

Statement of His Excellency

Mr. Silviu STOICA¹

Secretary of State

*Ministry of Environment
and Sustainable Development*

ROMANIA

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*The capacity building: progress and perspectives in implementation of the
Environment Strategy for EECCA and of the Central Asia initiative for
Sustainable Development*

**Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Sofia EIA Initiative launched in 1995 can be considered a success taking into account the activities developed within its framework, which accelerated debates on introduction of SEA legislation and also negotiations on SEA Protocol. These objectives are essentials because of the necessity to prepare plans and programs in bilateral and multilateral relations, which shall take into consideration their environmental impact.

Romania, during accession process to the European Union, transposed into the national legislation the specific strategic environmental assessment requirements and already applied this procedure to its national documents. Also, in the case of cooperation programs with neighbor countries, Romania tries to be a promoter of this "tool" (the strategic environmental assessment) which improves the governmental planning and also makes it more efficient.

We consider that Sofia Initiative and also the commitments taken by the signature of SEA Protocol in Kiev contribute to and accelerate the unifying process between the national and international legislation on the environmental protection.

Romania, as party of the Espoo Convention, has elaborated the legislation which will assure the recognition of the SEA Protocol on the national level. Nevertheless, we strongly believe that, at the working program level for implementing the SEA Protocol, the countries should find availability not only for human resources but also for financial ones, in order to apply successfully this protocol. In this respect, we welcome the Belgrade SEA Initiative and we hope that this document will be very soon translate it into practice.

At the same time, please allow me to invite you at the fourth Conference of Parties to the Espoo Convention, which will take place in May 2008 in Romania.

As a new EU Member State, Romania is ready to share its experience concerning implementation of the new environmental concepts for economic developments.

Taking into account that our country has passed through the same situation as many countries in the region, we consider that EU Water Initiative is the best platform to connect EU water policy with the experiences from East Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

In a globalized world it is essential to harmonize water management practices in order to allow a sustainable development. In this respect, Romania, in its future position as a coordinator for EECCA component of the EU Water Initiative, will try to increase the exchange of information between countries and to present the approach taken by the new Member States toward a better water management in a changing global environment.

Thank you.