Dear Chairman,

Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

The decade after the summit in Rio turned out to be of unimaginably high social cost, and the social stress was so great that the reorientation of CIS countries to the track of sustainable development became a specific problem both for us and for the world community.

Now I can note with satisfaction that we have achieved great success in consolidation of our efforts for developing a New Environment Strategy in agreement with Aarhus provisions on reorientation to the “Environment for Europe” process on the needs of New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union. This underlines the need for strengthening the efforts and role of our countries in this process and in implementation of Aarhus resolutions.

Recognizing the importance of such an initiative, our country got involved in the process of developing the Strategy from the very inception. And I believe that the implementation of the initiative will promote the improvement of the state of the environment of our countries.

We realize that the Strategy will not be able to find solutions to all national priority issues. It will, rather, take into consideration the existing environmental, institutional, financial and other difference between countries, and will be focused on finding solutions to common issues. In this respect, the exchange of experience will be a good platform for finding practical solutions.

We signify the provision that Environment Strategy must be a tool in achieving the goals of Agenda 21, as well as for strengthening the ecological component of sustainable development in the region. In this respect, I want to put an emphasis on the Declaration of the new East-West cooperation at the WSSD in Johannesburg and note the importance of developing new forms of cooperation in the framework of regional initiatives.

We completely support the provision that the Strategy serves as a tool for providing precise and explicit information on more effective cooperation ways to “Environment for Europe” process partners, donor countries, international organizations and programs. The comprehensive formulation of problems and requirements for their solutions, both on the common, as well as on specific country level, will promote the strengthening of the cooperation between the countries and other partners. This, in its turn, will promote a number of environmental international programs, being implemented in the frames of “Environment for Europe” process, to better target the efforts on regional needs and make use of outcomes more effective.

In the end, I would like to drive your attention on the fact that the readiness and efforts of UNECE countries for developing joint actions towards improvement of the state of environment in EECCA countries, is in important prerequisite for capacity building and integration of environmental concerns in a broader economical and political reform process in our countries. All the above mentioned definitely will contribute to the solution of a number of regional and global environmental issues. Thank you for your kind attention.