



SPEECH BY

Mr. Saša Dragin, Minister of Environmental Protection, Serbia
Wednesday, 2007-10-10

Item 1. opening the Conference

Your Excellencies , Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank all of you for participating in the Sixth Ministerial Conference within the scope of ``Environment for Europe `` process.

It is an honour for Republic of Serbia and Belgrade to host the most significant event regarding environment in the UNECE region.

Now, I would like to give the floor to Mr Boris Tadic, president of Republic of Serbia for welcome speech and for the opening of the Conference.

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Thank you Mr. President for your warm welcoming address and before we proceed to official adoption of provisional agenda for the Conference I invite Mr. Svatoslav Kurulenko, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection of Ukraine to give address on the subject "From Kiev to Belgrade: passing the "Environment for Europe torch".

First of all I wish to thank Mr Svatoslav Kurulenko, First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection of Ukraine for his inspiring speech and encouragement for taking over very responsible and honorable duty of organizing the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in Belgrade.

Based on the meetings of Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO) in which operation representatives of 56 countries took part, the Secretariat of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in consultation with the Chair developed **provisional agenda for the Conference** and the **organization of work at the Conference**.

Both documents are compiled on the basis of interests expressed by the Governments, as well as inputs by partners in the "Environment for Europe" (EfE). Creating it WGSO took into account expressions of interest received and, at the same time,

ensured a well-balanced and broad representation of the UNECE region based on geographical coverage as well as on Governments' leadership in certain activities.

I would like to thank members of Secretariat of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Working Group of Senior Officials (WGSO) for their successful but hard work in the course of preparatory period preceding the Conference. We are very grateful for the support of these organizations and individuals which took part in organization.

Documents include assessment and implementation of previously agreed decisions and mechanisms together with the presentation by the European Environment Agency (EEA) of its fourth pan-European assessment report on the state of the environment (Belgrade assessment) and UNECE Environmental Performance review; education for sustainable development: biodiversity; capacity-building with special interest on countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia with the presentation of the report on the implementation of the Central Asia Initiative on Sustainable Development as well as South-East European perspectives including presentation of the Belgrade Initiative; partnerships in environmental finance and partnerships to support the implementation of environmental policies and programmes including presentation of UNECE key findings on Environmental Policy and International Competitiveness in a Globalizing World and the future of the process with adoption of and statements on the Ministerial Declaration. Provisional agenda for the Conference stipulates the Category I and II documents for consideration.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now call upon for any comments you wish to put forward concerning these documents.

Then I call for adoption of provisional agenda.

As provisional agenda we have just adopted stipulates I invite Mr. Marek Belka, Executive Secretary of UNECE and Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to give keynote addresses.

I want to thank Mr. Belka and Mr. Steiner for their addresses and now I invite you to follow the opening ceremony.

Ladies and gentlemen please take a moment for a group photo and then we will proceed to the conference hall 1 in building A for plenary sessions. The first item Assessment and implementation opens with State of the environment and monitoring and assessment at 10 a.m. After photographing please let's proceed according to agenda. Thank you.