



Statement by State Secretary Asa-Britt Karlsson, Sweden

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is our belief that developing capacities for efficient environmental management is key to performance. Well designed legal frameworks are necessary. Sweden has to focus its bilateral co-operation as well as its work with the EAP Task Force on capacity development. We have given priority to strengthening environmental authorities and improving chemicals management. We have also introduced integrated permitting and the principle of BAT as well as promoting international agreements. Many projects involve different stakeholders and more than one country. We have seen progress and are committed to further co-operation.

We have, however, a number of issues yet to be tackled.

First. Environmental legislation and its enforcement is not always clear. It does not always provide effective tools for implementation.

Second. The enforced global environmental debate at the highest level has not yet led to the strengthening of environment ministries in all countries.

Third. Industry faces different standards and systems which hinder the need for an even playing field.

Since Kiev the EECCA Strategy has been useful for identifying needs when it comes to capacity development. We as donors have to be more attentive to individual needs from countries or sub-regions. Also in the Marrakech process of Sustainable Consumption and Production, the need for capacity development and effective institutional organisation, has been noted frequently.

Capacity building and governance should be one of the cornerstones within the Marrakech process and the development of a 10 Year Framework of Programmes on consumption and production. It should also be important in the future work of this region and the Environment for Europe to move to change unsustainable consumption and production patterns and contribute to sustainable development.

I am optimistic about the prospects of competent environmental agencies that can work with different sectors. We know the instruments to use, but it requires that countries pursue this aim and we must also work for a broader understanding of the issues. With capacity development and effective legal frameworks we would also benefit from technical development and new technology.

I am especially pleased with the guidelines for environmental permitting. It is an example of a fruitful

dialogue that has engaged many. The results will depend on the institutional capacities to implement them.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, we have the opportunity to use capacity development as a key instrument. Our engagement can make a difference.

Thank you.