

**Sixth Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe
Belgrade, 11 October 2007**

**Keynote address by H.E. Predrag Nenezic, Minister of Tourism and Environment
of the Republic of Montenegro¹**

**on the Item 6b): Environmental finance and partnerships to support the implementation of
environmental policies and programmes**

**Round table discussion on partnerships to support the implementation of environmental
policies and programmes**

Madam Chair.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentleman,

It is a great pleasure and honor to have an opportunity to address this high-level meeting and share with you some thoughts on the so far experiences and the role of partnerships in supporting the implementation of environmental policies and programmes. In doing so, I will first of all speak from the perspective of my country, but will also, I believe, address issues that are relevant for the entire region of South East Europe. These issues are already emphasised in the draft Ministerial Declaration and elaborated in the Conference background papers. Please allow me now to bring to your attention to the ones that I find particularly relevant for my country and the SEE sub-region. They primarily include:

- Implementing the MEAs, where in parallel with stepped up domestic efforts, South-Eastern European countries will need further technical and financial assistance;
- Contributing to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity where joining of forces and improved co-operation between different actors (national as well as international) is crucial for achieving the goals of Kiev Biodiversity Resolution and related Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy;
- Addressing the climate change through improved cooperation on the sub-regional (SEE) level and in the wider international context;
- Developing and implementing adequate policy mixes to improve energy efficiency and promote renewable energy sources;
- Ensuring sustainable development of mountain regions in the South-Eastern Europe by strengthening local initiatives, regional co-operation and by transferring experience from other similar initiatives in the Pan-European region;
- Ensuring implementation of the ecosystem approach to human capacities management in Adriatic sub-region and provide its sustainable development improving national capacities and regional cooperation through regional initiatives and partnerships, e.g. Adriatic-Ionian Initiative. Adriatic Strategic Partnership, etc.
- Preparing national programmes and action plans and establishing partnerships to promote sustainable use of resources and change unsustainable production and

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consumption patterns;

- Promoting security in the region through cooperation for environmental improvements; and
- Phasing out of leaded petrol, reducing sulphur content in motor fuels and stimulating partnerships for clean fuels vehicles.

Notwithstanding the problems we face and challenges that lie ahead, I would like to emphasize that some positive developments in the implementation of environmental policies can be observed in Montenegro as well as across the SEE. We are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of multistakeholder partnerships and have endeavored to use them as a mechanism to implement environmental and sustainable development objectives. And even though we must not be complacent, I believe substantial progress has been achieved. Ongoing legal harmonisation, institutional and policy reforms and preparation of National Strategy for Sustainable Development, to mention just a few examples from Montenegro, are processes that have and are fostering partnerships between different stakeholders nationally. Furthermore, we are working on strengthening environmental administration, improving co-operation with civil society and private sector. A lot remains to be done, in particular in respect to the latter. We are committed to and are paying increased attention to strengthening the role of economic instruments and securing more substantial funding for the environment, and are exploring possibilities for public/private partnerships. With an increased public participation, we have gained first experiences with new tools for sustainability and mainstreaming environment into sectoral and general economic development policies. The results are at the same time encouraging and warning that much more work is needed.

All of the progress achieved so far would have not been possible without strong partnerships, and partnerships will continue to have a crucial role in overcoming future challenges and improving national and regional environmental performance. In this sense, we are appealing for a. continued donor support for environmental priorities and for a more effective coordination of their activities. At the same time, we are reiterating our commitment to strengthen in-country capacities and co-operation, and are assuring that Montenegro will be a strong and reliable partner in all the efforts to achieve environmental improvements nationally, regionally and Europe-wise.

Last but not least, I would like to underscore the importance of developing partnerships for the EU integration process. Accession to the EU is one of the common denominators for the SEE region, and at the same time one of the main driving forces for the development and implementation of environmental policies. There is a great need for co-operation, support, transfer of experiences and knowledge in this area, particularly between the EU-27 and SEE countries, and I would like to welcome such partnerships in the future, knowing that they will yield environmental benefits and advance the integration process.

On this note, I would like to thank you for your attention and give floor back to the Chair.