

Statement by the European Community delegation under agenda item 4(a)

1. Already in 2000 it seemed evident that the Protocol would not entail additional obligations for the European Community or for its Member States, due to the comprehensive and legally binding nature of related EU legislation. This legislation is consistent with the Protocol, but in the majority of cases more detailed and precise, and enforceable. Several delegations of EU Member States have in their statements under this agenda item already referred to this fact.
2. Considerable developments have taken place since 2000, in particular
 - Enlargement of the European Union 2004 and 2007, with EU legislation now applicable in 12 new Member States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean region,
 - Decisions at the 2002 Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development on water supply and sanitation, with operational commitments including budget; in this context the EU Water Initiative component for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia is providing an efficient tool for cooperation and financial support. Contribution by UNECE towards the EECCA component is highly appreciated.
3. Summarising, there is no intention by the European Commission to have the Protocol ratified, or to provide financial contributions under the Protocol.