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### ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

#### COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials  
“Environment for Europe”

Executive Committee

Sixth meeting  
Geneva, 1 June 2007

### REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING

#### Introduction

1. The sixth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO) for the preparation of the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade Conference), to be held in Belgrade on 10–12 October 2007, took place in Geneva on 1 June 2007. This report was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson.
2. The following members of the Executive Committee participated: Hungary (Ms. Mária Gálvölgyi), Italy (Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Ms. Loredana Dall'ora), Kyrgyzstan (Ms. Baglan Salymambetova), the Russian Federation (Mr. Sergey Kononuchenko), Serbia (Mr. Miroslav Spasojevic, Mr. Mihailo Djukic), Sweden (Mr. Jon Kahn), Switzerland (Ms. Martine Rohn-Brossard) and the United States (Mr. Charlie Ashley).
3. Participating as observers were the Co-Chairperson of the OECD Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme (represented by Ms. Aziza Nasirova), the Chairperson of the Project Preparation Committee (Mr. Rodney Matthews, accompanied by Mr. Craig Davies), representatives of the Presidency of the European Union (Ms. Silvia Reppe, Mr. Luis Veiga Da Cunha and Ms. Telma Branco), representatives of the European

Commission (Mr. Claude Rouam, Ms. Annika Agerblad and Ms. Maria Marotta), a representative of European ECO-Forum (Ms. Victoria Elias) and a representative of the regional environmental centres (Mr. Talaibek Makeev, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia). The list of participants is available at <http://www.unece.org/env/efe/wgso/Belgrade/ExecomMeetings.htm>.

4. Mr. Miroslav Spasojevic (Serbia) chaired the meeting.

## **I. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA**

5. The Chair opened the meeting and the Executive Committee adopted the provisional agenda as set out in Working Paper WGSO/EXECOM-6/2007/1<sup>1</sup>.

## **II. THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE”**

6. Following discussions and decisions by the fourth meeting of the WGSO, the Committee considered further the issue of the future of the “Environment for Europe” process. Different views were expressed with regard to the format of the session to ensure an interactive discussion among ministers from different subregions of the UNECE region. The Committee recommended that priority in key addresses be given to the ministers from the EECCA and SEE subregions in line with the future focus of the process.

7. The Committee requested the secretariat to reflect the comments received in the revised document on the organization of work at the Conference for further consideration by the fifth meeting of the WGSO.

## **III. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONFERENCE AND THE PREPARATORY PROCESS**

8. In light of the discussion of the budget issue by the WGSO, which had noted with appreciation the contributions made by some donor countries, the Committee did not see the need to elaborate further on this item. The Chair stressed that any further contributions from donors would be welcome as there was still a financial gap in the budget for preparing the Conference.

## **IV. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP OF SENIOR OFFICIALS AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

9. The Chair recalled the decision by the fourth meeting of the WGSO to hold a fifth meeting for a half day on 30 August 2007 back-to-back with the third meeting of the Drafting

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<sup>1</sup> Available on the website <<http://www.unece.org/env/efe/wgso/Belgrade/ExecomMeetings.htm>>.

Group for preparation of Ministerial Declaration (Geneva, 30-31 August 2007). The meeting would consider pending issues related to the organization of the Conference and its provisional agenda, as well as to the future of the “Environment for Europe” process.

10. The sixth meeting of the WGSO is tentatively scheduled for 6-8 October 2007 in Belgrade. The seventh meeting of the Execom, if necessary, would be held back-to-back with the sixth meeting of the WGSO. Different views were expressed on the scheduling of these two meetings and it was agreed to further consider this issue at the fifth meeting of the WGSO, when the preparations of the draft Ministerial Declaration would be more advanced. The Committee also agreed that if there was a need for a seventh meeting of the Committee, such a meeting should take place before the sixth meeting of the WGSO, preferably in the morning of the first day of the WGSO meeting.

## **V. OTHER BUSINESS**

11. The Committee voiced concern about the large number of side-events registered for the Conference. The Chair informed the Committee that all registered side-events would be distributed evenly over the course of the Conference, provided that there was enough space at the Conference venue and they would not interfere with the official Conference sessions.

12. The delegation of Portugal informed the Committee that Portugal would take over the Presidency of the European Union on 1 July 2007 and expressed its gratitude to the current Presidency, Germany, for assisting during the transition period in an efficient manner.

## **VI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

13. The Chair thanked the Executive Committee for the constructive discussion and closed the meeting.

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