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Preparations for the Seventh “Environment for Europe”

Ministerial Conference: communication activities; resource requirements

Information Paper No.8

20 May 2011

Proposal for a capacity-building workshop for journalists at the Astana Ministerial Conference

Note by the secretariat

Summary

Pursuant to a decision by Ministers at the Sixth “Environment for Europe” (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Belgrade, 2007), the Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference will be held from 21 to 23 September 2011 in Astana. The Conference is being organized in accordance with the Reform Plan of the EfE process. The Plan calls for the development of an effective communication strategy for the Conference, including broad mass media coverage, as appropriate, comprising, inter alia, special events for journalists, and circulation of electronic newsletters and maintenance of a dedicated website.

At its seventeenth session in November 2010, the Committee on Environmental Policy approved the Communication Plan for the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference (ECE/CEP/2010/5). The host country and the UNECE secretariat are implementing the communication activities, accordingly.

This paper presents a proposal for a workshop for journalists to be organized in Astana on 20 September 2011, back-to-back to the Conference. The proposal includes the workshop’s objective, expected outputs and the estimated extrabudgetary cost requirements for supporting participation of journalists from countries with economies in transition.

The present document is being submitted to the Committee on Environmental Policy for consideration. Interested countries and organizations are invited to consider the possibility to contribute (in cash and in kind) to the organization of this workshop. The UNECE secretariat will prepare invoice letters with banking details upon request from countries.

I. Project proposal

A. Type of activity:

- Training of journalists from the UNECE region on the “Environment for Europe” process and the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference;
- Participation of journalists in the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, Astana, 21–23 September 2011.

B. Date and venue:

- 20 September 2011, Astana, Kazakhstan;
- 21–23 September 2011, Astana, Kazakhstan.

C. Background:

Journalists at the national level, in particular in the countries of Central Asia, may not be fully aware of the key environmental challenges in the UNECE region, the “Environment for Europe” process and its role in addressing environmental problems, and the major issues to be discussed at the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference to be held in Astana on 21–23 September 2011. They may lack the knowledge and capacity to report effectively on environmental issues. In particular, issues related to green economy may need additional clarifications for local media to ensure quality coverage of the Conference.

The training for journalists is expected to bring journalists from the UNECE member States, including approximately 30-35 participants from media from countries of South-Eastern Europe, Russian Federation and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The total estimated budget for the seminar is 60,000 US\$. The budget included in Table 1 of this document only seeks to raise funds to cover the participation of 32 journalists from the countries of South-Eastern Europe, Russian Federation and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia¹. The Government of Germany has already pledged 20,000 Euro for this project. UNECE plans to continue its fundraising for this training to cover the remaining expected costs.

Following the training, its participants will attend the Conference and related side-events and exhibition and will be expected to provide quality media coverage at the national and subregional levels.

D. Objective and expected outcomes:

1. Objective:

Enhance the capacity of journalists to report on key environmental issues, in particular on main issues of the Astana “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, i.e. (a) on the sustainable management of water and water related ecosystems, and (b) greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

2. Expected Accomplishments:

As a result of the programme:

- Deepened understanding of participants on key environmental challenges and issues in the UNECE region;

¹ Provided that the necessary funds will be raised, the participation (travel and DSA) of up to three journalists from the Central Asian countries will be financially supported. These exclude Kazakhstan, as a host country, which will be represented by 1 non-Astana based journalist. At least 4 Astana-based journalists are expected to participate at the seminar at no additional costs.

- Enhanced visibility of the Conference and of the “Environment for Europe” process through effective media coverage.

3. Indicators

- Coverage in the national media, covering the issues and decisions of the Conference during and immediately after the Conference;
- Coverage in the national media on the environmental issues during 6 month following the Conference (information gathered through feedback forms sent to participants).

D. Target group and main beneficiaries:

Journalists from the UNECE region, in particular from the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

E. Organizers:

UNECE jointly with the Government of Kazakhstan as well as with the European Environment Agency, UNEP, OECD, RECs and other relevant “Environment for Europe” partner organizations.

F. Proposed programme of work:

1. Workshop

A media expert will moderate the workshop. Speakers from the UNECE secretariat as well as from relevant “Environment for Europe” partner organizations will be invited to give an overall introduction of the Conference and to brief on their respective agenda items. The proposed draft workshop programme is as follows:

- Welcome remarks by the host country;
- Overall introduction on the Conference and the “Environment for Europe” process by the secretariat;
- Briefings followed by questions & answers on specific agenda items and main documents for the Conference:
 - Europe’s Environment Assessment of Assessments;
 - The second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region;
 - Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems;
 - Astana Water Action Initiative;
 - Greening the Economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development;
 - Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative and its Partnership Programme;
 - UNECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Environmental Performance Reviews.
- Sum-up by the moderator.

2. Attendance of and reporting from the EfE Ministerial Conference, 21-23 September 2011.

- UNECE will organize daily briefings to journalists during the Conference.

Table 1. Estimated Costs for organizing the workshop for journalists*(United States Dollars)*

| Item | Unit cost | No. of units | Total expected costs |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| | A | B | C = A x B |
| Travel costs for 32 journalists from SEE, Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Caucasus and Central Asia | | | |
| Economy class return airfare (SEE–Astana–SEE) | 1,600 | 5 | 8,000 |
| Economy class return airfare (Russia/Eastern Europe–Astana–Russia/ Eastern Europe) | 750 | 8 | 6,000 |
| Economy class return airfare (Caucasus–Astana–Caucasus) | 750 | 6 | 4,500 |
| Economy class return airfare (Central Asia–Astana–Central Asia) | 520 | 13 | 6,760 |
| Subtotal (1) | | | 25,260 |
| Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for 32 journalists | | | |
| SEE (US\$ 210 DSA x 4 days) | 840 | 5 | 4,200 |
| Russia, Eastern Europe (US\$ 210 DSA x 4 days) | 840 | 8 | 6,720 |
| Caucasus (US\$ 210 DSA x 4 days) | 840 | 6 | 5,040 |
| Central Asia (US\$ 210 DSA x 4 days) | 840 | 13 | 10,920 |
| Subtotal (2) | | | 26,880 |
| Interpretation | | | |
| (3) Simultaneous interpretation (En/Ru) | | | 750 |
| Programme Support Costs | | | |
| (4) UNECE Programme Support Costs (13%) rounded | | | 6,900 |
| TOTAL ESTIMATED (1+2+3+4) | | | 59,790 |
| Total rounded | | | 60,000 |

Table 2. Pledges made to the “Environment for Europe” Trust Fund earmarked for the workshop for journalists

| Member State | Comments | Amount pledged |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Germany | Earmarked for the workshop for journalists | 20,000 Euro |