

To:

Mr. Kaj Barlund

Director of Environment, Housing and Land Management Division

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Dear Mr. Barlund,

Thank you for your letter of January 31, 2008, in regard to the reform of the Environment for Europe process. The Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia considers the EfE process to be highly important and appreciates very much the work carried out by CEP.

We believe that exact details of the reform should be decided upon through the upcoming discussions. Our position remains flexible to consider full spectrum of options. Still, we have general preferences we would like to share with you below:

- **The format, focus and priorities of the process and Ministerial Conferences:** We see EfE process as a forum with a rather comprehensive scope where any particular issue would have a chance to be addressed. We also note that while an amount of documentation generated for the Ministerial Meetings is very large, virtually all of these studies, reviews and analysis find their way to their respective interest groups and individuals and are used extensively by broad range of stakeholders. Many pieces of these documents would never be produced without the EfE in place.

- **The performance and impact of the process:** We firmly believe that the EfE process does have the value added. EfE has directly or indirectly contributed to the environment and sustainable development cause, especially in EECCA. E.g., the establishment of the State Environmental Inspectorate (2005) in Georgia has been based also on the EfE-related policy and technical assistance.

- **Attracting the broader interest and more active engagement of all stakeholders, in particular the private sector:** This is not anymore the matter of choice, but that of need and – even - of obligation. Creative means to stimulate

interest could be employed – e.g., trade shows and exhibitions of environmental technologies accompanying EfE ministerials.

- **The full cost of the process and the effective allocation of available resources:** Among other means, increased share of the host country contribution against total expenses of the Ministerial Conferences could be considered. This option can be viable as EfE Ministerials, being high-level summits of unique sort, undisputedly put the host countries' image under positive spotlight, making it politically attractive to governments to invite one.

- **Future secretarial arrangements:** We prefer EfE to continue with the UNECE based secretariat. Adopting other alternatives will probably affect the constituency of stakeholder institutions as well as participating persons, and may result into decreased interest into, and credibility of, the process.

In conclusion I would like to confirm our interest to participate actively in discussions. I believe the EfE process can – and will – be reformed to achieve more successful results in future.

Yours Sincerely,

Zaal Lomtadze

Advisor to the Minister of Environment Protection and Natural Resources