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Keynote address on *Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs)*

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Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Republic of Moldova is a small country with economy in transition, but with strong policy oriented to integration in European Community. In this context I would like to emphasize the considerable importance of Environmental Performance Reviews. The Environmental Performance Review recommendations will significantly stimulate that accelerate us implement the obligations assumed in the national and international policy document, conventions and other bilateral and multilateral agreements. Both Environmental Performance Reviews had a favorable impact on environmental protection in the Republic of Moldova.

The first Environmental Performance Review was carried out in 1998. The EPR recommendations of the first evaluation were very important for the environmental protection in Moldova. After implementation of the EPR recommendations the Department of Environmental Protection was upgraded to a Ministry of Environment in 1998, and then restructured several times till becoming the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources in 2004.

The second Environmental Performance Review of the Republic of Moldova began in November 2004 and was launched in July 2006. The Second Review Team constituted from representatives of different countries and experts from secretariats of the UNECE and OECD evaluated the state of environment of the Republic of Moldova as well as the activity results of Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, existing priorities and future plans. During the EPR mission in Moldova were organized meetings with representatives from different sectorial Ministers, Departments and nongovernmental sector.

It is important to mention that Moldova was one of the first countries that express on voluntary basis its request to begin the Second evaluation.

It was a very important and useful exercise for us because the Environmental Performance Reviews also gave tailor-made recommendations to us concerned on improving environmental management to reduce their pollution load, to better integrate environmental policies into sectoral policies and to strengthen cooperation with the international community.

The report takes stock of the progress made by the Moldova in the management of its environment since the country was first reviewed in 1998, in particular in the implementation of the recommendations of the first review. The Second review also covers eight main important problems for Republic of Moldova, concerning policy-making, planning and implementation, the financing of environmental policies and projects, and the integration of environmental concerns in economic sectors and

promotion of sustainable development. Special attention during the review was compliance and enforcement mechanisms, economic instruments and environmental funds, and environmental management in agriculture and forestry and in industrial activities.

The Second EPR for Moldova includes concrete recommendations to reach the performances in the environment and solving the existing problems. These recommendations represent an advantage and an impetus to improve the environmental management in our country. To achieve this recommendation it is necessary to raise the awareness, consciousness and attitude of ministries, institutions and the public involved in their implementation.

Taking into consideration, that European integration of Moldova is the national priority political goal, the recommendation of the UNECE experts are very useful and need obligatory implementation. The implementation of the recommendations will contribute to the promotion of the positive country image abroad, as well as attracting technical assistance and investments for implementation of the actions for environment protection.

To implement the Second EPR recommendations Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources developed the "Implementation Work Plan" with time-schedule for every institute or ministries responsible for implementation.

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources developed and presented for coordination to the Ministries and other institutions the draft of Government Decision on "Approving the Recommendations of the Second Environmental Performance Review for 2007 – 2010" having as main purpose active involvement of all stakeholders in implementation of the recommendations. I would like to mention, that according the recommendation number 1.2. from EPR, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources now developing the Strategy of capacity-building strengthening of the ministry.

Dear colleagues, I am agreeing that the environmental ministries have a significant role in implementation of the EPR recommendations. We should make all efforts in involving governmental and non-governmental institutions in addressing environmental challenges and achieving good performances for better environment of future generation.

Thank you for attention.