

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA AND THE MINISTER OF HOUSING,
SPATIAL PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NETHERLANDS**

The Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of The Netherlands, hereinafter referred to as the Signatories,

- Recognizing that many environmental problems are of a transboundary nature and require international cooperation, bilaterally as well as in the context of international conventions, and that cooperation between national environmental authorities may be of mutual benefit at both the national, the regional and the global level;
- Recognizing the principles as delineated at the UN Human Environment Conference (Stockholm, 1972) and the UN Environment and Development Conference (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) including Agenda 21;
- Wishing to strengthen the process "Environment for Europe" including the results of the Pan-European Ministerial Conferences for the Environment (Dobris 1991, Lucerne 1993, Sofia 1995 and Aarhus 1998);
- Wishing to promote the implementation of environmental conventions within the scope of the United Nations and its Economic Commission for Europe;
- Recalling that both Lithuania and The Netherlands participate in the work of the UNECE Committees on Environmental Policy and Human Settlements respectively as well as in the work of the UN Environment Programme;
- Aware that the Republic of Lithuania has indicated the wish to start negotiations for the purpose of obtaining full membership of the European Union and in this process intends to incorporate the acquirements of the European Union into its national law;
- Taking into consideration the Letter of Intent signed at Vilnius on 19 February 1998 by the Minister of Construction and Urban Development of the Republic of Lithuania and the State Secretary of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of The Netherlands and the subsequent merger of the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development with that of Environmental Protection in Lithuania;

have decided:

Paragraph 1

1. Signatories will promote bilateral cooperation in the fields of environmental protection, territorial planning and housing policy on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit. This bilateral cooperation is to complement and in no way to duplicate joint efforts within the context of multilateral fora to which both Signatories belong.

2. Themes for cooperation are established every two years in the form of a jointly decided working-programme and may include:

- monitoring of compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation;
- access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making within the scope of the UNECE Convention of Aarhus;
- joint implementation within the scope of the Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- waste management;
- strategic environmental assessment;
- exchange of experience and information on best practices and methods on land use management planning, in particular the preparation, monitoring and enforcement of plans;
- housing policies including quality surveys, maintenance and management of the housing stock;
- implementation of sustainable housing and building measures including national packages;
- improvement of the energy efficiency of the present housing stock with particular emphasis on large-panel dwellings.

Paragraph 2

1. This Memorandum of Understanding does not create any rights or obligations under international law.

2. The cooperation may take the form of:

- meetings, workshops and symposia of experts;
- training and exchange of personnel;
- exchange of scientific and technical information;
- environmental projects involving interested stakeholders in the respective countries.

3. Signatories acting within their competence and in conformity with their respective national legislation will assist in establishing direct relations between third-party stakeholders within the anticipated fields of cooperation as indicated in paragraph 1 of this Memorandum.

Paragraph 3

1. Unless otherwise agreed there will be no exchange of funds and each Signatory will provide adequate resources to carry out its responsibilities. No financial commitments can be made without concurrence of appropriate authorities on either side.

2. Applications for funding of intended projects may be considered under one of the existing Netherlands' programmes for cooperation with countries in Central- and Eastern Europe:

- a. The Netherlands' Programme for cooperation with countries in Central- and Eastern-Europe (PSO: Programma Samenwerking Oost-Europa) administered by the agency "Senter" under auspices of the Netherlands' Ministry of Economic Affairs;
- b. The Netherlands' Programme for Societal Transformation (Matra: Programma Maatschappelijke Transformatie) administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- c. the Programme for International Environmental Cooperation under the Environmental Subsidies Decree administered by The Netherlands' Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment.

Paragraph 4

Signatories will assign contact persons for housing-, planning- and environment-related issues respectively and draw up bi-annual working-programmes for the purpose of bringing this Memorandum to life.

Paragraph 5

1. This Memorandum will come into operation upon signature.
2. This Memorandum is terminated after a period of five years, unless Signatories agree in writing to prolong it for a specified period of time thereafter.
3. Giving one month's written notice either Signatory may terminate this Memorandum at any time.

Signed at Malmö this 29 May 2000 in duplicate in the English language.

The Minister of the Environment
of the Republic of Lithuania,

D. Lygis



The Minister of Housing, Spatial
Planning and the Environment of
The Netherlands,

J.P. Pronk

