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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials

"Environment for Europe"

Executive Committee

REPORT OF THE FIFTH SESSION

1. The Executive Committee of the Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials held its fifth meeting on 3 July (morning) 2002 in Geneva, Switzerland. Members present at the meeting were **Denmark** (Mr. Erik Tang), **Germany** (Mr. Bert-Axel Szelinski), **Italy** (Mr. Massimo Cozzone), **Norway** (Ms. Eldrid Nordbo), **Poland** (Mr. Janusz Zurek) and **Ukraine** (Mrs. Anna Golubovska-Onisimova). The representatives of **Bulgaria** and **Georgia** were not present.
2. Participating as observers were Russian Federation (Mr. Sergey Tveritinov); Ukraine (Mr. Stepan Lyzun and Mr. Vitaliy Potapov); the UN ECE Committee on Environmental Policy (Mr. Hugo von Meijenfeldt); the European Commission (Mr. George Strongylis); Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (Mr. Frits Schlingemann); Environmental Action Programme Task Force (Mr. Brendan Gillespie); Eco-Forum (Ms. Victoria Elias). Sweden (Mr. Jon Kahn) was invited to report on work plan for the preparation of document on Environment and Education.
3. Mrs. Anna Golubovska-Onisimova chaired the meeting.
4. The list of participants is contained in Annex I of this Report.
5. The Session was opened by the Chair. She welcomed the participants and expressed her hope that the Executive Committee would work effectively and efficiently.
6. The Executive Committee had before it the following documents: the Provisional

Agenda (CEP/AC.11/EXECOM-5/2002/1); Issues and Possible Approaches Towards Addressing Water Issues in Central Asia (CEP/AC.11/2002/16); Discussion paper on future for Environment for Europe process (CEP/AC.11/2002/14); Background Paper on Guidelines for Environmental Education and the Addendum to it (CEP/AC.11/2002/10; CEP/AC.11/2002/10/Add.1); Provisional Estimate of Resource Requirements (CEP/AC.11/2002/6); a document on Participation of NGOs in the Kiev Conference (Working Paper CEP/AC.11/EXECOM-5/2002/3) and the Proposal for the organisation of work during the Kiev conference, prepared by the Secretariat.

7. The Ukrainian Delegation provided members of the Executive Committee with the informal translation of the Decree of the President of Ukraine on preparation and carrying out of the Kiev Conference.

8. The Executive Committee adopted the proposed changes in the Provisional Agenda of the meeting.

Agenda Item 1: National preparations in Ukraine for the 2003 Kiev Conference

9. The Chair informed the Working Group about the Decree of the President of Ukraine on the preparation and carrying out of the Kiev Conference. She also introduced Mr. Lyzun, the Secretary of the National Organizing Committee for the preparation of the Kiev Conference.

10. Mr. Lyzun provided detailed information regarding the provisions of the Decree and underlined the full support that the Ukrainian Government is giving to the preparation of the Conference. He stressed that the Decree addresses both the organisation and the financing of the Conference. The first meeting of the National Organisational Committee is scheduled for 11 July 2002.

11. Mr. Kinakh, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, heads the National Organizing Committee. The First Deputy Head is Mr. Kurykin, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources; Second Deputy Head is Mr. Zlenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The other key-Ministers, including the Minister of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine, Minister of Science and Education, Minister of Finance, Minister of Healthcare, Minister of Emergency Situation and Public Protection on Chernobyl Disaster Consequences, Minister of Justice and the Mayor of Kiev are also members of the National Organising Committee. In addition, the representatives of local administrations, science and the non-governmental community are represented there.

12. The Ukrainian Government decided to provide free visas for the official delegates of the Conference and will try to create equal conditions for non-governmental delegates.

13. The Executive Committee requested Ukraine to provide it with copies of documents to be adopted at the first meeting of the National Organizing Committee, e.g. Action Program, arrangements for the Secretariat, and other decisions. The Ukrainian delegation expressed its willingness to do so.

Agenda Item 2: Resource requirements for the Kiev Conference

14. Ukraine (Mr. Lyzun) reported on the status of financing for the preparations for the Kiev conference. He informed the Committee that the Ukrainian Government included financing of

the Kiev Conference in its national budget for 2003. Thus, the amount of UAH¹ 6.5 mln. (approximately USD 1.2 million) would be provided by Ukraine. Part of these funds might be available already in 2002.

15. The Chair noted that the Ukrainian Government is going to support travel, accommodation and meals for 2 senior officials and 1 representative of an NGO per each delegation during the Conference. Ukraine has also allocated UAH 25 000 for the activities of national NGOs. Other arrangements include travel and accommodation for 26 NGO representatives from the different regions (oblasts) of Ukraine.

16. Mr. Lyzun expressed his gratitude for the financial support provided by Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, UNDP and the European Commission. He noted that discussions are now underway with various donors for additional financing. According to the estimation of Ukraine, there is still a deficit of USD 300,000 for the preparation and organisation of the Conference.

17. The Executive Committee requested Ukraine to provide a more detailed financial status report at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Agenda Item 3: Environmental education

18. Sweden introduced the Addendum to document CEP/AC.11/2002/10 and announced that it, in partnership with the Russian Federation, would lead the process for environment and education. Whether the final product is a strategy, guidelines or an action plan is still to be determined. The first meeting of a drafting group will take place in September 2002. Sweden also invited all interested participants to join an informal meeting on the subject during the lunch break on 4 July.

19. Sweden noted that there was very limited time now, so it is important to accelerate the drafting process. The first draft of the strategy should be available for the November 2002 meeting of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) and the final draft, for the CEP in February 2003. Sweden and Russia proposed that the Working Group of Senior Officials should establish a drafting group for this purpose. The drafting group should include representatives of both Ministries of Environment and Ministries of Education.

20. The Baltic 21 strategy for environmental education, which involved eleven countries and Ministries of Education as well as of Environment, could be one useful model. The strategy for Kiev should be action-oriented and map out a process that could be further elaborated upon after the Kiev Conference.

21. The Committee welcomed the initiative of Sweden and the Russian Federation and supported further work.

Agenda Item 4: Water, environment and security: update of consultations

22. The Secretariat presented the results of the mission that was organised at the request of the fourth session of the Executive Committee. The main purpose of the mission was to investigate whether the issue of water, environment and security should be raised as a separate agenda item for the Kiev Conference. The mission was supported by the Government of Norway.

¹ UAH is Ukrainian Hryvnia; \$1=UAH 5,3

23. The Secretariat participated in a seminar in the region where the possibility to link commitments to be made by the Heads of States in Johannesburg with the development of an initiative to the Kiev Conference was discussed. As a result, Environment Ministers in Central Asia recommend that the Central Asian governments develop a common position to WSSD in Johannesburg and the Ministerial Conference in Kiev.

24. However, the conclusion of the Secretariat is that the five countries at this stage do not seem to be in the position to agree on a common platform for a serious effort to address the diverging positions with regard to water management and water allocation. Members of the Executive Committee expressed the opinion that it might be better to include water, environment and security in Central Asia within the context of the G12 Strategy.

25. The Chair further reported the results of the fourth preparatory meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Bali, June 2002), where consultations on the margins of the meeting led to an agreement between the G12 and the European Union to launch a new water initiative in the context of an "East-West partnership for sustainable development" to be presented at the World Summit in Johannesburg. She underlined that the G12 Strategy includes the water issue and therefore could provide a framework for the proceeding of the water question of Central Asian region as well.

26. All members of the Committee expressed their deep interest in the Strategy and their willingness to be involved in the process. Most countries supported the possible inclusion of "water, environment and security in Central Asia" as a separate item on the agenda of the Kiev Conference. However, given the existing political, economic and social difficulties involved, Committee members were inclined to think that incorporating this issue within the G12 Environmental Strategy might be a better alternative.

27. In conclusion, it was agreed the matter should be brought to the attention of the WGSO and discussed further at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Agenda Item 5: Future of the Environment for Europe process: Mr. Von Meijenfeldt's proposal

28. Mr. Von Meijenfeldt, Chair of the Committee of Environmental Policy, introduced the paper on Future of the "Environment for Europe" process that he had been requested to prepare as a first draft by the Executive Committee at its fourth meeting.

29. The paper was welcomed as an important contribution to the preparations for Kiev. The Executive Committee offered comments on the paper but primarily focussed their attention on the process that should be adopted to finalize the paper. To this end, the Committee recommended to the Working Group of Senior Officials that it consider establishing a drafting group on the future of the Environment for Europe process.

30. The drafting exercise could also take into account other work that is underway on the issue of governance, including the World Summit on Sustainable Development and discussions within both the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme.

Agenda Item 6: Proposals for the organisation of work during the Kiev Conference

31. The Executive Committee considered a draft organization of work for the Kiev Conference prepared by the Secretariat as a basis for discussion. A number of suggestions were made to try

to accommodate the time limitations and the large number of possible agenda items, including beginning the Conference at 9:00 instead of 10:00, clustering some issues and deleting others. For example, some Committee members proposed that public participation could be clustered with environment and education and that all energy-related issues might be deleted, since these had been considered at the Aarhus Conference. They also noted that some issues not included on the first draft might need to be added, for example, a Convention for the Carpathian Mountains, the European Forest process and the Conference on Agriculture, Trade and Environment.

32. There was general agreement that it was a good idea to spread out adoption of the various Protocols, with one (or more) adopted each day.

33. The Executive Committee considered the duration of the Conference, but was not yet able to decide whether it should be three full days or two and one-half days.

34. It was decided that Ukraine would prepare a draft of the organization of work for submission to the sixth meeting of the Executive Committee. This organization of work would also include information concerning airport timetables in order to determine possible times of arrival and departure of the delegations.

Agenda Item 7: Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in Kiev.

35. Due to the lack of time members were not able to discuss this issue and decided to include it in the Agenda of the next session.

Agenda Item 8: Other Business

36. The next, sixth, meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for 13 September 2002, in Geneva, at the Palais des Nations, from 10:00 to 18:00.

ANNEX

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