

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials
"Environment for Europe"

Second meeting
Geneva, 29-30 June 2006

Request by Regional NGOs network FORUM EfE07
to include

DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL COHESION OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AS
THE TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (with preamble)
in Agenda of BELGRADE 2007

Approved in Belgrade on Regional FORUM EfE07 Preparatory Meeting on June 5th, 2006*

Text:

Taking in account that:

- In achieving sustainable development and security is the high importance of regional harmonization in environmental sector;
- Environmental sector is the important segment of foreign policy
- Environment and sustainable development are not having price and borders;
- The region faces many treats, including but not limited to poverty, unemployment, unplanned development, pollution, regional energy deficit, over exploitation of natural resources, as well as extensive fishery and hunting, neglectance of animal wall fare;
- The next Pan-European Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" will be in Belgrade in October 2007 (BELGRADE 2007);
- The citizens of Western Balkan and South Eastern Europe compliment the UNECE for 2003. decision to have the next 2007 Pan-European Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in region and expressing the interest for region as the one of the key partners;
- NGOs oft region welcome the opportunities to participate in EfE (Environment for Europe) Process, yet regret the lack of financial resources to participate consistently in all meetings and to carry out an ongoing and broader consultation in preparation for BELGRADE 2007;

Affirming:

- A common goal of peace, stability and security, creating the region of shared prosperity;
- Johannesburg 2002 Plan of Actions and the decisions from Kiev 2003 Conference;

Following:

- Conclusion of Meeting of the Ministers of Environment of the countries involved in Stabilization and Association process to EU, held on October 15 in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia;

* presented in Geneva by FORUM EfE07 Coordinator for international activities and ENVIRONMENTAL AMBASSADORS president Prof dr Andjelka Mihajlov

- 2003 Initiative by Serbian Ministry for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment on environmental cohesion of Western Balkan, expressed by Draft Declaration on Environmental Cohesion as the WB countries tool to EU accession;

Contributing to:

- EU cohesion policy in support of growth and jobs 2007-2013

With note that:

- region is shaping challenges for sustainable future;
- it is a lack of ambition, quantitative goals and timetables in Belgrade 2007 preparation by some relevant partners;
- to environmental security, sustainable development concerns and social responsible behavior in region are not given priority;
- the need for solidarity between the citizens of the region, as well as the right (especially for women and children) to be protected at the highest level;
- it is the need for affirmation of principles and guidelines on animal welfare;
- investments in environmental sector and education for sustainable development are investments in the future

We, the citizens and nongovernmental organizations of the region, are requesting international NGOs, organizations (such UNECE, UNEP) and relevant governments to follow-up activities, including developing the instruments and financing for implementation, particularly to develop and include this Declaration (with preamble) in Agenda of BELGRADE 2007:

DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL COHESION OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AS THE TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 1. We call to overcome environmental differences in region in partnership with NGOs:**
 - a. We call for NGO networking and straightening, such as NGO FORUM Efe07 developed in the process of preparation of this declaration;
 - b. We request regular participation on NGO and governmental institutions on all relevant international meetings;
 - c. We request by governments the regular participation of representative and relevant NGOs in all official governmental delegations on international meetings, as well as representative NGOs participation of strategic documents and legislation on sustainable development and environment, including natural resources, biodiversity and animal welfare issues;
- 2. We call to contribute to human security by mitigating transboundary risks and further enhance regional and transboundary cooperation, in anticipation of future EU accession:**
 - d. We request straightening capacities for environmental management at all levels (local, provincial, national, regional), including human, technical, institutional, organizational and financial capacities;
 - e. We call the need of ratification of multilateral environmental agreements, particularly UNECE Conventions and their Protocols, as well as MEA signed in 2003 in Kiev, as the minimum for regional environmental cohesion; we recommend the rapid regional implementation of agreements;
 - f. We call to secure the further development and implementation of sub-regional agreements or arrangements such as the Danube Basin Protection Convention,

- the Carpathian Convention, a future Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of mountain region in SEE, etc;
- g. We call to secure collaborative capacities in monitoring and respond of accidents, early warning systems, waste and hazardous waste and chemical management;

3. We call on strategies and activities to secure sustainable development:

- h. We call for preparation and support to implementation of different level Strategies for sustainable development, stressing the need for Working Group for preparation of Western Balkan Strategy for Sustainable Development;
- i. We are pointing out that the biodiversity protection and animal welfare have to be included in strategies for sustainable development;
- j. To call for partnership between ministries, agencies and other institutions (included business, industry and NGOs) related to environmental sector, including joint platforms aimed to efficient activities;
- k. We call for proper environmental education and education for sustainable development on all levels, including the establishment of formal and no-formal educational institutions/institution/ School for environment and sustainable development of SEE;
- l. To call for efficient law implementation and judgury system for environment and sustainable development, including establishment of Environmental Court for environmental and sustainable development issues and Environmental Police;
- m. We request efficient access and exchange of information on environment and sustainable development;
- n. We call for promotion on importance of inclusion of environmental issues in other sectoral policies, such as energy, transport, agriculture, geology, fishery, hunting, mineral resources, urbanization, industry, common regional market, diplomacy and foreign policy', as well as to implement local sustainable development strategies and corporate social responsible activities
- o. We call to respect of intergeneration justice
- p. We call for gender equality representation in all projects, delegations and activities (minimum 30% of women/men) in sustainable development and environmental issues;
- q. We call upon governments in region to make complete commitment to support environmental sector by reaching minimum 3% GDP by the year 2020

4. We are requesting on modalities to monitor Declaration follow-up and implementation, including annually reporting on implementation to UNECE

5. We request by international and EU institutions to increase financial and other support to region in achieving above listed goals.