that the third meeting of the WGSO would further advance the discussions relating to setting the agenda for the Belgrade Conference. The WGSO adopted the report of its second meeting (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/2) and the provisional agenda as set out in document ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/8.

12. Switzerland expressed its reservation regarding the heading “Parallel Processes” as applied to the PEBLDS in the draft outline of the Belgrade Conference agenda (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/2, annex 1) and stated that the issue of biodiversity and the PEBLDS was an integral part of the EfE process.

II. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE

(a) Draft outline of the Belgrade agenda

13. The secretariat introduced the document on the revised possible framework for the agenda of the Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/10). The document had been amended on the basis of the draft outline of the agenda (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/2, annex 1) adopted at the second meeting of the WGSO and the recommendations from the third meeting of the Executive Committee. The WGSO was invited to draw special attention to the content, the discussion format and the expected outcomes of the proposed items under each of the three main themes.

14. The WGSO agreed to consider the Kiev Commitments under those agenda items that were directly related to the follow-up of the Kiev Conference, as appropriate, rather than as a separate agenda item.

15. The EfE partners reported on progress in preparing those activities/documents for the Conference which had been identified in the draft outline of the Belgrade agenda. In addition, a few issues were proposed to the WGSO for possible inclusion on the agenda. The WGSO shared its comments on the preparatory activities and discussed the proposals.

Assessment and Implementation

Belgrade report

16. EEA reported on progress in the preparation of the fourth pan-European assessment (the

Belgrade report) and expressed appreciation for the active participation of all concerned organizations in this process. The consultation/review process of the draft report (in both English and Russian) had been launched on 5 October 2006 and would last for two months. A Web-based reviewing tool (<http://ewindows.eu.org/belgrade07>), which was publicly accessible, had been developed as a platform for the consultation process. All stakeholders were invited to provide comments to help EEA improve and complete the draft, in particular concerning the EECCA coverage. In addition, several review meetings were planned.

17. The WGSO took note of the progress made and the activities planned for the review and finalization of the report. The Chairperson of the UNECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) stressed the importance of having the Russian version of the draft chapters available to allow for an active review process in EECCA countries. The European ECO-Forum welcomed the openness of the consultation process for the report's review. Regarding the suggestion on paying due consideration to the issue of decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation, EEA confirmed that this issue had been addressed in the section on socio-economic developments in Europe and integrated into the analysis in various chapters of the report. EEA would further revise and finalize the draft between December 2006 and February 2007. The final publication would be available in June 2007 so that its main findings could be discussed at the Belgrade Conference.

Monitoring and assessment

18. The Secretary of the WGEMA informed participants of its forthcoming meeting on 27–29 November 2006 to review and provide comments on the draft chapters of the Belgrade report. At that time the WGEMA would also review a set of policy and guidance instruments for strengthening environmental observation and assessment capacities in EECCA countries: (a) *Guidelines for Strengthening Environmental Monitoring and Reporting by Enterprises*; (b) *Recommendations on the Adaptation of National Systems for Environmental Monitoring, Data Collection and Reporting*; (c) *Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators*; and (d) *Guidelines on Indicator-Based Environmental Reporting*. Once agreed to at the November meeting, these guidelines and policy recommendations would be transmitted through the Committee on Environmental Policy and the WGSO to the Belgrade Conference for endorsement, which could send a strong political message to relevant public authorities and thus help ensure effective implementation.

19. The WGEMA proposed organizing the discussions on monitoring and assessment at the Belgrade Conference as a multi-stakeholder dialogue, in the form of a roundtable discussion focused on the environmental responsibility of enterprises. It suggested inviting the EECCA ministers to present their views on how to successfully implement the challenging tasks relating to environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting through cooperation and partnerships.

20. The WGSO took note of the information and welcomed the offer by the World Bank of a contribution to this session and the proposal by the European ECO-Forum to involve NGOs in the multi-stakeholder dialogue.

UNECE multilateral environmental agreements

21. Following the request of the second meeting of the WGSO, the UNECE secretariat had prepared the draft framework of the report on the implementation of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). In addition to the comments received at the thirteenth session of the CEP, the WGSO suggested paying special attention to the capacity-building activities undertaken under the conventions. The Guidelines for Strengthening Compliance with and Implementation of the MEAs in the UNECE Region, adopted at the Kiev Conference, should serve as a useful resource in the further development of the paper. The WGSO requested that further written comments be sent to the secretariat by 31 October 2006.

Environmental Performance Reviews

22. As requested by the WGSO, the UNECE secretariat presented the outline of a paper on critical issues in implementation of environmental policies highlighted by the UNECE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme. The paper would analyse the extent to which the implementation of national and international instruments had contributed to the progress of national environmental management in the countries eligible for UNECE EPRs and what further improvements were needed in order to move forward decisively. It would also showcase studies and highlight success stories as well as challenges and obstacles in the implementation of environmental policies. Written comments should be sent to the secretariat by 31 October 2006.

23. The WGSO requested the secretariat to compile an additional paper on recommendations made in the EPRs conducted between the Kiev Conference and the Belgrade Conference. The WGSO welcomed the proposal by the European ECO-Forum for further involvement of civil society in the EPR consultation process.

“Parallel Processes”*Education for Sustainable Development*

24. The representative of Greece, on behalf of the Bureau of the UNECE Steering Committee for Sustainable Development, reported on the preparations for the joint session for education and environment ministers on education for sustainable development (ESD). He informed WGSO of the ongoing joint work by UNECE and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to compile good practices in ESD, as well as the reporting exercise to support the first assessment of progress in implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD. The commenting process for the draft joint statement on ESD as the major political outcome of the session was also ongoing. The proposal for the joint session on ESD would be further discussed by the Bureau and submitted to the second meeting of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD (4–5 December 2006) for consideration.

Biodiversity

25. The PEBLDS secretariat, together with the European ECO-Forum, reported on progress in the organization of the roundtable on biodiversity between the ministers and NGOs at the Belgrade Conference to review the implementation of the Kiev commitments on biodiversity and strengthen synergies to reach the 2010 goal. The proposed structure of the session was presented to the WGSO, including the five possible issues to be addressed in discussion blocks with keynote presentations: agriculture and biodiversity; the Pan-European Ecological Network; biodiversity indicators and monitoring; financing biodiversity; and communication, education and public awareness. The WGSO was also informed that the Minister of Environment of Norway would co-chair the roundtable discussion along with a high-level NGO representative.

26. The WGSO recommended further consideration of the selection of issues to be discussed in order to have fewer and more focused issues for the two-hour session. The WGSO agreed that the session should address issues within the framework of the nine targets of the Kiev Resolution on Biodiversity. The involvement of relevant representatives from the agricultural sector would be indispensable for a meaningful discussion of agriculture and biodiversity issues. The World Bank offered to facilitate participation from the agricultural sector.

Capacity-building

EECCA PERSPECTIVES

Progress and perspectives in the implementation of the EECCA Strategy¹

27. The EAP Task Force Secretariat reported on the preparation of the report on assessing progress in the implementation of the EECCA Strategy. Questionnaires had been circulated to the environment ministries of EECCA countries to collect additional information and fill in information gaps. The draft EECCA report would be ready for review by relevant stakeholders in early 2007, and the final version would be available in May 2007. The EAP Task Force also proposed to submit a paper on “Guiding principles of effective environmental permitting systems” (to be categorized later) to the Belgrade Conference and suggested that this paper be considered under the session on monitoring and assessment. EECCA RECs proposed that an analytical paper be prepared on the progress of the LEAP² process in EECCA.

28. The WGSO emphasized that the EECCA report should be one of the flagship documents of the Conference, which would be available as a stand-alone OECD publication with its own cover, similar to the publication of the EEA Belgrade assessment. It emphasized that the progress in the EECCA Strategy’s implementation and the Strategy’s future perspectives should be better reflected in the report. EECCA RECs offered to cooperate in preparing the section on perspectives. Regarding the future role and activities of the EAP Task Force, the WGSO agreed that these should be considered together with the future of the EfE process.

¹ Environmental Partnerships in the UNECE Region: Environment Strategy for Countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (ECE/CEP/105/Rev.1).

² Local Environmental Action Programmes.

Central Asia Initiative on Sustainable Development

29. The representative of Kazakhstan presented a proposal on the development of a Partnership Agreement on Implementation of the Central Asian Initiative on Sustainable Development and its submission to the Conference as a category I document for adoption by ministers. The goal of the agreement would be to create a legal basis for the integration of efforts by all stakeholders to achieve sustainable development goals, strengthen regional coordination mechanisms, and create better conditions for investments.

30. The WGSO took note of the proposal and promised to consider how this topic could fit into the session on EECCA perspectives.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Initiative

31. The representative of Armenia presented a proposal for an initiative on strategic environmental assessment (SEA), with a focus on capacity-building. The initiative would promote SEA systems in EECCA by facilitating the sharing of experience and knowledge among countries that had acceded to the Protocol on SEA of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context or were planning to do so.

32. The WGSO took note of the proposal and promised to consider how the topic could fit into the session on EECCA perspectives. It was preferable that all EECCA countries be involved in this initiative.

SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

33. At the second meeting of the WGSO, three issues had been proposed for discussion at the Conference session on SEE perspectives: (a) environmental investments, (b) climate change and (c) environmental enforcement and compliance. Marine pollution from coastal-based sources was proposed as an additional item for the agenda. The Resident Representative a.i. of UNDP Montenegro reported on the preparation of the Western Balkans³ Regional Environmental Report,⁴ which gave an overview of progress in environmental and sustainability policy development and implementation since the Kiev Conference. A proposal was made to launch and sign a legal framework for the protection and sustainable development of mountain regions in SEE.

34. The WGSO suggested that the SEE countries hold further consultations on the priority issues to be addressed at the Conference. It reiterated the need to choose issues that would be of general interest not only to SEE countries but to the UNECE region as a whole, and for which the EfE process was the appropriate mechanism, as well as to consider the political messages to be delivered to the Conference. Regarding the proposal from the NGOs Network FORUM EfE07

³ Includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

⁴ This working title may be changed for the final version of the report.

for a declaration on environmental cohesion on SEE as the tool for sustainable development, the WGSO agreed that it would be more appropriate for this proposal to be addressed by the NGO Conference planned to take place back-to-back with the Belgrade Ministerial Conference. Concerning the request by the United Nations Conference to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) for a slot to present the new Drought Management Centre for SEE based in Slovenia, the WGSO suggested that this issue be addressed in a side event or exhibition at the Conference.

Partnerships

Energy efficiency

35. The Energy Charter Secretariat and the UNECE Sustainable Energy Programme presented the outlines for the category I and category II documents requested by the WGSO relating to energy efficiency. At the suggestion by the European ECO-Forum that the prepared reports include case studies on energy efficiency from rural areas, Finland expressed its interest in submitting to the concerned organizations its good practices for financing energy efficiency in small communities, which could be used as case studies in the reports, as appropriate. The World Bank offered to contribute its experience in this area.

36. The WGSO agreed that the envisaged reports needed to be further considered with a view to ensuring their usefulness in supporting possible political decisions by ministers. The WGSO decided that the report on public-sector participation in the energy efficiency equity fund would be submitted as a category I document, and that the analytical report on progress in energy efficiency efforts, the background report on financial mechanisms for energy efficiency investments, and the progress report on facilitating the development of coal mine methane projects in EECCA would be developed as category II documents. The WGSO also agreed that instead of taking the form of a statement on energy efficiency and the environment as proposed by the Energy Charter Secretariat, the importance of energy efficiency could be reflected in the Ministerial Declaration, as appropriate.

Environment and Security (ENVSEC)

37. UNEP, on behalf of the ENVSEC partners,⁵ presented a background paper on the need to recognize and reinforce the work on assessing and addressing environmental and security risks in the pan-European region. In addition, a short and targeted paper would be prepared to facilitate the ministers' discussions at the Conference. While certain countries were in favour of giving a high profile to this issue at the Conference, other countries raised questions regarding the appropriateness of having ministers of environment adopt such recommendations. The WGSO decided that the fully developed document would be submitted for further consideration before any final decision on the category of the document.

⁵ UNEP in cooperation with UNECE, UNDP, OSCE and REC-CEE.

Mountain initiatives

38. UNEP presented a background paper on mountain initiatives for the Belgrade Conference and suggested to prepare a category II document on this issue for the Conference. The WGSO requested UNEP to cooperate with the Alpine Convention in this regard. Kyrgyzstan proposed that the document include a separate section for Central Asia, which was currently covered under “other mountain regions”. The WGSO welcomed the offer by CAREC to cooperate with UNEP and provide information and data on mountain statistics in Central Asia.

Sustainable consumption and production

39. The representative of Sweden, in cooperation with UNEP, reported on the preparation of the proposed two documents on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in SEE and EECCA. The first draft of the category II document (the SCP mapping exercise in SEE and EECCA) would be ready by mid-January 2007, and the final report would be submitted by May 2007. Case studies from countries on SCP would be appreciated. It was proposed that a category I paper be developed at a later stage, taking into account the findings of the relevant background documents.

40. The WGSO welcomed the support extended by the World Bank in this exercise. It took note of the paper prepared by the European ECO-Forum on the NGOs’ position and recommendations on SCP and encouraged the organization to contribute to this process as proposed and discussed at the thirteenth session of the CEP.

Water and sanitation

41. The Chairperson invited suggestions on how to proceed with the preparation of this proposed issue. In addition to the proposed papers by the UNECE secretariat and REC-CEE, the WGSO agreed that the analytical report prepared by the EAP Task Force on financing the water supply and sanitation sector in EECCA countries could serve as a background paper to facilitate the discussions at the Conference. The WGSO would consider further how to address this issue at the Conference on the basis of the available documents.

Partnerships with the private sector

42. The WGSO welcomed the offer by the United States to prepare, in cooperation with the UNEP Regional Office for North America, a category II report on partnerships with the private sector. It also welcomed the offer by the REC-CEE to prepare a category II background document on this issue. The WGSO agreed that this issue could be considered together with other issues under the session on partnerships.

Others

43. Following discussion by the thirteenth session of the CEP, the issue of environmental policy and international competitiveness was proposed for inclusion on the Belgrade agenda. The

WGSO welcomed this proposal and suggested integrating it with SCP.

44. The Project Preparation Committee, in cooperation with the EAP Task Force and REC-CEE, proposed to include environmental financing on the Belgrade agenda. The World Bank supported the proposal. The WGSO agreed to further consider this issue, including the proposed documents.

45. The WGSO took note of the proposal by WHO/Europe to present environment and health issues at the Belgrade Conference. Given that such issues would be addressed at other important international forums, the WGSO suggested organizing a side event rather than including the issues on the Conference agenda.

46. The WGSO suggested clustering the large number of issues proposed under the “Partnerships” session in order to make the discussions more substantive and focused. The Executive Committee was requested to reconsider this idea at its fourth meeting. The WGSO mandated the Executive Committee to prepare the draft provisional agenda for the Belgrade Conference in light of the discussions. The draft agenda would be considered at the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee in February 2007.

(b) Overview of activities proposed by partners for the agenda of the Conference

47. On the basis of discussions at the second meeting of the WGSO and the recommendations received from the third meeting of the Executive Committee, the secretariat prepared the document on the revised overview of activities that could provide input to the agenda of the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/11). An updated information paper (Information Paper No. 1) provided an overview of activities provisionally categorized as category III documents.

48. The WGSO emphasized the need to avoid flooding the Conference with a large number of documents. The secretariat reminded participants that category I was for documents intended for possible action (signature, endorsement, approval, adoption or discussion) by ministers.

49. As was stated in the document on organizational issues for the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/5), approved at the second meeting of the WGSO, draft category I documents should have been available for comments at the third meeting of the WGSO. In view of the current situation, the WGSO mandated the Executive Committee to review full drafts of the proposed category I documents at its fifth meeting in February 2007 and to make decisions as appropriate.

50. As had been agreed at the previous WGSO meeting, a synthesis report would be compiled to include the executive summaries with key messages of category I and II documents, as appropriate. To facilitate the preparation of the synthesis report, the secretariat would develop a template to ensure the consistency of the format for executive summaries.

51. The WGSO requested the partners in the EfE process to submit revised or additional

proposals for activities (category I and II documents) to the secretariat and asked the secretariat to revise the document accordingly for the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee.

(c) Major outcomes

52. The secretariat presented the document on the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration of the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/14), which had been developed on the basis of the adopted draft outline of the agenda, in particular in line with the three main themes identified there. As had been agreed at previous meetings, the Ministerial Declaration should focus on a limited number of issues in accordance with the agenda.

53. The WGSO agreed that the suggested draft framework for the Ministerial Declaration provided a good starting point for further work. Proposals were made regarding the possible elements of the Declaration, such as energy efficiency and renewable energy issues. Regarding the part on “the way forward” is concerned, the WGSO suggested that the “Environment for Europe” process should be needs-driven. The Declaration should address the priority needs of countries beyond the Belgrade Conference and identify appropriate mechanisms to address these needs.

54. The WGSO decided that an open-ended drafting group should be established and start its work according to the schedule given in document ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/14. The first draft on possible elements of the Ministerial Declaration would be discussed at the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee and the subsequent first meeting of the drafting group.

III. THE BUDGET REQUIRED FOR THE CONFERENCE AND THE PREPARATORY PROCESS

55. The secretariat presented the paper on the revised provisional estimates of resource requirements (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/12), which had been prepared following the decisions by the WGSO at its second meeting and on the basis of inputs received from partners and the host country as well as internal UNECE budget-related rules.

56. Concerning the UNECE secretariat core estimated resource requirements, following the request from the WGSO and the Executive Committee, the secretariat had prepared the revised budget table (in Information Paper No. 2) to reflect the most recent available information. The secretariat expressed gratitude to the member States that had made or pledged contributions. More resources were needed to ensure a smooth and efficient preparatory process for the Conference.

57. The Chairperson informed the meeting that the host country budget, as reflected in document ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/12, remained unchanged and that fund-raising activities were being and would be undertaken to fill the financial gaps. He thanked those countries that had expressed interest in contributing to support the host country’s preparations for the Conference.

58. The document would be further revised to reflect changes in resource requirements and then submitted to the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee for its consideration. The EfE partners were requested to provide their inputs to the secretariat in this regard.

IV. THE STATUS OF HOST COUNTRY PREPARATIONS

59. The Chairperson updated the WGSO on the national preparatory process for the organization of the Conference, including interactions with embassies in Belgrade and efforts to involve the business community. The host country would make every effort to provide effective logistic support and facilitate the participation of all stakeholders. A leaflet and a website (<http://www.EfE-Belgrade2007.org>) had been developed to publicize the Conference. The Chairperson would give another update on the host country preparations at the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee.

V. THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE WGSO AND THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

60. It had been planned that the fourth meeting of the WGSO would be held in Geneva on 30 May – 1 June 2007, back-to-back with the special session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (29 May), and that the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee would take place on 14 February 2007, back-to-back with the CEP Bureau meeting (13 February) and followed by the first meeting of the drafting group on the Ministerial Declaration on 15–16 February.

61. The WGSO took note of the request to postpone the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee by one week and asked the secretariat to explore the possibility and inform participants accordingly.

62. An updated schedule of preparatory meetings for the Belgrade Conference is annexed to this report.

VI. THE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

63. The secretariat presented the document on a draft communication plan for the Belgrade Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.11/2006/13) and the concept proposal on the training of journalists from the UNECE region on the EfE process and the Belgrade Conference (Information Paper No. 3/rev.1). Special attention was drawn to the key messages to be delivered at the Belgrade Conference and to the list of proposed communication activities, particularly the proposed training of journalists, as it had financial implications.

64. The WGSO expressed support for the proposed activities and suggested that communication activities also target ministries that had an impact on environmental policies. The briefing/training of journalists would be carried out if resources were available. The WGSO suggested that the information materials for children be developed in consultation with the

Steering Committee on ESD. The WGSO took note of ongoing communication activities undertaken by EfE partners and requested further efforts and synergies to enhance the visibility of the Conference.

VII. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

65. The Chairperson thanked the WGSO for the constructive discussions and closed the meeting.

Annex

Updated schedule of preparatory meetings for the Belgrade Conference

Committee on Environmental Policy	Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO)	Executive Committee of the WGSO	Drafting Group for preparing the Ministerial Declaration
Twelfth session, Geneva, 10–12 October 2005	First meeting, Geneva, 12–13 October 2005	First meeting (organizational), Geneva, 13 October 2005	---
---	---	Second meeting, Geneva, 24 February 2006	---
Bureau meeting, Geneva, 28 June 2006	Second meeting, Geneva, 29–30 June 2006 (a.m.)	Third meeting, Geneva, 30 June 2006 (p.m.)	---
Thirteenth session, Geneva, 9–11 October 2006	Third meeting, Geneva, 12–13 October 2006	Fourth meeting, Geneva, 13 October 2006 (p.m.)	---
Bureau meeting, Geneva, 13 February 2007	---	Fifth meeting, 14 – 15 (a.m.) February 2007	First meeting, 15 (p.m.) – 16 February 2007
Special session of CEP, Geneva, 29 May 2007	Fourth meeting, Geneva, 30 May – 1 June 2007 (all documentation and organizational arrangements completed)	Sixth meeting, Geneva, 1 June 2007	---
---	---	---	Second meeting, 2–4 July 2007
---	Fifth meeting, Belgrade, 6–8 October 2007 (finalization of draft Ministerial Declaration as needed)	If required, the seventh meeting would be held back-to-back with the fifth meeting of WGSO	Third meeting will take place, as needed, as part of the fifth meeting of the WGSO, 6–8 October 2007
“Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007			
Fourteenth session, Geneva, March ⁶ 2008	---	---	---

⁶ The date is to be decided.