



FOURTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE

Århus, Denmark
23 - 25 June 1998

REPORT ON THE CONFERENCE

Prepared by the ECE secretariat
in cooperation with the host country



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

REPORT ON THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
"ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE"
ÅRHUS, DENMARK
(23-25 JUNE 1998)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fourth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" took place in Århus (Denmark) from 23 to 25 June 1998. Fifty-two ECE member countries were represented. The Ministers and Heads of Delegation adopted the Ministerial Declaration.

"Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment" identifying the main areas of achievement and concern in the state of the European environment set the scene for the Conference. Based on its findings, the Ministers decided to strengthen support within the "Environment for Europe" process for the newly independent States and those countries of central and eastern Europe that were not part of the European Union's accession process.

The Ministerial Conference adopted the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. It was signed by representatives of 35 countries and the European Community. The Ministers also adopted the Resolution on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. An independent NGO session on "Strengthening Participatory Democracy for Sustainable Development" took place within the framework of the Conference.

Two new Protocols to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, on Heavy Metals and on Persistent Organic Pollutants, were adopted and signed by 33 countries and the European Community. The Ministers also adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. The Declaration on Persistent Organic Pollutants was endorsed by representatives of 18 countries and the European Community.

The Ministers endorsed the Pan-European Strategy to Phase Out Leaded Petrol. In addition, 32 countries signed the Declaration on the Phase-out of Added Lead in Petrol.

The Ministers endorsed the Resolution on Biological and Landscape Diversity and agreed to strengthen the process of integrating biodiversity and landscape conservation objectives into sectoral policies.

Environmental financing was considered to be one of the most significant challenges remaining. The Ministers agreed to facilitate and support the implementation of effective environmental management in enterprises, and confirmed their willingness to establish a dialogue with the business community on a more permanent footing. The Ministers also endorsed the Policy Statement on Energy Efficiency and welcomed the Guidelines on Energy Conservation in Europe.

The Ministers decided that the "Environment for Europe" process should continue with the same institutional arrangements and that the next ministerial conference would take place in 2002, preferably in a newly independent State. They agreed that the decision on the host country would be taken by the end of 1998.

Introduction

1. The fourth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" took place in Århus (Denmark) from 23 to 25 June 1998, at the invitation of the Danish Government.

2. Ministers and representatives from 52 UN/ECE member countries attended the Conference. Representatives of the European Community also participated. Over 70 international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were represented at the Conference. The list of participants is given in annex I below.

I. OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

3. The Minister of the Environment and Energy of Denmark, Mr. Svend Auken, opened the fourth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" and welcomed all the participants.

4. In his opening statement, he recalled the most important achievements within the "Environment for Europe" process and pointed to the most significant environmental issues facing Europe today. He noted that the environmental challenges facing central and east European countries and the newly independent States (NIS) were becoming increasingly differentiated. To avoid any new divisions in Europe, greater priority and more resources should be directed to the newly independent States. "This is not Europe's backyard but our front garden where the sun comes from", he said. He also stressed the importance of the expected outcome of the Århus Conference to Europe's environment, among others the adoption of two new protocols to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and, in particular, the adoption of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

5. Mr. Yves Berthelot, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, delivered a message to the Conference participants on behalf of Mr. K. Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

6. The Secretary-General expressed his appreciation to Mr. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark, and Mr. Svend Auken for their role in making this gathering possible. He stressed that most environmental threats did not respect borders and that their solution required international efforts. The tangible results achieved within the "Environment for Europe" process were recognized in that respect as examples for other regions. The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, to be adopted at Århus, "constitutes a milestone in increasing transparency and participatory possibilities in the environmental arena. It will help put an end to environmental secrecy. It will promote democracy and protect the right of everyone to live in a healthy environment." The Secretary-General noted the strong involvement of non-governmental organizations in the Conference and its preparations.

7. Mr. Berthelot himself stressed the pan-European character of the "Environment for Europe" process and in particular the Environmental Programme for Europe, one of its components. This Programme and the activities launched within its framework were intended to be a response to the challenges identified by the reports on the state of the region's environment. He also mentioned the success of the ECE programme for reviewing the environmental performance of individual countries in transition as well as the Commission's contribution to the development of international environmental law.

8. A message from Mr. V. Havel, President of the Czech Republic, was read on his behalf. In it he recalled that the "Environment for Europe" process had originated at the Conference in Dobříš, in the then Czechoslovakia in 1991 and had been initiated by the late Mr. J. Vavroušek, the former Czechoslovak Minister for the Environment. Speaking about the present and future attitudes toward the environment, Mr. Havel said, "It is up to each one of us to determine how we will assume our part of our collective global responsibility, how we will tame the pride of our thoughts and accept humility in the face of being and its order, and how to defend our actions before our grandchildren".

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. The Conference adopted its agenda as submitted by the Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials and contained in document ECE/CEP/40.

III. EUROPE'S ENVIRONMENT: THE SECOND ASSESSMENT

10. Mr. M. Meacher, Minister for the Environment of the United Kingdom, chaired the first session, which was aimed to set the scene for the Conference. In his keynote address, Mr. D. Jiménez-Beltrán, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, introduced "Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment", evaluating the current state, key trends, and the main areas of achievement and concern in the European environment. Mr. K. Toepfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, gave a personal response to this presentation.

11. In the light of the assessment and its main conclusion that, in general, the quality of the environment in Europe had not improved, the Ministers recognized that further action was required, in particular in transport, agriculture, energy, chemicals, waters, soil degradation, and biodiversity.

12. The Ministers decided to call on the European Environment Agency to update the information on Europe's environment regularly and to present its findings to them at the next "Environment for Europe" meeting. In this context cooperation should continue between all governments, organizations and existing information and observation networks.

III. NEW CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR IN A CHANGING EUROPE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION, IN PARTICULAR IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES (NIS) WITH A VIEW TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

13. Mr. A. Capcelea, Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Moldova, chaired this session and Mr. P. Haavisto, Minister of the Environment of Finland, was Vice-Chairman. Keynote statements were made by Ms. R. Bjerregaard, Environment Commissioner of the European Commission; Ms. J. Waller-Hunter, Director of the Environment Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Mr. S. Daukeev, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan; Mr. P. Gantar, Minister of the Environment of Slovenia; and Mr. T. Kyshtobaev, Deputy Minister of the Environment of Kyrgyzstan.

14. In the light of the need to create a stimulus for meeting the current and future environmental challenges in the newly independent States and those central and east European countries which were not part of the European Union's enlargement process, the Ministers agreed to give greater priority to these countries within the "Environment for Europe" process. This would apply in particular to the work of the Environmental Action Programme's (EAP) Task Force and the Project Preparation Committee (PPC). External support had a crucial role to play in this reorientation. A firm commitment from donors and international financial institutions (IFIs) was needed to ensure that the proposed shift in priorities actually took place. It was vital to develop local resources and strengthen national project preparation and implementation capacities to address environmental problems in these countries.

15. One of the main challenges for the newly independent States and those central and east European countries not involved in EU enlargement, was to move from development of the National Environmental Action Plans to their implementation. The EAP Task Force was invited to support these countries in this respect as well as to promote cooperation between all stakeholders to identify the most effective means for addressing priority problems. PPC was also invited to strengthen its efforts to support environmental projects in these countries.

16. The achievements of the EAP Task Force in central and eastern Europe were recognized by the Conference. The Task Force's further efforts in the 10 EU applicant countries should increasingly be supported by the Regional Environmental Center (REC) in Szentendre (Hungary).

17. In connection with the refocusing on the newly independent States, the Ministers welcomed and endorsed the establishment of regional environmental centres in Chisinau, Kiev, Moscow, and Tbilisi. They also encouraged all interested parties to provide the necessary resources for these centres and to establish an international coordination committee to coordinate their work.

V. FINANCE AND ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

18. This session was chaired by Mr. I. Emsis, State Minister for Environmental Protection of Latvia. Mr. M. Leuenberger, Minister of the Environment of Switzerland, was Vice-Chairman. Keynote statements were made

by: Mr. M. Bursik, Minister of the Environment of the Czech Republic; Mr. S. Kuraev, Head of the International Relations Department of the State Committee for Environmental Protection of the Russian Federation; Mr. J. Linn, Vice-President of the World Bank; Mr. R. De Korte, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank; and Mr. J. Henttonen, Chairman of the Project Preparation Committee.

19. On the environmental agenda, financing remained one of the most crucial issues in most of the UN/ECE region. Its availability and effective use were of major importance. In particular in central and eastern Europe and the newly independent States, where financing in general was limited and environmental investments were competing with urgent needs in other areas such as health care, pension reforms, education, etc., allocating funds to environmental projects was a significant challenge. Innovative financing mechanisms, e.g. environmental funds, should be further strengthened and IFIs should more effectively catalyse the generation of domestically available funds. The Ministers welcomed the approaches outlined in the report "Environmental Financing in CEEC/NIS: Conclusions and Recommendations" and endorsed its recommendations.

20. The Ministers also called for an improved environmental profile of the TACIS programme and a more effective dialogue between TACIS and the beneficiary countries in order to make better use of that assistance potential.

21. All partners were called on to increase their efforts to mobilize and channel funds to resolve priority environmental problems. The EAP Task Force and PPC were asked to facilitate these efforts and to assess the progress in a report for the next ministerial conference.

22. Economic instruments should increasingly be used to integrate environmental concerns into sectoral policies, to encourage sustainable production and consumption patterns and to generate domestic funds for environmental investments. In this respect, the Ministers welcomed the exchange of experiences between countries during an ECE/OECD workshop on economic instruments and the resulting Recommendations to Governments of the ECE countries in transition on the application of economic instruments for better integrating environmental policy with sectoral policies.

VI. BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENT

23. The session was co-chaired by Ms. A. Merkel, Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, and Mr. E. A. Utembaev, Chairman of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reform of Kazakhstan. Mr. B. Stigson, Executive Director of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, was Vice-Chairman. Keynote statements were made by: Ms. M. Erdos, Director of the Hungarian Oil Company; Mr. A. Chaplikas, Minister of the Environment of Lithuania; Mr. E. Mykelbust, Chairman of the European Round Table of Industrialists and Chief Executive Officer of Norsk Hydro; Mr. J. Jahnke, Vice-President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; and Mr. L. Royer, representing the OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; and Mr. E. A. Utembaev.

24. Economic development in the central and east European and newly independent States should benefit from the experiences gained by western economies during their technological development. Economic and environmental interests should supplement each other according to the general concept that "good environmental practice is also good business". Clean technologies should be further developed as a priority and the flow of information on them should be improved.

25. Based on the Policy Statement on Environmental Management in Enterprises, the Ministers agreed to facilitate and support the implementation of effective environmental management in enterprises including cleaner production in central and eastern Europe and the newly independent States. In this context, they invited all concerned to join these efforts and invited IFIs and international organizations to provide practical support for this process. The Ministers confirmed their willingness to establish a dialogue with the business community on a more permanent footing. They invited the EAP Task Force to facilitate this process and report on its progress to them at the next ministerial conference.

VII. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION TO ADOPT AND SIGN THE PROTOCOLS ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS AND ON HEAVY METALS ¹

26. The special session of the Executive Body was chaired by Ms. A. Lindh, Minister of the Environment of Sweden. The major issues related to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, its two new Protocols on Persistent Organic Pollutants and on Heavy Metals and future work within its framework were introduced by Mr. Y. Berthelot; Mr. J. Thompson, Chairman of the Executive Body; and Mr. L. Björkbom, Chairman of the Executive Body's Working Group on Strategies. These were followed by keynote statements by: Ms. E. Blondin-Andrew, Secretary of State for Children and Youth of Canada; Mr. M. Meacher; and Mr. J. Szyszko, Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry of Poland.

27. The importance of the Convention and the role of its Protocols in decreasing emissions of air pollutants in the UN/ECE region were underlined. The significance of the two new Protocols, among others, as examples for other regions was stressed. However, the timely finalization of the negotiations of a multi-pollutant, multi-effect protocol on nitrogen oxides and related substances as well as the development of implementation and compliance schemes were considered priorities for further work. The need to secure adequate financing for the future work under the Convention was raised.

28. The Executive Body adopted the Protocols on Heavy Metals and on Persistent Organic Pollutants on 24 June 1998 as contained in documents EB.AIR/1998/1 and EB.AIR/1998/2, respectively.

¹ A separate report on the special session is contained in ECE/EB.AIR/57.

29. The Executive Body adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution on 24 June 1998 as attached to the Ministerial Declaration contained in annex II to this report.

30. Mr. Y. Berthelot made an introductory statement at the beginning of the signing ceremony of the two Protocols. Representatives of 33 countries and the European Community signed the two Protocols on 24 June 1998 (see annex III below).

31. The Declaration on the Phase Out of Added Lead in Petrol was signed on 24 June 1998 by 32 countries, as attached to the Ministerial Declaration contained in annex II to this report.

32. The Declaration on Persistent Organic Pollutants was endorsed by Ministers and Heads of Delegations/Representatives of Parties, as set out in annex IV below.

VIII. PAN-EUROPEAN STRATEGY TO PHASE OUT LEADED PETROL

33. The session was chaired by Ms. E. Maneva, Minister of Environment and Waters of Bulgaria. Mr. A. D. Hecht, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, was Vice-Chairman. Mr. J. Zlocha, Minister of the Environment of Slovakia, delivered the keynote statement.

34. The adverse effects on health and the environment of lead were widely recognized. A study carried out by an ECE Task Force led by Denmark concluded that its phase-out from petrol was technically and economically feasible within a certain time period. In this context, the Ministers endorsed the Pan-European Strategy to Phase Out Leaded Petrol, which sets the phase-out target date at 1 January 2005² at the latest. They agreed to evaluate the fulfilment of the intermediate targets at their next ministerial conference. Recognizing the challenges facing countries in implementing the Strategy and in particular the financial requirements for necessary investments in the refining sector, the Ministers called on the PPC to make lead phase-out an element of its future work in the central and east European countries and the newly independent States. The introduction of public information programmes and supporting policies and regulations was called for in order to facilitate the implementation of the Strategy.

IX. INDEPENDENT NGO SESSION: STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

35. This session was chaired by Mr. B. Moldan, Chairperson of the Regional Environmental Center. Ms. T. Herzog-Zimmerman, Chairperson of the Steering Committee of the European ECO Forum, was Vice-Chairwoman. Keynote statements

² Many countries are planning to phase out leaded petrol before. However, five countries (Armenia, the Russian Federation, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan) reserved their position on the target date.

were made by: Ms. M. Taylor of the Friends of the Earth in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; Ms. O. Razbash, of the Regional Public Environmental Law Center "For Human Rights and Environmental Defense"; Mr. J. Szyszko; Mr. J. Peeters, Federal Secretary of State for the Environment of Belgium; Mr. K. Szili, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Environment and Regional Policy of Hungary; Mr. K. Bärlund, Director of the UN/ECE Environment and Human Settlements Division; Mr. W. Kakebeeke, Chairman of the Working Group for the preparation of a draft convention on access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making; Mr. J. Hontelez, Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau; Mr. B. Van Dyke, of the Center for International Environmental Law; Mr. J. Wates, of the European Environmental Bureau; Mr. K. Mindjov, of the Borrowed Nature Association in Bulgaria; and Mr. P. Roderick of the Friends of the Earth/Earthrights in the United Kingdom.

36. The participants wanted the dialogue between governments and environmental citizens' organizations concerning public participation, access to information and justice in environmental matters to be intensified. Although practical arrangements and supportive attitudes in this respect existed in a number of countries, there was much room for improvement. The Ministers recognized the essential role played by NGOs in voicing the public's environmental concerns and their willingness to strengthen communication with NGOs.

X. ENERGY CONSERVATION

37. The session was chaired by Ms. M. Arnstad, Minister of Petroleum and Energy of Norway. Keynote statements were made by: Ms. K. Szili; Mr. M. Bartenstein, Minister of Environment, Youth and Family of Austria; and Mr. S. Daukeev.

38. Improving energy efficiency was crucial for both economic and environmental reasons. It could also be a contribution to fulfilling the commitments under the Kyoto Protocol. The Ministers endorsed the Policy Statement on Energy Efficiency as contained in document ECE/CEP/47 and annex V below and welcomed the Guidelines on Energy Conservation in Europe as a menu of excellent ideas for implementation. The Århus Conference was seen as a starting point for further work on energy efficiency. Furthermore, the Ministers agreed to promote the strengthening of international cooperation in monitoring the implementation of energy efficiency policies and to consider a progress report at their next meeting.

XI. CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

39. The session was chaired by Mr. S. Auken and vice-chaired by Ms. N. Chkhobadze, Minister of the Environment of Georgia. Ms. D. Voynet, Minister for Spatial Planning and Environment of France; Ms. M. De Boer, Minister of the Environment of the Netherlands; Ms. G. Fjellanger, Minister of the Environment of Norway; Mr. A. Capcelea; and Mr. J. Wates, of the European Environmental Bureau, speaking on behalf of the Environmental NGOs Coalition, were the keynote speakers.

40. The importance of the Convention as a link between human rights and environmental protection was stressed. This was the first UN/ECE environmental agreement to impose obligations on its Parties vis-à-vis its own citizens. Those countries which would face difficulties in fulfilling the obligations of the Convention should be assisted. The active and constructive role of non-governmental organizations during the negotiation process was recognized.

41. The Conference adopted the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, as contained in document ECE/CEP/43, on 25 June 1998. The Ministers also adopted the Resolution on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters as contained in document ECE/CEP/43/Add.1/Rev.1 and in annex VI below.

42. The signing ceremony of the Convention was chaired by Mr. S. Auken, while an introductory statement was made by Mr. Y. Berthelot. The Convention was signed on 25 June 1998 by representatives of 35 countries and the European Community (see annex VII below). At the signing ceremony, representatives of the Governments of Denmark, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the United Kingdom and the European Community delivered statements, set out in annex VIII below.

XII. FOLLOW-UP TO THE PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY

43. The session was chaired by Ms. R. Tomescu, Minister of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection of Romania. It was vice-chaired by Mr. P. Gantar. Mr. J. Zlocha and Mr. P. Roch, State Secretary, Director of Environment of Switzerland, made keynote statements.

44. The Ministers agreed to strengthen the process of integrating biodiversity and landscape conservation objectives into sectoral policies. They acknowledged the work done so far in this area within the framework of the Strategy and endorsed the Resolution on Biological and Landscape Diversity as contained in document ECE/CEP/54 and annex IX below.

XIII. FUTURE OF THE "ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE" PROCESS

45. The session devoted to the future of the process was chaired by Mr. S. Auken. Keynote statements were made by Ms. M. De Boer; Mr. E. Jauck, State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany; and Mr. A. D. Hecht.

46. The Ministers agreed that the "Environment for Europe" process had been successful in facilitating international cooperation as well as in promoting sustainable development in the UN/ECE region. They agreed that it should continue and focus more on implementation in the future.

47. The Ministers called on the European Environmental Agency to update regularly the information in "Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment" and present the findings to future ministerial conferences (see also paras. 10-12).

48. The Ministers requested that the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy should continue to screen the Environmental Programme for Europe, taking into account "Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment", in order to implement priority actions.

49. The Ministers decided on a refocusing of work of the EAP Task Force and the PPC towards the newly independent States and those central and east European countries that were not included in the European Union's enlargement process (see also paras. 14-15).

50. The Ministers decided to reduce the frequency of meetings to an interval of four years. The next "Environment for Europe" Conference would thus take place in 2002. The venue would be decided before the end of this year by Senior Officials representing ECE member Governments. The general institutional arrangements, involving an ad hoc working group of Senior Officials with secretariat support from UN/ECE, would remain practically unchanged.

XIV. ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

51. In a session chaired by Mr. S. Auken, the Ministers and Heads of delegation adopted the Ministerial Declaration, as contained in document ECE/CEP/56 and annex II below.

XV. CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

52. The Ministers and delegations present at the Conference expressed their appreciation to the Government of Denmark for having hosted the fourth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

53. The Chairman thanked all the delegates for their participation and officially closed the deliberations.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS*

ALBANIA

Maksim Deliana	Chairman
Drita Dade	Public Relations Officer
Arian Gace	Head of Nature Conservation Department
Leka Gjikhuri	President, PPNE
Irena Jorgoni	Head of Energy Policy Department
Nexhat Kalaj	Chairman of Parliamentary Commission Health and Environment
Tatiana Kotobelli	Director, Air, Water Quality and Waste Management Department
Alban Zeneli	

ARMENIA

Sargis Shahazizyan	Minister for the Environment
Aram Gabrielian	Head of the Department of Atmosphere Protection
Noune Kirakossyan	Head of International Cooperation Department
Sirekan Ohanyan	Head of Department
Simon Papyan	First Deputy Minister
Rudolf Torosyan	Chief Environmental Specialist

AUSTRIA

Martin Bartenstein	Minister for Environment, Youth and Family
Ralf Böckle	Special Adviser
Karl Fiala	Director - Assistant
Elisabeth Freytag	Head of Department
Karl Kienzl	Division Manager
Gerhard Loibl	Head of Department
Manfred Ogris	
Silvia Pultz	
Manfred Schneider	
Heinz Schreiber	Director General

AZERBAIJAN

Ali Gassanov	Chairman of the State Committee on Ecology and Member of Parliament
Fuad Achundzade	Head of Department
Raouf Mouradov	NEAP Coordinator
Zizaddin Taguiev	Deputy Director of the NFP

* This list has been reproduced as received from the host authorities in Denmark except for minor changes that reflect comments received from delegations.

BELARUS

Mikhail Rusy	Minister for the Environment
Aleksandr Akulich	Senator
Charles Barrie Coulson	
Galina Dudko	Deputy Chief, International Department
Ruslan Ignatichtchev	
Alexandre Levchenko	National Coordinator
Latvia Melnikov	Director
Viktor Mihaduk	
Fedor Molotchko	Director
Manefa Omeltchenko	Staff
Aleksandr Rachevsky	Chief of Department of International Cooperation
Alfons Tishkevich	Senator and Committee Chairman
Nikolay Tsigankov	Director
Timofei Yanchuk	Executive Secretary
Khudaya Marie Zayaz	Deputy

BELGIUM

Jan Peeters	Federal Secretary of State for the Environment
Theo Kelchtermans	Minister for the Environment
Eddie Pierre Ivan Muylle	Director, Flemish Environment Agency
Frederic Chemay	Adviser, Ministry of the Environment
Bob De Richter	Member of Parliament, House of Representatives
Arthur Degee	Assistant to the Minister
Muriel Delvaux	Assistant to the Walloon Minister for the Environment
Paul L.A.J. Demeester	General Director, Flemish Land Agency
Florence Didion	Adviser, Brussels Institute for the Management of the Environment
Jan A.A.M.M. Heyman	Director, Flemish Environmental Agency
Michael Kyramarios	Adviser, Administration Section Europe and the Environment
Michèle Loutsch	Assistant, Ministry of the Walloon Region
Marc Pallemmaerts	Adviser to the Secretary of State
Rosa Renders	Adviser, Administration Section Europe and the Environment
Marc Smaers	Adviser, Administration Section Europe and the Environment
Francois Stuyckens	Inspector General
Chris Vanden Bilcke	Adviser, Foreign Affairs and Environmental Affairs Unit
Hugo van Dienderen	Member of Parliament, House of Representatives
Jean Vrijssen	Spokesman for the Cabinet

**BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA**

Tarik Kupusovic

**Chief of Ecology and Environment
Department**

Radmilla Kostic

**Adviser of the Minister of the
Environment**

Alija Lekic
Nesad Seremet
Edin Zametica

Professor
REC Local Representative

BULGARIA

Evdokia Maneva

**Minister for the Environment and
Waters**

Dimiter Brankov
Vania Grigorova
Dimitar Kantardjiev

Director
Head of Department
Director General, National Centre
for Environment and Sustainable
Development

Albena Milkova Karadjova
Edward Klein
Milko Kovatchev

Head of Department
Member of Parliament
Head of Division, Committee of
Energy

Emil Marinov
Maria Minkova
Politimy Paounova
Kirum Slavov

Deputy Minister
NGO Representative B NM Ecoglasnost
Head of Heavy Industry Department
Ambassador, Bulgarian Embassy

CANADA

Ethel Blondin-Andrew

**Secretary of State (Children and
Youth)**

Wendy Cornett
Sylvie Côté

Assistant to the Minister
Senior Policy Adviser, Environment
Canada

Peter Fawcett

Commercial Counsellor, Canadian
Embassy

Steve Hart

Director, Transboundary Air
Pollution

David P. Stone

Chief, Environmental Services and
Research

CROATIA

Ante Kutle

**Director, State Directorate for the
Protection of Nature and
Environment**

Lijerka Alajbeg

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head
of Department

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Annex II

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

A. PREAMBLE

1. We, the Environment Ministers and Heads of delegations from 52 countries in the UN/ECE region and the representative of the European Commission, met at Århus, Denmark, from 23 to 25 June 1998, in the fourth of a series of Ministerial Conferences held as part of the "Environment for Europe" process.

2. We reaffirm our strong commitment, developed at the three previous Ministerial Conferences in Dobriš (1991), Lucerne (1993) and Sofia (1995), to cooperate on environmental protection in the ECE region. We promise to satisfy the obligations arising from the Declarations made at those three Conferences. In particular, we declare that further integration of environmental considerations into policies in all sectors is of critical importance to the improvement of the environment. We welcome the active participation of the NGO community as well as the business community and the trade unions at the Conference. We also recognize the political importance of the "Environment for Europe" process as the major long-term pan-European political framework for the promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development.

3. We welcome the recovery of peace in areas formerly affected by armed conflicts, which opens the way to environmental improvement in those areas. We call upon States where such conflicts continue to re-establish and strengthen peace.

4. Bearing in mind that the EU enlargement will create new challenges both for the economy and for the environment, the enlargement can provide a powerful stimulus for environmental improvement in the applicant countries. There is no similar development in other CEE countries or in the Newly Independent States (NIS). Many of these countries still face severe environmental problems. The "Environment for Europe" process should therefore focus more of its resources on these countries in order to promote a convergence in environmental policies and conditions within the European region, as a step towards sustainable development.

5. We recognize the importance of regional, subregional and bilateral environmental cooperation in the UN/ECE region. In this connection we welcome the Joint Statement of the Ministers of Environment of the Central Asian Region (Almaty, 22 April 1998) and their commitment to mutual cooperation and support their decision to prepare and implement the Regional Environmental Action Plan within the "Environment for Europe" process. We also welcome and support the adoption of the Baltic Agenda 21 on 3 June 1998 in Nyborg (Denmark), which will play a major role in the Baltic Sea region.

B. THE ECE REGION AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

6. We recognize that many of the environmental problems of the world have their origin in the UN/ECE region and we reaffirm the special responsibilities of the UN/ECE countries in contributing to solving these problems and our aspiration towards a global leadership role for the UN/ECE countries in pursuing sustainable development. We welcome and are grateful for the support of international organizations.

7. We commit ourselves to complying with the obligations arising from those environmental conventions to which we are Parties. Furthermore, we note with great concern that some UN/ECE States are not Parties to a number of relevant environmental conventions and other legal instruments, and we urge these States to take all appropriate steps to become Parties to those instruments as soon as possible.

8. In order further to contribute to the global pursuit of sustainable development, we continue to support the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other relevant global organizations and conventions.

9. We need strong, efficient and effective compliance regimes backing the legally binding commitments arising from multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). It is important that procedures and mechanisms, entailing binding consequences, where appropriate, for Parties in non-compliance are further elaborated. We will provide full support for broader participation in and effective implementation of the existing MEAs and their mechanisms for exchanging information and achieving compliance.

10. We stress the importance of international cooperation in a non-confrontational and supportive fashion to strengthen the enforcement of national environmental law. In this respect we welcome the establishment of informal, cooperative networks of environmental inspectors in the UN/ECE region, such as the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law - Accession Countries (IMPEL-AC) and a network for environmental inspectors in the region of central and eastern Europe and Central Asia.

11. We emphasize that the objectives and obligations of MEAs should not be hampered by other international agreements, and the need to ensure that the WTO rules, provisions and procedures take full account of the need to promote a high level of environmental protection. In particular, the multilateral trading system should, under clear and predictable rules, accommodate the use of trade measures taken in the framework of MEAs.¹ We will promote efforts to ensure that environmental concerns are effectively integrated into the international investment agreements such as the proposed multilateral agreement on investment in a way that supports sustainable development, and

¹The United States of America cannot agree to the first two sentences in paragraph 11.

so as not to limit the capacity to make and implement national and international environmental policies.

12. Climate change remains the greatest global environmental threat to the world's sustainable development, public health and future prosperity. The Kyoto Protocol was a historic turning point and it is essential that we now translate the promise of Kyoto into reality. In this context we are aware of our responsibility to take the lead in combating climate change. Domestically, our nations undertake to pursue immediately significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. We firmly believe that these reductions can be achieved cost-effectively and deliver present and future improvements in the quality of life. Internationally we must maintain the momentum by making progress at the fourth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at Buenos Aires on the outstanding issues left by Kyoto. Flexible mechanisms such as international emissions trading, joint implementation and clean development mechanism shall be supplemental to domestic actions. They can play an essential role in achieving our commitments cost-effectively. Defining the relevant principles, modalities, rules and guidelines to ensure that these mechanisms provide real environmental benefit is a priority. It is important that these flexibilities, in particular trading, should help us to achieve greater overall abatement of greenhouse gases than would otherwise occur. The rules must ensure an enforceable, accountable, verifiable, open and transparent trading system. Work on the treatment of carbon sinks should be continued. We welcome the recent signature of the Kyoto Protocol by some of us and confirm the intention of the rest of us to sign it within the next year. We need a strong, efficient and effective compliance regime backing the legally binding commitments under the Protocol.²

13. In view of the continuing grave concern about unsafe nuclear installations, we reaffirm our pledge to phase them out as soon as possible.³ We acknowledge the need to solve the problems connected to the decommissioning of nuclear reactors and power plants, the management of nuclear waste and operational safety. In this regard we take note of the adoption of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and we urge all States that have not already done so to take all appropriate steps to become parties to that Convention and to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. We also reaffirm the need for an appropriate international liability regime for the compensation of damage caused by nuclear installations, noting the recent efforts of the international community to improve liability regimes.

² General reservation by Turkey.

³ Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden reaffirm their position that the use of nuclear energy in general should be phased out in the long term. This position is shared by Cyprus.

14. We recall the concerns expressed by many States about the risks of environmental and health damage involved in nuclear arms testing and urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

15. We note the increasing transboundary movement of living modified organisms. Accordingly, there is a growing need to address safety issues and we are firmly committed to finalizing the negotiation of a biosafety protocol, based on scientific risk assessment and the precautionary principle, to the Convention on Biological Diversity, by February 1999.

THE STATE OF THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT

16. We welcome the report *Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment* requested at our last meeting in Sofia in September 1995 and published recently by the European Environment Agency (EEA). Although some pressures have been reduced, this has not generally led to an improvement in the state or quality of the environment of Europe. We are therefore required to take further action, in particular in the following fields:

-Transport, where governmental policies are failing to keep pace with the growth in traffic, which is adding to the problems of air pollution, climate change, noise, congestion and biodiversity/habitat loss. We are determined to secure a sustainable and environmentally sound pattern of transport and to promote the use of public transport, transport by sea, rail, and non-motorized transport. Economic instruments should be used as a way of reducing transport volumes while reflecting environmental costs in transport prices, especially for freight transport;

-Agriculture, where much more needs to be done better to reconcile environmental concerns with agricultural practices, e.g. by further developing the rules of good agricultural practice, by encouraging environmentally friendly agricultural production techniques, by making agricultural support payments reflect environmental protection, and by implementing policies designed to neutralize the environmental impact of intensive animal production systems;

-Energy, where new efforts are needed to ensure that the available international instruments are implemented fully at the national level, particularly in the fields of energy conservation and the promotion and sustainable use of renewable energy resources;

-Chemicals, where further evaluation of hazards and exposures and their impacts on human health and the environment is needed. Such evaluations should be based on scientific evaluation, including risk assessment, and decisions should respect the precautionary principle;

-Surface, subterranean, coastal and marine waters, where threats to these waters remain in spite of the fact that many efforts have been made. Improved action therefore needs to be taken towards the progressive reduction

of pollutants (incl. heavy metals and anthropogenic chemicals) and by reducing inputs from nutrient sources;

-Soil degradation, where serious problems continue and too little progress has been made in soil conservation and remediation of contaminated sites. Further work is needed on prevention strategies for desertification;

-Biodiversity, where the overall pressures continue to increase and the need for the actions mentioned under the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy section is particularly urgent.

17. We recognize that *Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment* does not cover Central Asia. In this connection we welcome the report "Central Asia: Environment Assessment" prepared by the countries in this region.

18. We recognize that mechanisms for coordinated monitoring, data collection, processing and management in the European region are still inadequate. In the future we should give high priority to improving these mechanisms as well as the state of environmental information to support decision-making and to improve the availability of reliable environmental information to the public. With this in mind, we call for closer cooperation between all governments, organizations and existing information and observation networks. We welcome the initiative of the Russian Federation to convene a special meeting during the first half of 1999 in Moscow with a view to strengthening the cooperation in this field. Future work in this area should take fully into account the work of existing networks and fora, in particular the European Environment Agency.

C. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME FOR EUROPE

19. Environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedures are important means for integrating environmental concerns into development projects and for providing access to information and public participation. We welcome the recent entry into force of the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context. We urge the countries of the UN/ECE region to take all appropriate steps to become Parties to the Convention and implement it. We also note the progress made in the introduction of EIA in CEE countries and welcome the Sofia Initiative on EIA led by Croatia.

20. We recognize that strategic environmental assessment facilitates the systematic analyses of the environmental impacts of proposed policies, plans and programmes and invite countries and international finance institutions to introduce and/or carry out strategic environmental assessments with the appropriate participation of NGOs and citizens. We emphasize that - with a view to the integration of environmental considerations in the decision-making process in other policies - assessments of international sectoral policies, plans and programmes in the UN/ECE region in areas such as transport, energy and agriculture should be undertaken as a matter of priority.

21. We recognize that changes in consumption and production patterns must lie at the heart of the transition towards a sustainable UN/ECE region; with concern we note that developments in the countries with economies in transition may have the effect of duplicating unsustainable consumption patterns in other parts of the region.

AIR POLLUTION PREVENTION

22. We welcome the adoption and signature of the Protocols on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and on Heavy Metals within the framework of the UN/ECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and we urge all Parties to the Convention expeditiously to take all appropriate steps to become Parties to the two Protocols, and voluntarily to take swift steps to implement and comply with the Protocols even before they formally enter into force.

23. We pledge to work constructively in the forthcoming negotiations on a global convention on POPs.

24. We intend to reduce our countries' emissions of lead, cadmium and mercury from a combination of industrial sources, transport, combustion processes and waste disposal and incineration and to be bound by all other obligations arising from the Protocol on Heavy Metals. We note that 32 countries have expressed their readiness in a separate declaration to meet an earlier date for the final phase-out of added lead in petrol for general use by road vehicles than stipulated in the Protocol (a copy of the Declaration is attached).

25. We strongly support the expeditious completion of a new protocol on nitrogen oxides and related substances to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, and we resolve to take the necessary steps to secure the scientific foundation for the effective implementation and the further development of existing cost-effective legal instruments to reduce transboundary air pollution in the UN/ECE region.

26. We welcome the Declaration of the Executive Body on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, recognizing the important role of the Convention in promoting a better environment and improved human health in Europe and North America (a copy of the Declaration as adopted is attached).

27. We note with satisfaction that the 1991 Protocol on the Emissions of VOC entered into force in September 1997 and that the 1994 Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions will enter into force in early August 1998. We urge the Signatories to the two Protocols that have not yet become Parties to them to do so as soon as possible.

STRATEGY TO PHASE OUT LEADED PETROL

28. We endorse the proposed strategy to phase out leaded petrol for general use by road vehicles as early as possible and no later than 1 January 2005, acknowledging, however, that four countries have reserved their position on

the target date.⁴ We oblige ourselves to work towards the intermediate targets of the strategy and to evaluate their fulfilment at our next Ministerial Conference.

29. We will continue to endeavour to prevent possible increases in the overall emissions of harmful substances as a result of the lead phase-out.

30. We welcome and recognize the results of the cooperation among the CEE countries in phasing out lead from petrol and reducing local air pollution in the framework of the Sofia Initiative on Local Air Quality led by Bulgaria. We call on the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) to make lead phase-out part of its future work in both the CEE and NIS regions.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY^{5,6}

31. We endorse the Policy Statement on Energy Efficiency (see Conference document ECE/CEP/47) and welcome the Guidelines on Energy Conservation in Europe (see Conference document ECE/CEP/47/Add.1) submitted by the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, and we remain convinced that increased energy efficiency will be a major tool for fulfilling our commitments in the Kyoto Protocol.

32. In particular, we will promote action to reform energy markets and pricing to ensure there are cost-based prices and economic incentives that increasingly internalize the environmental costs of energy production and use. In this context we support all international activities to develop measures to reduce aircraft noise and air emissions. We furthermore support work towards the introduction of regulatory or fiscal measures in high-growth transport sectors such as aviation. We will promote action to progressively reduce and where possible remove energy price subsidies which counteract an efficient use of energy and/or have harmful effects on the environment by 2005.

⁴ During the Conference, one more country reserved its position on the target date.

⁵ Canada and the United States of America strongly support energy efficiency as a major tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They are firmly committed to continuing to increase energy efficiency. The endorsement of the Policy Statement on Energy Efficiency and the Guidelines on Energy Conservation in Europe would be inconsistent with a fundamental tenet of the Kyoto Protocol, to permit countries to meet environmental goals in accordance with national circumstances. Therefore, Canada and the United States of America cannot support paragraphs 31, 32 and 35.

⁶ Even though Turkey is not a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, it has similar concerns to those of the United States and Canada. Therefore, it cannot support paragraphs 31, 32 and 35 either.

33. We acknowledge the complex, cross-sectoral nature of energy efficiency policies and the need for the integration of those policies into other sectors, for instance in the field of housing, transport and industry. For energy efficiency policies to be effective, all relevant levels of government should ensure a strong and efficient coordination of policy measures.

34. We acknowledge the importance of international financing for effective energy conservation, and the development of renewable energy sources particularly in central and eastern Europe including the NIS countries, for example through the World Bank, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the EU PHARE and TACIS programmes. We urge the international bodies concerned to make energy conservation and efficiency a priority in their operational policies and project implementation guidelines.

35. We will promote action to strengthen international cooperation in monitoring the implementation of energy efficiency policies. Progress will be reported to the next "Environment for Europe" Conference.

PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY

36. We acknowledge the Progress Report on the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, welcome the links which have been established with the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and acknowledge the work undertaken under the Sofia Initiative led by Slovenia. We endorse the Resolution on Biological and Landscape Diversity (See Conference document ECE/CEP/54).⁷

37. We are aware that biological and landscape diversity, particularly in CEE and NIS, represents an important asset for Europe as a whole and express our concern about the increased pressure that risks to further deteriorate the situation. We resolve to strengthen and implement instruments for a better integration of biodiversity and landscape conservation objectives into sectoral policies at national and international levels, inter alia by developing appropriate economic and financial incentives.

38. In particular, we note that land use has a strong impact on biological and landscape diversity and that there are currently wide opportunities for progress as well as potential risks in this area. To take advantage of opportunities and to avoid negative impacts, we will take initiatives to integrate biodiversity considerations into the agricultural sector within the EU enlargement and transition processes.

39. We call on all participating States, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector to increase their support, as appropriate, for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, inter alia through

⁷ The United States of America welcomes and supports most elements of the Resolution on Biological and Landscape Diversity but cannot endorse it.

the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, by exploring new and innovative financing means.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND THE ROLE OF NGOS

40. We regard the Aarhus Convention, which provides recognition for citizens' rights in relation to the environment, as a significant step forward both for the environment and for democracy. We encourage all non-signatory States to take appropriate steps to become Parties to the Convention.

41. We note the Resolution of the Signatories to the Convention (see Conference document ECE/CEP/43/Add.1/Rev.1).

42. We recognize and support the crucial role played in society by environmental NGOs as an important channel for articulating the opinions of the environmentally concerned public. An engaged, critically aware public is essential to a healthy democracy. By helping to empower individual citizens and environmental NGOs to play an active role in environmental policy-making and awareness raising, the Aarhus Convention will promote responsible environmental citizenship and better enable all members of society to fulfil their duty, both individually and in association with others, to protect and improve the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.⁸

43. The decision to hold a special dialogue with environmental NGOs during this Conference marks our recognition of their essential role, and our engagement to strengthen lines of communication between governments and NGOs, including in international fora. We recognize the new role played by NGOs in this Conference and we greatly appreciate their leadership in organizing and taking responsibility for the NGO session and in actively participating in Conference preparations.

44. We encourage countries to provide, as appropriate, practical and financial support for environmental NGOs, noting at the same time that part of the role of such groups can be to question government policies.

⁸ Germany is not able to sign the Convention at this Conference. The decision on the signature will be taken within the time provided in article 17 of the Convention. Therefore, Germany is not in the position to support paragraphs 40, 41 and 42. Azerbaijan, Turkey and Uzbekistan are in a similar situation.

**D. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL
AND EASTERN EUROPE (EAP)**

REFOCUSING ON THE NIS

45. We recognize the effective role that the EAP Task Force has played in promoting environmental policy reform and capacity building in CEE countries and NIS. Participation in the Task Force has helped applicant countries, and their EU partners, to launch a dialogue on the environment during the enlargement process. We also welcome and encourage the more active participation in, and greater ownership of the process by the NIS. Taking into account the dynamism of the EU enlargement process and the large resources that the European Commission, the Member States and the Applicant States will be devoting to it, we agree that the main focus of future EAP work should shift towards the CEE countries and the NIS that are not part of the pre-accession process. In these countries, the need for external support for project preparation and implementation capacities, as well as for strengthening the operations of national environmental funds, is the greatest.

46. National Environmental Action Programmes (NEAPs), environmental financing and environmental management in enterprises should continue to provide the framework for the activities of the EAP Task Force, but the work should be designed and implemented better to respond to the differentiated needs of CEE and the NIS groups of countries. We acknowledge with appreciation the secretariat support that the OECD has provided to the Task Force. The Regional Environmental Center (REC) in Szentendre, Hungary, should play an increasing role in supporting the Task Force work in central and eastern Europe involving the applicant and non-applicant countries.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCING AND ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

47. We welcome the approaches outlined in the report "Environmental Financing in CEEC/NIS: Conclusions and Recommendations" (see Conference document ECE/CEP/50) and note that it presents a very varied picture. Some CEE countries have mobilized resources for environmental investments which are equal to, or greater than, OECD averages as a share of GDP. In the NIS, however, sources of environmental finance are weak or non-existent. These countries should develop appropriate financing strategies. To this end, we endorse the recommendations of the Report on Environmental Financing. In particular, we call for the development of more effective approaches to link the policies and instruments required to create demand and raise domestic finance with the mechanisms which supply financial resources for projects.

48. Environmental financing must come primarily from domestic sources. Economic instruments should play a more important role in terms of motivating the polluters to reduce pollution at their own costs (the polluter-pays principle), as well as promoting sustainable development and integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies and raising revenues for national environmental funds and other forms of public and private financing.

In this connection we welcome the exchange of experience among the countries in the framework of the Sofia Initiatives on Economic Instruments led by the Czech Republic and the UN/ECE-OECD workshop on economic instruments held in 1997 in the Czech Republic.

49. External finance will provide important assistance for applicant countries to meet EU environmental requirements. The main challenges will be to establish the policy and institutional frameworks, and the project preparation capacities, to ensure that these resources address priorities cost-effectively. External financing will remain very important in those countries that have limited domestic funding sources, particularly the NIS. Donor countries and international financial institutions (IFIs) should take a more proactive approach and expand their support to these countries, especially in contributing to financing pilot and demonstration projects in response to the increasing demand. External financing will also be important to help CEE countries and NIS to achieve global transboundary environmental objectives.

50. We welcome the recent review of the PHARE Guidelines in which the environmental sector is now made a main priority. We are however concerned that the TACIS programme still lacks a corresponding environmental profile. We therefore call for a similar recognition to that of the PHARE programme in the coming revision of the TACIS Regulation, including the need for close cooperation with other donors and IFIs, as well as enhanced procedures for project handling. In this respect, greater transparency in all phases of the project cycle is vital. We also call for an improved dialogue between TACIS and the beneficiary countries in order to make better use of existing TACIS assistance for environmental purposes.

51. We note the environmental projects financed and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at national and regional level in CEE countries and NIS.

52. We acknowledge the role IFIs have played in supporting CEE countries and NIS in addressing their environmental problems. We strongly urge IFIs to improve substantially their profiles as catalysts in pursuing environmental investment projects in the economies in transition. We will be more proactive, inter alia, through IFIs' Executive Directors, in promoting more and better environmental projects in the CEE countries and NIS as well as mainstreaming environmental concerns into IFI project portfolios.

53. All partners - CEE countries and NIS, IFIs, donors and increasingly the private sector - should strengthen their efforts to mobilize and channel financial resources to resolve priority environmental problems in particular by cofinanced projects. The EAP Task Force and PPC should work to catalyse and facilitate these efforts, and to prepare a report assessing progress for the next "Environment for Europe" ministerial meeting.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMMES (NEAPs)

54. We welcome the report "Evaluation of Progress in Developing and Implementing National Environmental Action Programmes (NEAPs) in CEEC/NIS" (see Conference document ECE/CEP/49) prepared by the EAP Task Force, noting that the principles of the EAP remain valid. However as economic growth resumes, and needs and priorities within the CEE and the NIS region become differentiated, these principles will have to be applied even more rigorously.

In the EU applicant countries, substantial changes in legislation and institutions as well as massive investments will be required. Cost-effective strategies to develop and implement them will be of crucial importance to the process. As the other CEE countries and the NIS move from development to implementation of NEAPs, a focused, pragmatic, result-oriented approach is urgently needed to overcome the scarcity of resources available. In this regard we encourage the coordination of NEAPs with the National Environmental Health Action Plans (NEHAPs).

PROJECT PREPARATION COMMITTEE

55. We welcome the achievements of the PPC in the CEE countries. The PPC should respond to the particular need for external financing and for proactive coordination among clients, host governments, donors and IFIs in the NIS and the CEE countries which are not involved in the EU enlargement process. Its main activities should focus on these countries, whilst it continues its activities in the 10 CEE EU applicant countries. Within the NIS and in those CEE countries which are not involved in the EU enlargement process, the PPC should continue to work in close cooperation with the countries concerned as well as with the EAP Task Force and strengthen its work by locating PPC officers in the region.

BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENT

56. We undertake to catalyse, facilitate and strongly support the implementation of effective environmental management in enterprises including cleaner production in CEE countries and NIS based on the recommendations in the Policy Statement on Environmental Management in Enterprises in CEEC/NIS (see Conference document ECE/CEP/51). We will give increased priority to environmental management in enterprises within bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We urge business and industry, trade unions, environmental citizens' organizations, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to work with us to these ends. We invite IFIs and international organizations to provide practical support for strengthening environmental management in enterprises in CEE countries and NIS. We urge donors, IFIs, CEE countries and NIS to create a business climate that will encourage the establishment of local private sector environmental goods and services companies in CEE countries and the NIS.

57. We welcome the opportunity within this Conference to extend a dialogue with prominent representatives of the business sector as well as the improved dialogue between industry and the environment set out at this year's CSD session. We confirm our willingness to establish this dialogue on a more

continuous basis and invite the business community to join us in this effort with the aim of promoting public private partnerships designed to achieve our common environmental objectives and more generally to promote sustainable development. We welcome the Message from the European Round Table of Industrialists on company investment in CEE countries, which identifies activities of good environmental practice that are also good business practice. We note with satisfaction that twinning arrangements between enterprises in west European countries and enterprises in CEE countries and NIS are being established to promote the transfer of environmental knowledge and experience in a most direct and practical way.

58. We invite the EAP Task Force to facilitate and support this process and to prepare, on the basis of the evaluation of progress made, a report for the next "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference.

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRES (RECs)

59. We recognize the development of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe in Szentendre, Hungary, into an independent body of an international character. It provides a significant capacity to assist in solving environmental problems of the CEE region through cooperation among governments, NGOs and business, promotion of free access to information and public participation in environmental decision-making. We welcome initiatives of beneficiary countries to actively support the work of the Center.

60. In view of the importance of the civil society and public participation for improving the environmental situation, we welcome and endorse the establishment of regional environmental centres in Chisinau, Kyiv, Moscow and Tbilisi. They are being established and operated as independent bodies that will promote cooperation among interested parties in addressing regional, transboundary and local environmental issues in an open and transparent way. We welcome the initiatives for increased environmental cooperation among the countries of Central Asia and their intention to establish a regional environmental centre. We encourage the founders and other interested parties to provide the necessary resources for the activities of the centres and to establish an international coordination committee to coordinate with the work of these new RECs. We also take note of the first steps to establish a new REC as an independent body of an international character in Istanbul and encourage further steps in consultation with other parties, including those within the region, concerning the establishment of this centre.^{9,10}

E. FUTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE PROCESS

61. We are convinced that the "Environment for Europe" process has played an essential role in strengthening dialogue and cooperation in the environment field in Europe and in promoting sustainable development within

⁹ General reservation by Armenia.

¹⁰ Reservation on the last sentence by Cyprus and Greece.

the UN/ECE region. It has put the environment high on the agenda even in countries where the social and economic situation is unfavourable. The process has brought together a wide range of international organizations with an effective division of labour and channels of communications and collaboration between them. Environment is often seen as a model example of policy cooperation in Europe and we will strive to make it a model for the other continents of the world. The "Environment for Europe" process should build on the work done so far and, in particular, move forward from policy commitments to practical implementation.

62. We appreciate other ministerial processes concerned with the environment in Europe. We will take an active role within the follow-up to the ECE Conference on Transport and Environment, held in Vienna in November 1997, in particular by undertaking those actions which are foreseen in the Vienna Declaration and the Programme of Joint Action. We welcome the Joint Work Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000 adopted by the Third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, Lisbon, 2-4 June 1998. We look forward to the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health to be held in London in June 1999 and to achieving closer cooperation with the Environment and Health process, noting with satisfaction that a protocol to the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes is being prepared for this Conference with the aim of preventing, controlling and reducing water-related diseases by meaningful obligations. We welcome further processes of close cooperation like the ministerial conference on agriculture and environment which is under consideration in follow-up to the Integration of Biological and Landscape Diversity Objectives into Sectoral Policies (see Conference document ECE/CEP/53) and are committed to maximizing the benefit of these for the sake of the environment in Europe.

63. We consider that the broad institutional arrangements of Environment for Europe shall continue with the following adjustments:

- Taking into account the importance and the comprehensive character of the "Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment", we call on the EEA together with existing national and international networks to update this information regularly and present the findings based on indicators to our future ministerial conferences in order to support decision-making.
- The ECE Committee on Environmental Policy should continue to screen the Environmental Programme for Europe, taking into account in particular the report "Europe's Environment: The Second Assessment", in order to implement priority actions on a pan-European level within the context of its long-term programme of work and to report on progress of this work at the next Ministerial Conference.

- The EAP Task Force and PPC shall reorient their work and focus more on the NIS and those CEE countries not included in the pre-accession process. The Regional Environmental Center in Szentendre shall overall assume a greater role in the Environment for Europe process and specifically work on the activities of the EAP Task Force in CEE countries. The EAP Task Force shall also cooperate with new RECs in the NIS region.
- The progress since Sofia in reducing the number of preparatory meetings shall be maintained.
- The frequency of ministerial conferences shall be reduced to an interval of four years. The next Conference shall take place in the year 2002 on the tenth anniversary of the Rio Conference.
- A special meeting of senior officials shall convene before the end of this year and shall at that meeting, chaired by the present host country, decide on the next host country, preferably a NIS country, and the exact date of the next Conference. In this connection, we take note of the offers by Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to host the next conference.
- An ad hoc working group of senior officials shall convene two years before the next conference. This ad hoc working group shall serve as the coordinating body for the preparation of the substance for the next conference. The ad hoc working group shall be chaired by the host country of the next conference with the UN/ECE serving as secretariat.
- The work of this ad hoc working group of senior officials shall be prepared by an Executive Committee (EXECOM) composed of two senior officials from the CEE countries, two from the NIS and four from the western European countries. The Chairpersons of the UN/ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, the EAP Task Force, the PPC and the Council for the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, will participate as observers. It shall be chaired by the host country. The EXECOM shall also be established at the meeting of the ad hoc working group two years before the next conference. The practical preparations for the next conference shall be the responsibility of the host country.

64. We are committed to changing the negative trend in the state of the environment in the UN/ECE region and to monitoring progress at our next Conference in four years' time. In this connection it is essential to stop the continuous degradation of the environment in the whole of the UN/ECE region, with particular emphasis on the NIS and to maximize the environmental benefits of the EU enlargement process. We are convinced that increasing public participation in environmental decision-making is important to strengthen democracy in Europe, an aim which we are committed to pursuing.

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Annex II

65. We express our deep gratitude to the Government of Denmark for having hosted this Conference and we wish to thank it and its people for the warm hospitality we have received.

DECLARATION
On the Phase-out of Added Lead in Petrol

The Ministers/Heads of Delegations of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, who will sign the Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Heavy Metals, *

Concerned that the emissions of lead from the use of leaded petrol are causing severe damage to the environment and to human health,

Aware that techniques are available to reduce air pollution by almost eliminating lead emissions from on-road vehicles,

Aware also that many countries have already phased out the use of added lead in petrol or are well under way in the process of doing so and have prepared plans for completely phasing out leaded petrol,

Considering that, beyond the measures provided for in the Protocol, timely and more effective reductions of lead emissions from petrol are feasible,

Declare as follows:

1. The Signatories to this Declaration have already phased out or will phase out the use of added lead in petrol for general use by road vehicles as early as possible and not later than 1 January 2005;
2. The Signatories call upon the other Parties to the Convention that will sign the Protocol to join them in making every effort to control and reduce substantially their national lead emissions by phasing out the use of added lead in petrol for general use by road vehicles as soon as possible.

In witness whereof the undersigned have signed this Declaration.

* Adopted by the Executive Body for the Convention at its special session at the Aarhus Conference on 24 June 1998.

**Ministerial Declaration on
Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution**

We, the Ministers and Senior Officials for the Environment from UN/ECE countries and the European Community, attending the Aarhus meeting as Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution,

- * **NOTE** with serious concern that air pollutants, including hazardous chemical substances, continue to be transported in substantial amounts across national boundaries and over long distances, causing harm to human health and damage to ecosystems and natural resources of major environmental and economic importance;
- * **ARE RESOLVED** to continue and intensify our efforts to protect human health and the environment notwithstanding the pressure from other competing priorities. In so doing we take into account the positive effects that environmental policy may have on long-term economic activity and employment;
- * **RECOGNIZE** twenty years of successful cooperation between the Parties to the Convention, which sets an example for global action in environmental protection;
- * **CONSIDER** that the Convention is a key instrument for protecting our common environment by creating a scientifically based framework for gradually reducing the damage caused by air pollution to human health, the environment and the economy in the UN/ECE region;
- * **UNDERLINE** that the controls contained in the 1998 Protocols on Heavy Metals and Persistent Organic Pollutants constitute a significant step towards reducing emissions of substances that may cause adverse effects on human health or the environment;
- * **STRESS** the importance of all the requirements in the two Protocols and welcome the recent establishment of an Implementation Committee under the Executive Body for the Convention to assist in the review of compliance with the requirements of all Protocols to the Convention;
- * **ARE DETERMINED** to continue our efforts to further reduce the emissions of heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants by strengthening the measures on substances already included in the two Protocols as well as by adding new substances to the Protocols pursuant to Executive Body decisions 1998/1 and 1998/2;
- * **URGE** the Signatories to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to strengthen their efforts, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to review the availability and feasibility of alternatives to DDT, and to promote the commercialization of safer alternatives;
- * **ENCOURAGE** countries to strengthen their efforts to identify and solve the environmental problems caused by the use of polychlorinated biphenyls

(PCBs), and work together to assist countries with economies in transition in dealing with these problems;

* **ARE ALSO DETERMINED** to cooperate closely under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme to develop, preferably by the end of the year 2000, a global legally binding instrument on the elimination or control of certain persistent organic pollutants, including appropriate support to meet the special needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, taking into account measures to control the transfrontier movement of such substances;

* **CALL UPON** all Parties to the Convention, as well as international financial institutions, to support the implementation process of the new Protocols through bilateral and multilateral assistance to Parties with economies in transition, mindful that their implementation will require substantial efforts;

* **ENCOURAGE** Parties to the Convention to sign and ratify the new Protocols without undue delay and to do their utmost to implement them, if possible, even before their entry into force;

* **NOTE** the progress made in developing a multi-pollutant/multi-effects approach including the technical basis for a draft protocol on nitrogen oxides and related substances, including ammonia and volatile organic compounds, covering all relevant sectors, based on scientific information and cost-effective solutions, and support the acceleration of the negotiation of an ambitious and realistic protocol, with a view to finalizing it by mid-1999;

* **WELCOME** the proposal to designate the North Sea Area as an SO_x Emission Control Area under the MARPOL 73/78 Convention;

* **SUPPORT** the future priorities of work under the Convention, as outlined by the Executive Body, with a focus on implementation and compliance as well as review and extension of existing Protocols;

* **ARE KEENLY AWARE** of the need to sustain the networks and capacities of the scientists and experts who have provided the scientific foundation for these Protocols and for the obligations they lay down on national strategies, policies, programmes, measures and information, research, development and monitoring, and review by the Parties;

* **DECIDE TO APPLY** the same high scientific requirements to the revision of existing Protocols and the development of any new ones;

* **RECOGNIZE** that effective implementation of Protocols and further development of cost-optimal abatement measures require our full commitment and equitable cost-sharing between all stakeholders, for research into and monitoring of the effects of air pollutants on ecosystems and human health, for refining the science on which EMEP is based and for developing further integrated assessment modelling for those pollutants for which it is appropriate.

Annex III

**SIGNATORIES TO THE PROTOCOLS TO THE CONVENTION ON LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR
POLLUTION ON HEAVY METALS AND ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS¹**

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Canada
5. Croatia
6. Cyprus
7. Czech Republic
8. Denmark
9. Finland
10. France
11. Germany
12. Greece
13. Iceland
14. Ireland
15. Italy
16. Latvia
17. Liechtenstein
18. Lithuania
19. Luxembourg
20. Netherlands
21. Norway
22. Poland
23. Portugal
24. Republic of Moldova
25. Romania
26. Slovakia
27. Slovenia
28. Spain
29. Sweden
30. Switzerland
31. Ukraine
32. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
33. United States of America

34. European Community

¹ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia submitted a Declaration at the signing ceremony.

Annex IV

DECLARATION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

The Ministers/Heads of Delegation/Representatives of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the European Community, who have signed the Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution on Persistent Organic Pollutants,^{1/} declare that they:

1. Share the objective of controlling and limiting the risks arising from the dispersive uses of short-chain chlorinated paraffins using appropriate national and/or international procedures; ^{2/}
2. Maintain their belief in the need for pentachlorophenol use to be tightly controlled to minimize emissions to the environment and urge other Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution to adopt controls similar in effect to those in place in the European Community if they have not already done so;
3. Will take effective measures to eliminate the export of the substances listed in annex I to the Protocol, except when such transboundary movement is for the express purpose of destroying such substances in an environmentally sound manner.

^{1/} Adopted by the Executive Body for the Convention at its special session at the Århus Conference on 24 June 1998.

^{2/} For example, the framework of the EU Regulation on Existing Substances (793/93).

Annex V

POLICY STATEMENT ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Having regard to:

- The "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Declaration, Sofia, October 1995,
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, June 1992,
- The Programme for further implementation of Agenda 21, United Nations General Assembly Special Session, June 1997,
- The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE),
- The Energy Charter Treaty and the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects, to come into force in 1998,
- The Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, December 1997,
- The background papers, case studies and country profiles of the Energy Conservation Initiative prepared during 1997 and 1998 for this Conference,
- National, bilateral and multilateral cooperative efforts to increase energy efficiency,
- The Global Environment Facility (GEF), which provides financial and technical support for the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other global conventions,

Considering that:

- Continued improvements in the entire energy cycle from production to distribution and consumption have many environmental benefits because they help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to relieve local and regional air pollution, acidification and water pollution, land degradation, health problems and other environmental impacts,
- There are important principles and approaches that can be widely applied although there is no single formula for energy efficiency policy which is appropriate for all countries,
- Energy efficiency is a driving force in economic development and environmental protection, thus contributing to both competitiveness and sustainable development,
- A high potential remains for cost-effective energy efficiency improvements by the introduction of energy-efficient technologies, good energy management techniques and energy-efficient behaviour,
- A substantial part of this potential may be achieved at no cost or even with immediate economic benefits,
- Energy efficiency may interact beneficially with small-scale energy supply and renewable energy,

- End-use energy prices should reflect as much as possible a competitive market, ensuring market-oriented price formation, including full reflection of environmental costs and benefits, and appreciating that such price formation is essential to progress in energy efficiency,
- Many market and institutional barriers delay the realization of the full potential for energy efficiency improvements,
- A systematic and comprehensive approach to energy efficiency policies and programmes should complement and reinforce the market approach and not replace it,
- This approach has to be pursued in partnership with Governments, the private sector and others integrating various responsibilities ranging from energy, economy, industrial development to transport and the environment,
- Many opportunities are open for cooperation amongst members of the Energy Charter Conference, and of UN/ECE and the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN/FCCC) to share experiences, know-how and financial support,
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank could contribute to the implementation of energy efficiency programmes and projects through the GEF financial mechanism,

We, the Ministers at the Århus Conference,

1. ***Recognise*** that energy efficiency policies are one of the most important elements in achieving our national and international goals in economy, environment, energy supply security, and technology, which all influence the quality of life;

2. ***Welcome*** the *Guidelines on Energy Conservation in Europe*,¹ appreciating that its findings are important and should be considered, as appropriate, in the further elaboration and implementation of our national, regional and local energy efficiency policies and for setting ambitious targets for energy efficiency;

3. ***Agree to promote action to:***

(a) Review, revise and invigorate as necessary our Governments' national approaches to energy efficiency promotion, and better integrate energy efficiency into our national energy, environmental, economic and social development strategies;

(b) Promote the implementation of energy efficiency policies, and, in that context, develop general public awareness, ensure a suitable market mechanism and a framework which enables decentralized approaches, and introduce or develop highly performing yet cost-effective and environmentally sound technologies and integrated systems;

¹ Contained in ECE/CEP/47/Add.1.

(c) Promote energy markets and pricing reforms to ensure less distorted prices and incentives which encourage better energy use and increasingly reflect the environmental costs of energy production and use, specifically by:

- (i) Modifying and phasing out those energy price subsidies which have an adverse impact on the environment before the year 2005 and encouraging international cooperation to establish review mechanisms to ensure this;
- (ii) Internalizing to the extent necessary and practicable environmental externalities in the energy prices before the year 2005;

(d) Promote energy-efficient and cleaner technologies by transforming our domestic and international markets, specifically by:

- (i) Developing, implementing and monitoring at an appropriate level in cooperation with the relevant parties, mandatory or voluntary minimum energy efficiency standards (such as voluntary commitments) on an ambitious and dynamic level for buildings and for relevant household appliances and standardized equipment, wherever practicable before the year 2005;
- (ii) Developing a strategy for promoting combined heat and power and, to the extent efficient and feasible, district heating and cooling, and combined with renewable energy, and encouraging international consideration of the options for establishing a focal point to assist in this;

(e) Promote investments in energy efficiency by encouraging international financial institutions, donors and other relevant parties, including the private sector, to increase energy efficiency investments significantly to become a considerable part of their economic activities within existing programmes; by supporting international cooperation in the continuous development of a 'clearing house' for new small-scale energy efficiency projects in order to make them bankable; and by encouraging the development of an energy efficiency service industry;

(f) Promote the international exchange of experiences on the best use of the opportunities for developing new markets in energy efficiency and energy services to create more jobs on a sustainable basis;

(g) Support the development of improved data and indicators to monitor and evaluate the progress being made in energy use by the end-use sectors, including the environmental aspects of this;

(h) Strengthen international cooperation in monitoring the implementation of energy efficiency policies. Progress should be reported to the next 'Environment for Europe' Conference;

(i) Urge those Governments that have ratified the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects to implement its provisions fully;

(j) Urge Governments to work vigorously and cooperatively to achieve the objectives of the Kyoto Protocol and the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects, e.g. by speeding up, as appropriate, the processes to sign and ratify them.

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Annex VI

**RESOLUTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN
DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

We, the Signatories to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters,

Resolve to strive for the entry into force of the Convention as soon as possible and to seek to apply the Convention to the maximum extent possible pending its entry into force, and to continue to cooperate in gradually developing policies and strategies related to matters within the scope of this Convention;

Recommend that the ECE Guidelines on Access to Environmental Information and Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making endorsed at the Third Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 25 October 1995, should be taken into account in the application of the Convention pending its entry into force;

Emphasize that, besides Governments, parliaments, regional and local authorities and non-governmental organizations also have a key role to play at the national, regional and local level in the implementation of the Convention;

Acknowledge that the Convention is an important element in the regional implementation of Agenda 21 and that its ratification will further the convergence of environmental legislation and strengthen the process of democratization in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE);

Emphasize the importance of capacity building to maximize the effectiveness of officials, authorities and non-governmental organizations in implementing the provisions of this Convention;

Call upon each Government to promote environmental education and environmental awareness among the public, particularly in relation to the opportunities that this Convention provides;

Call upon public, private and international fund providers to give high priority to projects that aim to further the objectives of this Convention;

Call for close cooperation between ECE, other bodies involved in the "Environment for Europe" process and other relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations on the issues of this Convention, for example in the implementation of national environmental action plans and national environmental health action plans;

Recognize that the successful application of the Convention is linked to adequate administrative and additional financial resources being made available to support and maintain the initiatives necessary to achieve this goal and call upon Governments to make voluntary financial contributions to this process so that sufficient financial means are available to carry out the programme of activities of the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy related to the Convention;

Request the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy actively to promote and keep under review the process of ratification of the Convention pending its entry into force by, inter alia:

(a) Establishing the Meeting of the Signatories to the Convention, open to all members of ECE and to observers, to identify activities that need to be undertaken pending the entry into force of the Convention, to report to the Committee on progress made in respect of the ratification of the Convention; and to prepare for the first meeting of the Parties;

(b) Giving full recognition to the activities identified by the Meeting of the Signatories within the Committee's work programme and when the Committee considers the allocation of ECE resources provided for the environment;

(c) Encouraging Governments to make voluntary contributions to ensure that sufficient resources are available to support these activities;

Consider that, pending the entry into force of the Convention, the necessary authority should be given to ECE and its Executive Secretary to provide for a sufficient secretariat and, in the framework of the existing budgetary structure, for appropriate financial means;

Urge the Parties at their first meeting or as soon as possible thereafter to establish effective compliance arrangements in accordance with article 15 of the Convention, and call upon the Parties to comply with such arrangements;

Commend the international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in particular environmental organizations, for their active and constructive participation in the development of the Convention and recommend that they should be allowed to participate in the same spirit in the Meeting of the Signatories and its activities to the extent possible, based on a provisional application of the provisions of article 10, paragraphs 2 (c), 4 and 5, of the Convention;

Recommend that non-governmental organizations should be allowed to participate effectively in the preparation of instruments on environmental protection by other intergovernmental organizations;

Recognize the importance of the application of the provisions of the Convention to deliberate releases of genetically modified organisms into the environment, and request the Parties, at their first meeting, to further develop the application of the Convention by means of inter alia more precise provisions, taking into account the work done under the Convention on Biological Diversity which is developing a protocol on biosafety;

Invite the other member States of ECE and any other State that is a Member of the United Nations and/or of other regional commissions to accede to this Convention;

Encourage other international organizations, including other United Nations regional commissions and bodies, to develop appropriate arrangements relating to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, drawing, as appropriate, on the Convention and to take such other action as may be appropriate to further its objectives.

Annex VII

**SIGNATORIES TO THE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION,
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN
ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS¹**

1. Albania
2. Armenia
3. Austria
4. Belgium
5. Bulgaria
6. Croatia
7. Cyprus
8. Czech Republic
9. Denmark
10. Estonia
11. Finland
12. France
13. Georgia
14. Greece
15. Iceland
16. Ireland
17. Italy
18. Kazakhstan
19. Latvia
20. Liechtenstein
21. Lithuania
22. Luxembourg
23. Monaco
24. Netherlands
25. Norway
26. Poland
27. Portugal
28. Republic of Moldova
29. Romania
30. Slovenia
31. Spain
32. Sweden
33. Switzerland
34. Ukraine
35. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

36. European Community

¹ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia submitted a Declaration at the signing ceremony.

Annex VIII

**STATEMENTS DELIVERED AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE
CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Statement by Denmark:

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

DECLARATION BY DENMARK ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SIGNING OF THE AARHUS CONVENTION

Both the Faroe Islands and Greenland are self-governing under Home Rule Acts, which implies inter alia that environmental affairs in general and the areas covered by the Convention are governed by the right of self-determination. In both the Faroe and the Greenland Home Rule Governments there is great political interest in promoting the fundamental ideas and principles embodied in the Convention to the extent possible. However, as the Convention is prepared with a view to European countries with relatively large populations and corresponding administrative and social structures, it is not a matter of course that the Convention is in all respects suitable for the scarcely populated and far less diverse societies of the Faroe Islands and of Greenland. Thus, full implementation of the Convention in these areas may imply needless and inadequate bureaucratization. The authorities of the Faroe Islands and of Greenland will analyse this question thoroughly.

Signing by Denmark of the Convention, therefore, not necessarily means that Danish ratification will in due course include the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

25 June 1998

Minister for Environment and Energy

Statement by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

STATEMENT
BY H.E. TOME TROMBEV, MINISTER OF
URBAN PLANNING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENVIRONMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia fully support and adopt the context of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

However, considering the fact that the constitutional name of my Country, REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, is not mentioned in the list of the countries which are signing the Aarhus Convention, as a head of Delegation at the Fourth Ministerial Conference, Environment for Europe, I am not in a position to sign the above mentioned Convention.

THEREFORE, THIS STATEMENT IS TO BE CONSIDERED AS AN ACT OF SIGNING.

Aarhus, Denmark
25 June 1998

Tome Trombev, Minister

Statement by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

DECLARATION BY THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND ON
SIGNATURE OF THE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION,
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN
ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

The United Kingdom understands the references in Article 1 and the seventh preambular paragraph of this Convention to the "right" of every person "to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being" to express an aspiration which motivated the negotiation of this Convention and which is shared fully by the United Kingdom. The legal rights which each Party undertakes to guarantee under Article 1 are limited to the rights of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters in accordance with the provisions of this Convention.

Aarhus
25 June 1998

Statement by the European Community:

COMMUNITY STATEMENT REGARDING THE CONVENTION
ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

The European Community wishes to express its great satisfaction with the present Convention as an essential step forward in further encouraging and supporting public awareness in the field of environment and better implementation of environmental legislation in the UN/ECE region, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development.

Fully supporting the objectives pursued by the Convention and considering that the European Community itself is being actively involved in the protection of the environment through a comprehensive and evolving set of legislation, it was felt important not only to sign up to the Convention at Community level but also to cover its own institutions, alongside national public authorities.

Within the institutional and legal context of the Community and given also the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam with respect to future legislation on transparency, the Community also declares that the Community institutions will apply the Convention within the framework of their existing and future rules on access to documents and other relevant rules of Community law in the field covered by the Convention.

The Community will consider whether any further declarations will be necessary when ratifying the Convention for the purpose of its application to Community institutions.

Annex IX

RESOLUTION ON BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY

Recognising that the biological and landscape diversity of Europe is part of the priceless world-wide natural heritage which human beings have handed down for thousands of years;

Noting that the conservation of this natural and cultural heritage makes possible a quality of life which meets human aspirations and ensures sustainable social and economic development;

Taking into account the conclusions of the "Dobris +3 Report" regarding continuous degradation of the European environment, especially with respect to the state of biodiversity;

Considering that Europe's nature and culture are intrinsically linked by the all encompassing landscapes - making the preservation of landscape diversity and quality one of the essential policy goals of the coming decade;

Recognising that numerous species and ecosystems are disappearing or threatened and that this endangers not only the quality of life but also life itself;

Considering that the conservation of biological and landscape diversity constitutes a fundamental human right and duty, as well as an important element for debate in democracy;

Taking into account, and wishing to reinforce initiatives carried out in Europe in the field of conservation of biological and landscape diversity;

Desiring to bequeath to future generations a diverse and sustainable system which this heritage represents;

We, the Ministers,

1. Recall the importance of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy's long-term vision, which is to conserve biological and landscape diversity by achieving the following aims: substantially reducing current threats to Europe's biological and landscape diversity; increasing the resilience of Europe's biological and landscape diversity; strengthening the ecological coherence of Europe as a whole; and ensuring full public involvement in the conservation of the various aspects of biological and landscape diversity;

2. Welcome the progress in the implementation of the Pan-European Strategy and take note of the Progress Report presented by the Governing Body set up for its implementation;

3. Call on those countries which have not yet done so to draw up national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation of biological and landscape diversity, and to define and undertake immediate and long-term priority actions, establish support mechanisms, and report progress;

4. Recommend increased participation of governments in the region in implementing the Strategy and urge that ways and means be secured for the continued participation of others (international organisations, financial institutions, scientific institutions and non-governmental organisations); recommend that the Council of Europe and UNEP continue to provide the Secretariat for the Pan-European Strategy;

5. Acknowledge the progress made in establishing the Pan-European Ecological Network, as a means of promoting nature conservation both inside and outside protected areas, and emphasise the role that international conventions and programmes (in particular the Bern Convention's Emerald Network and the Natura 2000 Network of the European Community), and the sharing of national experience play in establishing the network; reaffirm our commitment to establish the Pan-European Ecological Network and take note of the map and the information contained in the report on nature conservation sites designated in application of international instruments at Pan-European level and welcome the progress in the elaboration of the Guidelines for the development of the Pan-European Ecological Network as an appropriate framework for establishing the network;

6. Reaffirm our commitment to integrating biological and landscape diversity objectives into sectoral policies;

For this purpose:

- a) undertake to propose at national level -including the regional level- appropriate political, legal and other means of integration through cross-sectoral cooperation i.a. by adopting national or regional action plans or strategies; the agricultural sector deserves special attention since the changes in agricultural policy which are likely to take place in the coming years in Europe identify it as a priority within the integration theme under the Pan-European Strategy;
- b) call for stronger co-operation at international level with other Ministerial Conferences and international fora; in this context express our commitment to contribute to the follow-up of the Lisbon Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, in particular to the joint Work Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems;

7. Take note of the progress made to develop, as a source of inspiration for national legislation and practice, the Pan-European Code of Conduct for Coastal Zones and the Model Law on Sustainable Management of Coastal Zones;

8. Conscious of the need for adequate financial, managerial and other resources for the implementation and integration of biological and landscape diversity programmes and interests in other sectoral policies, recommend governments to adjust policies to develop economic and financial incentives to support intersectoral implementation of the conservation of biological and landscape diversity, urge the donor community at bilateral and multilateral level, as well as the private sector, to increase their contribution, and request the Governing body of the Pan-European Strategy to promote the exploration of innovative financing mechanisms for this purpose and invite the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) to promote investment projects on biological and landscape diversity in Central and Eastern Europe, in particular those of inter-sectoral character;

9. Recommend the increase of the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity components within European Union PHARE Programmes and that the scope of European Union TACIS Eastern European regulation be broadened to take duly into account biological and landscape diversity objectives;

10. Request the governing body of the Pan-European Strategy to monitor the implementation of this Resolution, building where possible on existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms.
