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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

(Eleventh session, 13-15 October 2004)

(Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda)

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTRIES**

Note by the secretariat

1. The proposal to hold a high-level meeting of Environment and Education Ministries was discussed at the second regional meeting on education for sustainable development (Rome, 15-16 July 2004). There was general support for such a meeting. The Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development also endorsed the proposed date, candidatures for officers and the agenda of the meeting.

**Purpose**

2. Once the Committee on Environmental Policy has endorsed the draft UNECE strategy for education for sustainable development, it may wish to submit it for adoption at a joint high-level meeting of Environment Ministries and Education Ministries or equivalent State bodies responsible for education in UNECE member States.

3. This regional initiative is expected to contribute to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2015), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session (December 2002). In coordination with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Meeting will formally launch the Decade in the UNECE region.

### **Major expected output**

4. The Meeting will be expected to adopt the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development and to decide on the framework for its implementation.

### **Nomination and participation**

5. The meeting will be open to all UNECE member States. Interested countries outside the region may also participate. UNESCO, the Council of Europe and other relevant organizations are invited to take part, as are regional NGOs and other major groups with expertise in environment, education and sustainable development, in accordance with the United Nations rules governing such participation.

6. Based on the decision of the Committee at its eleventh session, UNECE will organize a nomination procedure for the meeting. It will write to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs through the United Nations missions (with a copy to the Environment and Education Ministries) to inform them about the meeting and request them to nominate either a high-level official from the Education Ministry or other equivalent national body responsible for education (or a high-level official from the national authority for sustainable development) and/or a senior official from the Environment Ministry (perhaps the delegate to the Committee on Environmental Policy). The delegates will represent their countries' consolidated national positions at the meeting. Ministers are encouraged to take part.

### **Officers**

7. It is proposed that Sweden should chair the meeting and that the Russian Federation should nominate the vice-chair. Chair and vice-chair should represent two different sectors: education and environment.

### **Date and venue**

8. The one-day meeting is expected to take place on 25 February 2005 in Geneva or in a host country. Member States that wish to host the meeting should inform the secretariat by the end of November 2004.

### **Financial matters**

9. Financial support will be provided to two representatives (one from the environment sector and one from the education sector) from each eligible country, in accordance with the rules established by the Committee on Environmental Policy.

Draft agenda

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|--------------------|--|
| 10 - 10.15 a.m.    | Item 1: Opening of the meeting and introduction by the Executive Secretary of UNECE  |
| 10.15 - 10.30 a.m. | Item 2: Keynote speech by a high-level representative of UNESCO  |
| 10.30 - 10.35 a.m. | Item 3: Adoption of the agenda   |
| 10.35 - 1 p.m.     | Item 4: From goodwill to practical solutions: challenges and opportunities in implementing education for sustainable development in the region |
| 10.35 - 10.45 a.m. | Item 4.1: Introduction by Mr. Jon Kahn (Sweden), Chair of the UNECE Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development                        |
| 10.45 - 1 p.m.     | Item 4.2: Discussion on the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development   |
| 1 - 3 p.m.         | Lunch  |
| 3 - 5.05 p.m.      | Item 4: continued  |
| 3 - 4:30 p.m.      | Item 4.3: Discussion on the framework for and the ways and means of implementing the Strategy  |
| 4.30 - 5:05 p.m.   | Item 4.4: Adoption of the Strategy   |
| 5.05 - 5:10 p.m.   | Item 5: Other business   |
| 5.10 - 5.30 p.m.   | Item 6: Concluding remarks by the Chair and closing of the meeting   |

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