

**Presentation by Ambassador Oľga Algayerová  
The Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee  
To the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE  
14 February 2014**

Mme. Chairperson,  
Dear Members of the Parliaments  
Colleagues,

It is my honor to address the 13<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as the Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee of the OSCE continuously in the second year. I am convinced that our organization has valuable position for wealth and security of our citizens. And we cannot avoid our common endeavors within the Economic and Environmental Dimension. All three Chairs of the OSCE Committees we have had a lovely discussion with the President Krivokapič just before this meeting and I see that the area and issues related to economy and environment have great potential to be seen as a base for building further confidence and growth in the OSCE region. Our citizens are the ones who value or may practically feel our work and I am convinced that we have together a great potential which might be further developed, but must be target oriented - on targets mirroring challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Last year we devoted our work when coping with and raising awareness of on issues such as energy security, energy efficiency, environmental protection, fight against corruption, sustainable development, with the only aim to ensure economic, social and environmental stability and prosperity. Despite certain significant progress achieved further dialogue might be welcomed in order to pursue our common aims and goals. My intention is to have pragmatic solutions, reliable goals, visible and tangible results. And of course topics, which have real added value and are relevant nowadays.

Two Ministerial Decisions we adopted in Kyiv last December had given us a mandate to be more involved in issues, as environment, energy efficiency and natural disasters and its impacts which are all becoming more and more important for security of our citizens and

communities. Latest negative winter impacts in Europe and North America, which are further more exceeding the normal course of life we all used to have, are only a part of issues we have been dealing with. I would here very much appreciate timely reflecting present needs as the topic “environmental challenges” is among the priorities of the OSCE’s Swiss Chairmanship this year. We have already had a First Preparatory Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum which showed importance of common understanding, cross-dimensional and regional cooperation, resilient and prompt reactions needed to deal with such events. Economic and Environmental Forum in 2014 will focus whole year on environmental challenges, including natural disasters, within the topic “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”.

Allow me to devote some time now and enlighten you with what are my intentions, based on the aims of the Swiss Chairmanship this year. I will focus shortly on the main guidance of the work of the Committee and be pleased to discuss your views, endeavors and expectations from our activities during this year.

The OSCE Parliament Assembly Monaco Declaration in 2012 encouraged governments to consider the economic and environmental area of the OSCE’s work as one the most promising from the point of long-term interests. And I considered it also when having been preparing new challenges and aims to attain this year. Therefore our main topics have been outlined as follows: mechanisms to assess money laundering risks and improve capacity to recover stolen assets in the OSCE area, gender and environment, public-Private Partnerships to address economic and environmental challenges, sharing best practices on sustainable water management, Implementation of the Ministerial Decisions 5/13 on “Improving the Environmental Footprint of Energy Related Activities” and 6/13 on “Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-made Disasters”. I can assure you that the immediate assistance of our Field Missions, as a visible advantage of our organization, will be utilized during our thematic discussions.

Let me now briefly describe the content of the topics:

*1. Mechanisms to assess money laundering risks and improve capacity to recover stolen assets in the OSCE area*

Based on the work of the Irish Chairmanship 2012 we have progressed in the work focusing on money laundering and corruption-related issues. We have organized a lot of

events on the expert level with clear recommendations for participating States (for example Seminar on Identifying, Restraining and Recovering Stolen Assets in the OSCE Region). We have also produced the OSCE Handbook on Data Collection in support of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing National Risk Assessments, which is currently being translated into Russian language. Issues as money laundering and asset recovery raise many questions and therefore we see an opportunity to tackle and discuss these issues during our thematic meeting in order to reach further progress and fulfillment of the conclusions of the Declaration focusing on good governance issues.

## *2. Gender and environment*

We mark 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality this year. The Plan calls for integration of a gender perspective into OSCE activities and projects, across all three dimensions of security. When we considered this issue we thought it might be obvious opportunity to address the topic of gender and environment, and discuss it within the Second Dimension. Our aim is to focus on what has been achieved in the Second Dimension and how the environmental issues and its commitments can be introduced further into practice and implemented. We aim also to discuss deeper integration of gender aspects in the OSCE's environmental activities through an increased co-operation between various OSCE institutions and departments.

## *3. Public-Private Partnerships to address economic and environmental challenges*

When speaking on Public-Private Partnerships we must be convinced about their ability to gather necessary funding and invest in different areas. We all know that such partnerships at the national and regional levels can be instrumental in bringing the government agencies, business community and civil society much closer in their cooperation. Discussion during this thematic meeting will also focus on good examples within the OSCE region. We intend also to explore further potential for OSCE to be more active and engaged when promoting such partnerships.

## *4. Sharing best practices on sustainable water management*

Sustainable water management is among the priorities of the Swiss Chairmanship in the Second Dimension in 2014. Different events throughout the year will focus on this topic. In the OSCE region-wide exist more than 150 shared river and lake basins. Due to this fact many states have had to agree on areas as water distribution, water management and water use. Sustainable water management in this turbulent climatic changes period remains a challenge. We hope that sustainable water management topic can provide a platform where

experts and participating States can share experiences and best practices with the aim to meet the future challenges and grant sustainable and secure water supply. As is stated in the Istanbul Declaration “the water is essential for life and that a suitable supply of high-quality water is a prerequisite for economic and social progress”.

*5. Implementation of the Ministerial Decisions 5/13 on “Improving the Environmental Footprint of Energy Related Activities” and 6/13 on “Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-made Disasters”*

In line with the latest Decisions on energy adopted in December in Kyiv the First Decision 5/13 will focus our work on activities to support the exchange of best practices and build capacity in the areas related to environment and energy sustainability and security. The Second Decision 6/13 will focus on more effective coordination of protection measures among the participating States and the exchange of good practices in the area of energy networks protection against natural and man-made disasters. Since the adoption of the Decision the scale, frequency and severity of natural disasters gained on intensity and therefore I very much welcome the Swiss Chairmanships’ priority focusing on more reliable management of natural disasters.

Dear Colleagues,

Helsinki +40 process is an opportunity. An opportunity to enhance the future role of the OSCE and the Economic and Environmental Dimension. The conclusions from Istanbul reiterate central importance to the Second Dimension in the Helsinki Final Act for further cooperation and vital concerns the original drafters of the Act could not have anticipated. Allow me therefore to mention a novelty of the work of the Committee this year – an aim to organize a retreat which should reflect on the Helsinki +40 process with regard to the Second Dimension. We hope that the meeting will help us to create inspirations and reinforce commitments taken so far in order to strengthen the Second Dimension when reflecting the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a substantial pillar of OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security. Only economically prosperous region can be a prerequisite for secure region and further strengthen close and mutually beneficial co-operation aimed at building a genuine Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

Thank you for your attention and I am looking forward to your immediate reactions and I look for an effective cooperation this year again.