

Überschrift/Titel:	Progress and perspectives in the implementation of the Environment Strategy for EECCA countries
Üntertitel:	Outlook for the continuation of the process and its institutions from the point of view of Germany
Redner/in:	Parliamentary State Secretary Michael Müller <sup>1</sup>
Anlass:	6th Ministerial Conference in the framework of the Environment for Europe process, 10 - 12 October 2007
Ort:	Belgrade, Serbia

Mr Chairman [Environment Minister of the Republic of Moldova],

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly thank the Secretariat of the Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia countries (EAP Task Force) for drawing up the current report on the progress and perspectives in the implementation of the EECCA environmental strategy. In Germany's view the report is a very important foundation for assessing the environmental situation and environmental policies of the target countries of the process. This can form the basis for decisions on the further procedure and future key aspects of our cooperation.

In recent years there has been significant progress in establishing efficient environmental Institutions and policies in the EECCA countries. We highly commend the commitment of governments in the EECCA countries which has brought about the reforms.

Nevertheless, much remains to be done: the target countries are seldom short of policy recommendations or sound legal bases, but the administrative capacities to implement the policies are often lacking. As an active partner country in the region, we want to continue to actively support the implementation process. In Germany's

---

Statement PSt Muller, Belgrad, 11.10.2007

Rededauer: < 1 min

<sup>1</sup> The present document is a scanned copy of a statement received on 11 October 2007 during the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 10-12 October 2007). The document has not been formally processed by the UNECE.

view, setting up efficient environmental enforcement mechanisms and establishing a sustainable and affordable water infrastructure in the countries of the region remain key tasks.

In undertaking these tasks, we can no longer ignore the growing differences between the national political systems, economies and cultural frames of reference in the EECCA region. In order to give due consideration to the respective environmental problems and policies of the countries and subregions, support given in the framework of the process must take greater account of the respective political and economic conditions. Any revision of the EECCA Environment Strategy after Belgrade must take account of these developments and determine new objectives for the different countries and subregions.

As I will not be able to attend the discussions tomorrow, I would like to make a few comments here on how Germany sees the future of the process and its institutions:

- In our opinion, the continuation of the Environment for Europe process is important because it is the only high-level, multilateral process in which pan-European environmental interests are represented; Germany also sees the process as an important forum for exchange and for project-based cooperation with countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Nevertheless, Germany feels that streamlining the process and ensuring stronger "ownership" of the EECCA countries - both politically and financially - is vital for the constructive continuation of the process.

- A key focus of the work should be the implementation of the targets laid down in the framework of the UNECE Conventions, the EECCA Environment Strategy and the Environmental Action Programme. Achievements should be collected and clearly indicated, for these results will be the yardstick for measuring the prospects for success of further cooperation within the Environment for Europe process.

- In Germany's view, the EAP Task Force has successfully implemented a very ambitious programme of work over the past few years. At the last Ministerial Conference

in Kiev, it was recommended that Secretariat tasks be transferred from the OECD to the EECCA Regional Environment Centres (RECs), in order to generate greater commitment in the region. In principle Germany supports this position, but feels that the EECCA Regional Environment Centres are yet unable to assume the tasks of the Secretariat fully. We would therefore support a gradual transfer, starting with capacity building in the Regional Environment Centres to deal with the more national and sub regional activities of the Task Force.

- Germany furthermore welcomes the positive attitude of the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) towards internalising the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) within the EBRD structures. To date, the Project Preparation Committee has had the task of identifying environmental investment projects and supporting the countries of the region in drawing up applications to national and international financial institutes. Following a positive decision by the EBRD board, these activities could be continued and intensified. In this context Germany would like to advocate setting up a platform of the environment ministries from EBRD donor and recipient countries. This will ensure that the information flow between the bank and the environment ministries of the partner countries continues to be guaranteed in the internalised PPC.

Germany is willing - provided that there is a corresponding commitment from the countries and institutions gathered here - to continue the cooperation in the framework of this process.

Thank you for your attention.