

**SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE "ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE"**

*SPEECH OF THE DEPUTY MINISTER  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL PLANNING OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*

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**Wednesday, 10 October 2007**

10 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.

**Item 2. Assessment and implementation (a) State of the environment and monitoring and assessment**

Expressing my appreciation for the opportunity to address this Session, and bearing in mind the limited time for this intervention, I would like to focus on the issue that is of very high importance for this Region - namely our cooperation with the EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA) and our intention to become its full members.

In the process of cooperation of the Western Balkan Countries with the European Environment Agency, as EU information gathering and disseminating body, our countries have shown exceptionally high performance not only in reporting environmental data and information to the Agency, but also in terms of mutual cooperation to the benefit of the EEA completing the European environmental map. This, you have to agree with me, deserves to be awarded by granting our countries full membership in the Agency. In this way, our voluntary contributions to the European reporting process would be transformed in obligation. We are sure we are capable to undertake such responsibility in full.

Therefore, I appeal to the representatives of the EU Member States in this Meeting to support the formal admission of the Western Balkan countries (Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia in the EEA), to the mutual benefit. The participation will help all Western Balkan countries to establish effective monitoring systems where harmonised data collection and assessment will provide reliable and comparable information of the state of environment, while the European Environment Agency will be able to better report on the state of the environment of the whole of Europe. Finally, this will help us all to create and to implement more effective and efficient environmental policy, which is the ultimate goal of all our efforts.

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