

Joint Conclusions
by the Participants of the Conference on Clean Fuels and Vehicles
Szentendre, October 27 and 28, 2005

Government officials, representatives of refineries, research institutes, the academic community, non-governmental organisations, and automotive manufacturers and importers associations from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey and the USA, together with representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), International Fuel Quality Center (IFQC), FIA Foundation, UNDESA, UNIDO, certifying and consulting businesses, academia and international consultants (see attached list of participants) met on 27 and 28 October 2005 in Szentendre to discuss the cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe in clean fuels and vehicles. The conference is taking place with the financial support of US Environmental Protection Agency and UNEP.

The conference is launching the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) activities in Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey.

At the conference were presented the objectives and activities of the PCFV, technological, financial and legal aspects of clean fuel production, air emissions and fuel quality developments in the EU, global trends in clean fuels and vehicles and biodiesel production. The REC presented a summary of the study on clean fuels and vehicles conducted in 16 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey. The participants from different countries presented the fuel quality and vehicle improvements in their countries.

Countries in the region are working to implement EU vehicle and fuel quality standards and timetables as rapidly as feasible.

Based on discussions in three working groups the following issues and actions have been identified by the participants for implementation in the region:

Lead Phase-out:

- The lead removal from gasoline should be as soon as possible;
- Institute national regulation to ban leaded gasoline, incl. official date;
- Improved monitoring/control of fuel quality;
- Information campaign for better understanding of lead phase-out (public, fuel stations, possible blood lead level monitoring);
- Launching of vehicle renewal programs (e.g. scrappage);
- Improved vehicle import regulations (to include age limits and catalytic converters);
- Improved interaction on all levels of governance.

Reducing sulphur:

- Public awareness on the benefits of cleaner fuels (including NGOs) and awareness for decision-makers;

- Highlight the importance of fuel taxes to the economy (check with government inspectors and policy);
- Fuel testing independent from producers and ISO accredited labs (country specific);
- For poor quality refineries designate fuel for non-transport use (for industrial boilers, marine, domestic heating) – temporary measure;
- Availability of mobile testing labs for testing fuel quality (at least for sulphur and colour marking);
- Modernizing the equipment of state-owned labs;
- Training of personnel for fuel quality control;
- Higher tax for dirty fuels compared to cleaner fuels;
- Sliding scale for penalties (starting with lower);
- Implementation of national plans for step by step sulphur reduction.

Cleaner vehicles:

- Public awareness raising;
- Necessity for training for policy makers;
- Improve access to information;
- Introduction of fiscal incentives;
- Launching a discussion on how to harmonize the second-hand cars market – standardization;
- Introduction of differentiated environmental taxes for vehicles;
- Work with other stakeholders and the private sector ;
- Retrofitting older vehicles.

The participants concluded that:

1. There is a need for coordinated national and regional action for improvement of vehicle fuel quality and reduction of vehicle emissions.
2. Fuels and vehicle quality and public transport issues need to be integrated in national and local environmental and sustainable development plans.
3. There should be increased participation in the PCFV from CEE and Turkey. All participants from this event are invited to join the PCFV.
4. A regional network of experts and practitioners is established to support the above actions. In close cooperation with the PCFV, the REC will facilitate the network operation.

The participants agree to work together to ensure the implementation of the follow up activities. The development and implementation of projects and actions linked to these activities should be open to all governments, international organizations, institutions, NGOs, academia and the private sector who can make a contribution to their implementation.

The participants thank the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe for hosting this meeting and creating a constructive atmosphere for fruitful discussions. Participants also thank the US EPA and UNEP for funding the conference.

Szentendre, October 28, 2005