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Tenth meeting

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Report of the Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development on its tenth meeting

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I. Introduction

1. The tenth meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development was held on 8 and 9 June 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland.

2. The meeting focused on: (a) the progress achieved and challenges encountered in the third phase of implementation; (b) the outcomes of capacity-building activities; (c) recent activities to promote education for sustainable development (ESD) in other international forums; (d) the draft future implementation framework for the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development; (e) preparations for the ECE High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in 2016; (f) the draft ministerial statement for adoption at the High-level Meeting; (g) preparation of the publication, “Ten years of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development”; and (h) the status of reporting on gender-related issues. The Committee also addressed the resource requirements necessary to support an efficient management and implementation process for the UNECE Strategy for ESD.

A. Attendance

3. Delegations from the following 25 ECE member States attended the meeting: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

4. From the United Nations system, representatives of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) participated.

5. A representative of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe also attended the meeting.

6. In addition, representatives of the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and educational institutions participated: COPERNICUS Alliance; European ECO Forum; Learning for a Sustainable Future; Planet’ERE; and the University of Gibraltar.

B. Organizational matters

7. The Chair of the Committee, Mr. G. Farthing (Canada), opened the meeting.

8. The Committee adopted its agenda (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2015/1),¹ which was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Chair and the Bureau.

¹ All meeting documentation for the tenth meeting is available on a dedicated web page: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=38322#/>.

II. Implementation of the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

A. Progress achieved and challenges encountered in the third phase of implementation: findings of the 2014 reporting cycle

9. The Chair recalled that in 2014 the second formal call for mandatory reporting on the status of implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD had been launched. All countries had been required to submit national implementation reports (NIRs) addressing the progress made in the implementation of the Strategy at the national level during implementation phase III (2011–2015). The assessment for phase III was of particular importance, since it marked the end of the 10-year implementation process for the Strategy. The third progress report — the final monitoring and evaluation report — would provide an opportunity to review and compare progress made since the 2007 and 2010 evaluation reports were published, providing insights into the implementation of ESD in the ECE region. Moreover, the assessment of progress made and challenges encountered in implementation phase III was vital for setting future priorities in the implementation of ESD.

10. While the original deadline for the submission of NIRs had been 1 November 2014, that deadline had had to be extended to the beginning of January 2015 following requests from a number of member States for more time. Due to that postponement, the third progress report could not be finalized and translated into French and English in time for the tenth meeting, but would be made available for the special eleventh session of the Steering Committee, which would take place in February 2016.

11. The Chair recalled that development of the third progress report, which was still being completed, had been made possible thanks to the support offered by the provincial government of Manitoba, Canada, which had supplied a staff person from the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning Department to take on the task of writing the evaluation report together with the ECE secretariat and a consultant.

12. Ms. Carolee Buckler, co-author of the final monitoring and evaluation report, presented the preliminary findings of the report. The report reviewed the data collected through NIRs submitted by member States at the end of the third phase of implementation, information gathered through the previous informal country reporting cycles and supplemental information provided to the secretariat, and compared progress in implementation with the first and second ESD Strategy evaluation reports for 2007 and 2010. In phase III, 2 additional member States had submitted an NIR — 38 States in total — as compared with 36 member States for both phases I and II.

13. Ms. Buckler drew attention to the following key findings of the report:

(a) **Securing and sustaining leadership and political will had been a critical factor in the success of the UNECE Strategy for ESD.** Almost all ECE member States had participated to a lesser or greater extent in advancing ESD during the three implementation phases of the Strategy, with the endorsement and support of political and administrative leadership. Over 91 per cent of the 56 ECE member States had reported formally or informally to ECE and/or UNESCO on their work to advance the role of education in achieving sustainability. Furthermore, two thirds of ECE member States had provided indications of their interest and intention to continue to work towards full implementation of ESD. Leadership and political will had contributed to member States' ability to sustain their commitment to ESD, although concerns were expressed by some that

changes in government had and might continue to adversely affect the level of ongoing participation;

(b) **During the third phase of implementation of the Strategy, several important advancements had been made on policy integration, curricula, tools and resources, and networking.** ESD was now reflected in national education policy documents by over 90 per cent of reporting member States and 89 per cent of reporting States considered that education was now part of their countries' sustainable development policies and planning. Member States (84 per cent) also suggested that ESD had been included in national curriculum frameworks, with the majority of efforts focused on primary, lower and upper secondary levels. While the environmental dimension continued to receive most of the attention, it was encouraging to see the levels of effort to address social and economic themes as well. Government, academic and civil society stakeholders in all reporting member States were involved in the development and production of ESD materials. However, while the supply might be growing, the demand was unknown: mechanisms that promoted and provided access to the materials varied widely from country to country; to what extent these materials were being used was difficult to assess, and mechanisms for evaluating the quality were limited. Member States (95 per cent) reported that ESD implementation was a multi-stakeholder process, and supported a wide range of working groups, councils, networks and partnerships. Regional cooperation was strong, and the role of different stakeholders, especially civil society actors, was recognized and appreciated;

(c) **Full integration of sustainable development knowledge, abilities and values, while well in progress, had yet to be realized across all levels of education, formal, non-formal and informal.** There had been substantive good practices, generated among a wide range of stakeholders in formal non-formal and informal education in the region. Many of the indicators of success for the Strategy, as set out by the Expert Group on Indicators, had been met, but reporting member States nevertheless cautiously considered that they were still "in progress" or "developing" towards a comprehensive implementation of ESD across all levels of education. The majority of advances reported by member States had been in explicitly addressing ESD themes in the curricula (97 per cent), competences and learning outcomes (92 per cent) and pedagogical approaches (95 per cent) at the earliest levels of early childhood learning, as well as at the primary and secondary levels of formal education. Less was known about ESD in higher education, although member States reported that higher education institutions in the region had been increasingly engaged in ESD through high-level affirmations by university leaders and through networks of committed institutions;

(d) **The three priorities for phase III — school plans, teacher competences and ESD in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) — were proving to be critical leverage points in whole-system change.** Nearly three quarters (71 per cent) of member States were promoting whole-institution approaches. Most continued to focus on enhancing sustainable development in the curriculum and the classroom through projects, and/or promoted voluntary schemes for individual schools to seek ESD recognition and certification. With respect to teacher education, close to 90 per cent of member States reported that ESD was now a part of educators' initial and in-service training, although the qualitative comments suggested that many were cautious about how widespread and transformative the support might be for ESD, given the autonomous nature of teacher education institutions in many countries. It was also not clear whether significant numbers of teachers had been trained to date. From 2012 to 2015, some member States had moved beyond discussions of what constituted a green economy and green jobs to concerted efforts to retool TVET to support sustainability, in consultation and partnership with industry sectors and TVET institutions. However, while in some States new competences and skills were being defined, new courses developed and TVET

programming revised, less than half of ECE member States indicated that there had been significant progress made;

(e) **Continued progress on ESD implementation would require overcoming persistent challenges and obstacles, and seizing new opportunities to advance the ESD agenda.** A number of challenges and obstacles had persisted throughout the Strategy period, including the need for sustained leadership and political will among key decision makers, securing structural reform of education systems, including embedding ESD in mainstream budgets, preparing educators, strengthening mechanisms for cooperation and engagement across a broader cross-section of stakeholders, and addressing the need for more ESD research, monitoring and evaluation. Those various obstacles suggested that an overarching challenge continued to be securing recognition that ESD lay at the heart of the purpose of education: to prepare the learner with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand, respond to and prosper in the face of the economic, social and environmental challenges of today's world.

14. Ms. Buckler furthermore outlined the following core recommendations for advancing the future implementation of the Strategy:

(a) **Strengthen existing mechanisms for implementation.** At the national level, each member State should be encouraged to review their implementation of ESD and identify the critical success factors, including the mechanisms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement, both across government departments and among external groups such as NGOs, academic institutions and the private sector;

(b) **Strengthen the integration of ESD into both education and sustainable development policies.** Decision makers should continue to operationalize education policies and plans to meet their national sustainable development and green economy goals. More work would also be needed by member States to support the targets on education in the proposed global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to advance education provisions in related sustainable development conventions and programmes, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable production and consumption (10YFP) spearheaded by UNEP;

(c) **Put in place strategies and plans to promote sustainable development in non-formal and informal learning.** The limited attention given to non-formal and informal learning had been reflected in member States' reports (50 per cent of States had either not introduced ESD in non-formal or informal learning or were just in the initial stages of doing so), particularly in cases where those activities were seen to be outside of the government's immediate sphere of influence and to be the responsibility of other actors, such as NGOs and the private sector. Creating awareness of sustainable development across other learning communities and the general public should be considered jointly with formal education in a new phase of work;

(d) **Address the need for ESD research, monitoring and evaluation.** The limited availability of ESD research and the need for robust approaches to monitoring and evaluation of ESD initiatives had been identified as significant barriers to ESD implementation. Over half of member States had either not started or were just in the early stages of addressing the need for research; and nearly one fifth had no strategy for dissemination of research. Theories of learning, new methodologies for teaching and evidence of progress needed to be systematically collected, rigorously reviewed and disseminated through open access mechanisms. ESD research needed to be seen as a legitimate and important field of inquiry. Promoting the need for, and value of, ESD research, monitoring and evaluation should be a priority in a new phase of work, in order to secure support from granting agencies responsible for funding research in the education and sustainable development fields. In addition, consideration should be given to mapping how

research and evaluation could be used to inform and enhance policy and practice in the ESD domain, with guidance provided to member States.

15. The secretariat informed the Committee that the progress report was in the last stage of drafting and that once completed it would be circulated to a few selected members for peer review. After the peer review, the report would be finalized and circulated to the Steering Committee for information and further submission as an official document for the consideration of the Steering Committee at its eleventh meeting (February 2016).

16. The Chair opened the floor for interventions on outstanding activities and initiatives implemented since the ninth Steering Committee meeting in 2014. In the following discussion, a number of countries presented relevant activities or provided information that had not been included in their country reports. The Steering Committee asked the secretariat to upload on the website all interventions provided to the secretariat and to take note of the good practices reported, which should feed into the publication “Ten years of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development: Good practices and lessons learned”.

B. Outcomes of capacity-building activities

17. The secretariat reported that a national workshop held in Kyrgyzstan from 30 March to 1 April 2015 to promote the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD at the national level. The workshop had been organized in partnership with the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry and the United Nations University Regional Centres of Expertise for ESD in Kyrgyzstan and Lithuania, with financial support from the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation. A delegate from Kyrgyzstan presented the outcomes of the workshop, which had focused on implementing one of the three priority action areas under the Strategy, namely, reorienting the TVET system in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy. The Chair highlighted that such workshops at the national or subregional level made an important contribution to promoting coordination between relevant stakeholders, including different governmental departments, in fostering the implementation of the Strategy for ESD, and thanked the representative of the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation for its crucial support in the implementation of the Strategy.

18. A representative of Switzerland who had attended the national workshop in Kyrgyzstan observed that he had been impressed by the dedication of the participants. They had demonstrated their commitment to promoting ESD in their country, to contributing to greening the economy, to learning from each other and to developing new approaches to foster sustainable development, including by using local traditions and particularities. They had not considered ESD as a burden or obligation, but as a tool or a lever for new economic activities. For its part, one of the main assets that ECE had brought to the table was access to a network of experts from the United Nations, including the United Nations University Regional Centres of Expertise and other relevant agencies, who had helped to provide quality expertise to the local stakeholders. Given the successful experience with the workshop in Kyrgyzstan, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation had decided to support another similar workshop planned for 2016 in Belarus.

III. Recent activities to promote education for sustainable development in other international forums

19. The Steering Committee heard interventions from a number of speakers on recent activities to promote ESD in other international forums.

20. A representative of the UNESCO Section for ESD presented the outcomes of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 10–12 November 2014). The main outcome, the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on ESD, called for urgent action to mainstream ESD and include ESD in the post-2015 development agenda. Other outputs included the launch of the final report on the United Nations Decade of ESD and several important initiatives, including the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (GAP), with its Roadmap for implementation,² and the 10YFP on Sustainable Lifestyles and Education. Three-hundred and sixty-five launch commitments to the GAP had been received from stakeholders in 80 countries so far.

21. The UNESCO representative noted that the GAP, which had been adopted as a follow-up to the United Nations Decade of ESD (2005–2014), was also a concrete contribution to the post-2015 agenda. The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 69/211, had invited UNESCO, as the lead agency for ESD, to continue to coordinate its implementation. The Goal of the GAP was to generate and scale-up ESD action to accelerate progress towards sustainable development. It focused on five priority areas: advancing policy; transforming learning and training environments; building the capacity of educators and trainers; empowering and mobilizing youth; and accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level. For each of the priority areas a partner network had been built, and the first consultation meeting of the GAP Partner Networks (Paris, 26–27 May 2015) had been organized at UNESCO Headquarters to start identifying activities they could undertake together to further scale-up ESD in those priority areas. The discussions had been constructive and had led to concrete agreements that would be integrated into a workplan template for each Partner Network to be completed with activities, benchmarks and timelines, and distributed to all Partners. Countries had been encouraged to set national targets for ESD as appropriate, based on national requirements and aspirations, updating existing ESD plans and policies, and keeping in line with the SDGs. UNESCO would coordinate, implement, monitor and report on GAP implementation, in cooperation with all partners, including ECE.

22. A delegate from Cyprus briefed the Committee about the participation in the ECE side event at the UNESCO World Conference, “Driving ESD through regional policy frameworks”, organized together with Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development. The side event had explored the role of regional and subregional strategies for ESD as a tool to help stakeholders to advance ESD. A number of concrete suggestions had been put forward by participants for the implementation of the GAP, including through partnerships in the implementation the UNECE Strategy for ESD.

23. A representative of the University of Gibraltar summarized the outcomes of the workshop on monitoring and evaluation during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, held at the World Conference in Japan. The workshop had centred around sharing understanding and experiences of the monitoring and evaluation undertaken during the United Nations Decade in various regions, so as to draw lessons for the effective implementation of the GAP. The key points highlighted during the discussions pointed to the need to go beyond consulting stakeholders, by facilitating and encouraging them to monitor and evaluate their own work; to rethink the way monitoring and evaluation were conducted, and decrease the focus on expert reviews; and for monitoring and evaluation to be carried out by those working in the relevant sectors, with the results shared both vertically and horizontally to support implementation and changes. The final recommendation was that monitoring and evaluation should serve as a key component for

² UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (Paris, 2014). Available from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco-world-conference-on-esd-2014/esd-after-2014/global-action-programme/>.

making ESD implementation an evolving learning process — so that it served as the pivot in the implementation process — moving away from linear implementation towards progressive cycles of action and reflection.

24. The Chair shared the achievements of Manitoba Province in Canada in implementing the first priority area of the UNECE Strategy for ESD — establishing ESD school plans in every school — which had been reported at the Nagoya Conference.

25. In the ensuing discussion, speakers focused on different aspects of the present methods of monitoring and evaluation, including with regard to quality versus quantity reporting, standardized reporting versus non-standardized reporting, and statistics versus good practice examples, as well as possibilities for moving away from the traditional methods of monitoring and evaluation.

26. The Chair thanked the representatives of UNESCO and Gibraltar University for their insightful presentations, and stressed that the collaboration of the Steering Committee with UNESCO and other partners in monitoring and evaluation was important in the framework of advancing the implementation of the ESD agenda.

IV. Draft future implementation framework for the Strategy

27. The Chair recalled that, at its ninth meeting (Geneva, 3–4 April 2014), the Steering Committee had requested the secretariat in cooperation with the Bureau to revise the draft future implementation framework for the Strategy for ESD in the light of the outcomes of the discussions held and the comments received during the ninth meeting, also taking into account the outcomes of the national implementation reporting carried out in 2014 and the World Conference on ESD (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2014/2, paras. 38–39).

28. The Chair reported that the revised draft future implementation framework (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2015/4) before the Steering Committee for consideration was still not complete, as it had to include the outcomes of the national implementation reporting on the third implementation phase. Those outcomes would only be available upon the finalization of the third progress report.

29. In the following discussion, delegates reflected on the content of the text of the draft future implementation framework and made proposals to introduce a number of changes.

30. The Steering Committee asked the secretariat to review the proposed changes and to include them in a revised version, as appropriate. After reviewing all the proposed changes, the secretariat stated that a revised version of the draft future implementation framework would be circulated before the end of June to Committee members via e-mail for final approval. The first draft would then be presented to the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) in October 2015 in the form of an information paper, if possible also in an informal Russian translation. After the formal approval by CEP, the first draft of the future framework would have to be finalized before the official deadline for the submission of official documentation for the eleventh meeting of the Steering Committee in February 2016.

V. Preparations for the High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in 2016

A. High-level Meeting

31. The Chair recalled that, at its twentieth session (Geneva, 28–31 October 2014), CEP had welcomed progress in the work under the Strategy for ESD. It had further supported the request by the Steering Committee to organize a High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in the framework of the Eighth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016), with a view to assessing progress during the first 10 years of the Strategy and to consider its future implementation.

32. The secretariat briefed the Committee on the relevant CEP decisions from its twentieth session, including regarding organizational issues for the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference (see Information paper No. 1).

33. The Chair opened the floor for discussion and invited the Committee to decide and agree on the next steps for preparing the high-level segment on ESD at the 2016 Ministerial Conference, including the proposed format and content.

34. During the discussions, delegates reflected on different options for the outline of the High-level Meeting, including the role of ministers and the structure of the meeting. The secretariat informed the Committee that invitations to ministers would be sent out by the host country Government according to the existing practice, possibly in the course of autumn 2015.

35. The Chair asked Committee members to send proposals on the outline of the High-level Meeting and the side event to the secretariat in writing within the two weeks after the present meeting, i.e., before 23 June. The secretariat would then develop some options for the scenario for the Bureau's consideration and thereafter would send it back to the Committee for final comments. After incorporating any additional comments from the Committee, the Bureau would send the revised draft of the proposal to the secretariat for presentation and consideration by CEP at its twenty-first session (Geneva, 27–30 October 2015). In the meantime, CEP should decide the final details of the Ministerial Conference agenda, which would clarify the exact timing of the holding the high-level segment on ESD. CEP would consider the Bureau's draft outline and would be asked to make additional comments, if appropriate. The final version of the draft outline for the High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries would be then presented to the eleventh meeting of the Steering Committee in February 2016 for its final approval.

B. Draft ministerial statement

36. The Chair informed the Committee that, at its last meeting in February 2015, the Bureau had discussed the possible format and content of the draft ministerial declaration of the High-Level Meeting and, in cooperation with the secretariat, had prepared a zero draft of the statement for discussion (Information paper No. 2).

37. Following a brief discussion, it was proposed that Committee members would send suggested changes to the draft to the secretariat in electronic form right after the meeting. The secretariat would review the suggested changes from Committee members and also proposed changes coming from the revision of the draft future implementation framework and incorporate them, where appropriate. Following the approval by the Bureau and the Chair, the secretariat would circulate the revised draft to the Steering Committee members before the end of June 2015. The revised draft declaration would then be submitted to the

CEP at its twenty-first session for information, as one of the proposed draft outcomes of the Batumi Conference. After the formal approval by CEP, the draft declaration would need to be finalized for submission as an official pre-session document for the eleventh meeting of the Steering Committee, scheduled for 15 and 16 February 2016.

VI. “Ten years of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development” publication

38. The secretariat informed the Committee that an official publication on the achievements of 10 years of implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD had been forecasted for 2015. The Bureau had agreed that the publication should be ready for the 2016 Steering Committee meeting, and should focus on the outcomes of the progress reports from the three implementation phases, as well as the case studies developed based on the NIRs. The national reports had been reviewed to identify relevant good practices for the priority action areas, and the secretariat had prepared a draft outline of the publication and a preliminary list of selected countries that could serve as interesting case studies for it (Information paper No.3). However, the Bureau had not been able to approve the list of countries, as requested, before the present meeting, owing to the delay in the completion of the progress report on phase III.

39. Following a discussion on the draft outline, it was pointed out that the good practices identified from the NIRs had to be further elaborated to feed into the publication. The Committee agreed that the countries would have to provide relevant information for the publication, and asked the secretariat to develop a simple template for providing information on good practice cases for possible inclusion in the publication and to circulate it to the Steering Committee before the end of June. The deadline for providing good practice cases would be indicated when sending the template.

VII. Status of the trust fund and resource requirements for 2015–2016

40. Reporting on the status of the ESD trust fund, the secretariat gave an overview of the report on the operations of the trust fund in the period 2014–2015 (information paper No. 4).

41. The secretariat said that, in view of the current critical status of the trust fund and the contributions that had been pledged to date, it would most likely be difficult to sustain the ECE Professional support for the Strategy until the next Steering Committee meeting. So far, no funds had been secured to ensure the servicing of the Strategy between the tenth Steering Committee meeting in 2015 and the High-level Meeting of Environment and Education ministries in 2016. It was also highlighted that the discussion on the continuation of the ESD activities after the High Level Meeting had to be conducted prior to the meeting itself and to consider a realistic assessment of the situation with regard to financing those activities to avoid overambitious expectations. Any plans for the future had to be based on such a realistic approach.

42. The Steering Committee agreed that a letter should be sent out requesting countries to transfer financial contributions in support of the UNECE Strategy for ESD in accordance with the commitment they had made by adopting the Vilnius implementation framework. In the letter, countries would be asked to make commitments to funding the Strategy in 2015 and 2016, setting out also the relevant decisions of the Steering Committee in that regard. The Committee members asked the secretariat to copy the financial contribution letters addressed to ministers to the national ESD focal points for their follow-up.

VIII. Strengthening synergies with other organizations and processes

43. A number of stakeholders informed the Steering Committee of national and international activities related to the Strategy's implementation that were planned or currently being carried out.

44. The representative of the University of Gibraltar briefed the Committee about the activities and achievements of the "University Educators for Sustainable Development" project financed by the European Commission and led by the COPERNICUS Alliance, the European Network of Higher Education for Sustainable Development. The project included plans for university staff to develop professional competences and the academic leadership capabilities linked to ESD, and sought to establish a leading expert group on ESD in higher education in Europe and to create a platform to combine and share their expertise.

45. The representative of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute gave a presentation on the country's joint efforts to promote ESD on the national and international levels, and outlined concrete examples of the achievements from the implementation of different projects and programmes in cooperation with multiple stakeholders.

46. The representative of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe briefed the delegates on the Centre's activities in the field of ESD, in particular an initiative for the period 2012–2016 aimed at the comprehensive implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD in three Kosovo,³ Montenegro and Serbia. It was expected that the programme concept would be rolled out in other countries following the completion of the project.

47. The representative of the Canadian non-profit organization, Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF), reported on LSF activities aimed at working with educators, students, parents, government, community members and business leaders to integrate the concepts and principles of sustainable development into education policy, school curricula, teacher education and lifelong learning across Canada. The innovative programmes and strategic partnerships of LSF were reshaping education policy and transforming learning methods, helping students address the increasingly difficult economic, social, and environmental challenges of the twenty-first century. LSF strategic priority areas were closely aligned with the priority action areas outlined in the GAP, which meant LSF was very well positioned to continue delivering on that important work in Canada and internationally.

48. The representative of the COPERNICUS Alliance informed delegates about the vision, strategy and activities of the Alliance aimed at promoting the role of sustainable development in European higher education to improve education and research for sustainability in partnership with society. The network included 20 active member institutions plus approximately 40 affiliated institutions through project cooperation (e.g., University Educators for Sustainable Development), and promoted sustainability in higher education and research through its capacity-building, policy and professional development activities.

49. The representative of the Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI) international network, under the umbrella of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, said ENSI supported

³ All references to Kosovo in the present document should be understood to be in the context of in compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

educational and pedagogical developments that, via research and international exchange of experience, promoted insight into learning for sustainable development, environmental studies, active forms of learning and teaching, as well as education for citizenship. ENSI had also established a regional partnership with UNEP in the Carpathians, in the context of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention). At its last meeting, in 2014, the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention had decided to cooperate also with ECE and to establish the Carpathian ESD network. As a follow-up to that decision, the Carpathian ECE focal points had held an informal side event on the first day of the Steering Committee meeting and had agreed to join the Carpathian ESD network and to prepare a Carpathian ESD report for the next ECE Steering Committee meeting. As a next step of cooperation with ECE, the Carpathian ESD network planned to provide a case study for the publication on 10 years of the Strategy's implementation, a contribution for the Batumi Conference and to organize a side event at the next ESD Steering Committee meeting.

50. The secretariat also mentioned that, during its last meeting in February 2015, the Bureau had been briefed by a representative of the Harmonization and Facilitation of Frontier Controls of Goods Section of the ECE Transport Division, who had shared experience of work they were doing jointly with the ECE Trade Division under an Education on Standardization project, which could serve as an example of cooperation within ECE in the field of ESD.

51. The Chair thanked all speakers for the information shared and asked the secretariat to make the presentations available on the meeting website.

IX. Status of reporting on gender-related issues

52. The Chair reported that, at its most recent meeting, the Bureau had agreed to consider the issue of contributing to the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality. The secretariat updated the Committee on Gender Action Plan-related activities and the situation with required reporting.

53. Following the existing reporting obligation on gender-related issues, the Bureau at its last meeting had mandated the secretariat to launch a call for member States to report on what they were doing generally in the education sector on gender equality and equity, and to invite the Steering Committee members and observers to provide their contributions on the issue. The secretariat had accordingly asked Committee members and observers to send examples of good practices and success stories related to gender equality in the education sector to be shared at the tenth Steering Committee meeting.

54. The secretariat presented the outcome of that call for information (Information paper No. 5), with responses received from 10 countries and 1 observer organization, including weblinks to documents and projects available on the web in English and/or national languages. The Steering Committee was then invited to further discuss how to connect the broader effort in the education sector to ensure gender equality more directly and specifically to ESD and to decide on further steps.

55. Following the discussion, the Steering Committee requested the secretariat to upload the inputs provided on the Committee's website before the eleventh meeting, which should be presented in the unified format of one to one-and-a-half pages. A simple template with the reporting format would be sent out to the Steering Committee members before end June 2015. It was also agreed to organize a round table at the next Steering Committee meeting to share experiences and achievements in the area.

X. Dates for the next session and closure of the meeting

56. The secretariat pointed out that as the EfE Ministerial Conference would be held in June 2016, it would be important to hold the next Steering Committee meeting in the beginning of 2016. The Committee agreed to preliminarily schedule the eleventh Steering Committee meeting on 15 and 16 February 2016.

57. The Chair provided some concluding remarks on the two days of the meeting and thanked the Committee for its constructive and efficient work. He also thanked the interpreters for the excellent job and officially closed the meeting.
