Item 7: Environmental Partnerships in the UNECE Region: (a) Environment Strategy for countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

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Madam Chairperson, distinguished Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On the last day of this Conference, we suppose to discuss the future of the Environment for Europe process. But before we will be approaching this agenda item, let me highlight one important factor which I can see as the leading message for our future from all I have heard here by now: our future is in enhancing our responsibility, in recognizing our common goals, and IN JOINT AND PROMPT ACTIONS PERFORMED IN PARTNERSHIP.

Having said that let me highlight the enormous importance of the Environmental Strategy being prepared to address top environmental priorities in the 12 countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This document, which development has been supported by the Czech Republic since the beginning, provides all countries and stakeholders in the UN-ECE Region with a possibility to launch new quality of co-operation and communication.

The proposed Strategy provides us with many opportunities for both co-ordinated multilateral actions and bilateral co-operation. Specifically, the EU acceding countries have an important role to play in transferring their experience and knowledge gained through the EU accession process. We have already started to use this strategic framework for starting preparation of modest programmes, which could make our lessons learned from harmonizing the national legislation with the acquis communautaire, and from building institutional and enforcement capacities (namely the State Environmental Inspectorate, the State Environmental Fund and their Regional Offices) useful for the EECCA countries.

We strongly support the Strategy and commit ourselves to take part in actions supporting its implementation.

Thank you for your attention.