

**The Intervention from Denmark
at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE”
Belgrade, 10 – 12 October 2007**

By Ms. Gunvor Barnholt, Chief Adviser Ministry of Education, Denmark on behalf of Mr. Bertel Haarder, Minister for Education, Denmark

1. Introduction

Ms. Chairperson, Minister of National Education and Religious Affairs of Greece,
(Ms. Marietta Giannakou)

Minister of Education of Serbia (Mr. Zoran Loncar)

Ministers of Environmental Protection and Ministers of Education

Distinguished delegates

- Denmark fully supports the UNECE Strategy and the implementation plan on Education for Sustainable Development as adopted in Vilnius in March 2005.
- Next week I attend the UNESCO General Conference in Paris and I am pleased to see the successful cooperation and coordination of initiatives among the different UN organisations.

2. Danish interpretation

- Denmark considers this moment with the upcoming global Climate Conference in November 2009 as a unique chance to combine the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the climate change issues.
- It is especially important for me as Minister for Education to use this opportunity to underline the importance of basic skills in natural sciences as well as in reading and mathematics as a basis for understanding of the importance of ESD.
- The climate change problems are good examples of how to work with ESD in daily life because ESD is a matter of attitudes and knowledge.
- This has top priority because it is crucial for the Danish government that pupils leaving compulsory school have got the necessary tools to understand the complex mechanisms of a modern democratic society. This understanding will enable them to take part in the democratic debate on the distribution of the world's natural resources.

- International surveys show that the Danish students have the best knowledge about principles for democracy, decision making and the institutional functions in a democracy.
- Statistics also show that the Danish population in general is attending lifelong learning, in-service training and re-education more than any other population. The attendance covers both the formal, non-formal and informal education area.
- Including the whole population in lifelong learning will also lead to the inclusion of most of the population in the ESD debate as well as in the debate on climate change.

3. Danish initiatives in a global context

- Climate change is the truly global issue that involves the entire world and relates to complex questions such as poverty, population growth and sustainable development. Dealing with climate change issues means taking responsibility for this generation and ensuring respect for future generations living conditions.
- In 2009, Denmark will host the fifteenth Global Conference on Climate Change where we hope to reach an agreement for the time beyond the Kyoto Protocol after year 2012. Denmark will work to engage the education sector in broad terms as well as civil society and business in the climate change talks.
- Denmark is recognised for the way we - in our market based system - have succeeded in decoupling economic growth from increasing greenhouse gas emissions. This indeed is considered to lead to sustainable development.
- Dealing with climate change is an important part of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD).

4. Conclusion

- I will conclude this speech by confirming the Danish support to the Statement on Education for Sustainable Development submitted by the UNECE Steering Committee.
- Thank you.