



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
The Secretariat**

**Co-ordinator of OSCE  
Economic and Environmental Activities**

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Technology and the Environment  
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**Statement**

by

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Chairperson,

Distinguished Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to participate today in the 14<sup>th</sup> Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and address the Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment.

I would like to start my intervention by presenting the **23<sup>rd</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process** that will focus on “Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability through co-operation”.

The First Preparatory Meeting of the Forum took place in January in Vienna. Participants had the opportunity to exchange views about best practices in water governance in the participating States and discuss how the OSCE could efficiently contribute to strengthening cross-sectoral co-ordination, transparency, engagement of various stakeholders and other aspects of good water governance.

Building up on the recommendations generated during this first event of the Forum process, a Second Preparatory Meeting will take place in Belgrade, Serbia, in May, followed by a Concluding one, to be organized in Prague, on 14-16 September.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite the Parliamentary Assembly to actively contribute to this process.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Let me now briefly outline the thematic priorities for my Office for the year 2015, by starting with some planned **economic activities**.

Corruption remains among key factors that impinge on and distort good governance, management of public funds and competitive markets. If unsuppressed, it undermines economies, social protection, the trust of citizens in democratic institutions and processes. Combating this evil requires, first of all, detection and elimination of the causes and conditions of corruption through the development and implementation of a system of corruption prevention measures.

With this in mind, the 2014 *Basel Ministerial Council Decision on Prevention of Corruption* provides the OSCE with a broad mandate to assist its participating States in stepping up their corruption prevention efforts. We plan to launch, in the spring of 2015, the *OSCE Guide on Combating Corruption*. In addition, in co-operation with the OSCE Field Operations, we will continue to provide assistance to participating States in implementing their commitments in this area, in particular those related to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.

The OCEEA also plans to continue co-operating closely with the Field Operations in promoting a participatory approach in the prevention of corruption, increase the institutional capacity and skills of key practitioners, and develop joint, multi-stakeholder activities, aimed at enhancing national corruption prevention policies in line with international standards. Particular attention will be given to selected **Central Asian** countries that expressed an interest to benefit from targeted capacity-building and training activities. In response to these requests, the **ExB project proposal** on “Fostering a participatory approach towards preventing corruption in Central Asia” will be presented to the participating States for support in the coming months.

Building further on the adoption of the Basel MC Decision on Prevention of Corruption and the recommendations of the *Regional Corruption Prevention Workshop* held in Batumi, Georgia, in December 2014, the Office plans to organize in **Chisinau**, Moldova, a follow-up **seminar** with a focus on **business integrity and anti-bribery issues** in April of this year.

Determined to assist anti-corruption officials of OSCE participating States in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus in addressing legislative and regulatory needs, this workshop will provide an insight into the available mechanisms and patterns of co-operation between the public and private sectors in preventing corruption. Also, the Office will continue its co-

operation with the **OECD Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia**, including in the form of a joint corruption prevention event planned in Croatia in June.

The OCEEA will join efforts with the **TNT Border Security and Management Unit** in the implementation of the **ExB project** entitled “Anti-Corruption Interactive Training Programme for Border Guards, Customs Services and Anti-Corruption Authorities of Moldova and Ukraine”. The project, which is pending extra-budgetary funding, aims at enhancing the capacities of border guards, customs services and anti-corruption authorities in Moldova and Ukraine to more effectively investigate and prosecute corruption cases, with emphasis on cross-border related challenges.

Corrupt officials often engage in money laundering and attempt to present stolen or earned illegally funds as earned legitimately. They may launder money by moving illegal funds through the international financial system in order to conceal their criminal origin and enjoy the proceeds of their crimes. As a result, states should enhance their regulatory and supervisory systems to oversee private sector compliance with anti-money laundering rules. Therefore, in the area of **anti-money laundering**, my Office, in co-operation with the Field Operations and partner organizations, will continue providing support to strengthening the capacities of participating States’ officials to more successfully initiate, investigate and prosecute cases of money laundering, as well as to promote inter-agency co-operation. Following a request by the Prosecutor General’s Office and the Financial Intelligence Unit of Azerbaijan, the Office, in partnership with the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku, plans to organize in **Baku** this spring a training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors on corruption investigations and a training for the Financial Intelligence Unit on investigating corruption cases and money laundering.

Building further upon last year’s *Regional Training on Cross-Border Co-operation and Money Laundering* that took place in Vienna, my Office intends to hold, with the support of the UNODC, a Regional Workshop on “Supporting successful prosecutions and other disruptions by building, enhancing and networking financial investigation capacity in national Law Enforcement Agencies” in **Tashkent** this spring.

Also, together with the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, my Office will work on the development and implementation of an ExB project on combating money laundering that will assist the Ukrainian authorities in conducting a ML/FT national risk assessment.

Contemporary economic realities call for enhanced harmonization of transport and customs operations that impact trade and commerce. Efficient border management policies create simplified border crossing procedures that create favourable conditions for diversified trade activities. In the area of **transport, trade and customs** my Office will remain active on capacity-building and exchange of best practices activities. For example, my Office plans to conduct in autumn, in Bishkek, in co-operation with the OSCE Centre in Bishkek and the World Customs Organization, a **Regional Transit Conference** particularly aimed at officials from landlocked developing countries in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Together with

the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, the UN Economic Commission for Europe and the Government of Tajikistan, we are planning to co-organize in Dushanbe, in June, the **13<sup>th</sup> Expert Group Meeting** under the UNECE's Euro-Asian transport links project.

Labour migration is a transnational phenomenon that cannot be managed or addressed solely at the national level. Therefore, development of effective, fair and durable labour migration policies and practices requires co-operation among all states involved in the process. It is important to recognize that an effective labour migration policy should be protecting migrant workers and optimizing the benefits of labour migration for both countries of origin and destination. **Labour migration management** remains among the priorities of my Office. The OCEEA will continue to promote a comprehensive approach to migration management that supports legal migration and reduces irregular migration by facilitating regional dialogue, co-operation, capacity building activities and exchange of good practices. Recently, my Office, jointly with the IOM, has produced a Russian language Handbook entitled "Towards Evidence-based Migration Policies" with recommendations on migration data collection for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. We will promote, disseminate and support the use of this publication in the course of 2015.

Let me now turn to planned **environmental activities** for his year.

The *Madrid Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Security* continues to provide the framework for our activities in the environmental field. I will now briefly touch upon four themes, namely - water, disasters, climate change, and waste - and environmental good governance cross-cutting all four.

The significance of **water** for prosperity and security is acknowledged around the globe. This year, the Global Risk Reports of the World Economic Forum identified water crises as the top first global risk in terms of its possible impacts. Water is the focus of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum and has always been among our core activities in the second dimension's environmental field, in particular since the adoption of the 2003 Maastricht Strategy. The Sava River, Dniester River, Chu-Talas Basin, and Kura River are some transboundary river basins where we have been engaged over the last several years through developing legal and institutional frameworks for co-operation. This year we are also stepping up our engagement and collaboration with other international actors in raising awareness on the water-security nexus. The OECD Water Governance Initiative that we have recently joined is a good example in this respect.

**Disaster risk reduction** is an important component of water co-operation as we have seen during the response to the devastating floods that affected South-Eastern Europe, in May last year. In 2015 and beyond, the *Basel Ministerial Council Decision on Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction* will guide us in our activities. My Office, in close collaboration with the field operations will further strengthen national and regional capacities in disaster risk reduction. We will further deepen our engagement in fire management and will also expand our good

practice in South Caucasus to Mongolia and Central Asia. We will also continue to collaborate with Aarhus Centres in promoting community-based disaster risk reduction.

**Climate change** will also remain a priority for my Office. In 2015, together with our partners in the Environment and Security –ENVSEC- Initiative, we continue to address security implications of climate change in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus in partnership with the European Commission’s Instrument for Stability and the Austrian Development Agency. As part of this work, we will, for example, soon finalize a transboundary climate change adaptation strategy for the Dniester river basin shared by Moldova and Ukraine, which will serve as best practice example for other shared river basins worldwide.

My Office, together with field operations, will also continue its activities on **hazardous waste and substances**. In Central Asia, we are starting a new project to raise awareness on the risks posed by uranium mining legacy sites and facilitate dialogue to better address these risks. This work will benefit from the Aarhus Centres in the region. In Eastern Europe, this year we will finalize two projects: training of border management officers in Moldova and Ukraine in the prevention of illegal trafficking of hazardous waste as well as development of safety regulations for demarcation works in the radioactively contaminated area on the Belarus – Ukraine border.

**Strengthening civil society and good governance** remain firmly at the centre of our environmental activities. Together with our field operations, for over a decade now, we have been supporting participating States in implementing environmental good governance principles through the UNECE Aarhus Convention on *Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*. The Aarhus Centres are our primary tools in this endeavour. There are currently 57 OSCE supported Aarhus Centres operating in 14 countries across the OSCE region. In 2015, my Office will mainly focus on strengthening the networking among Aarhus Centres within and across countries.

**Access to justice** also constitutes an important pillar of our work. As we speak now, my Office is holding a workshop in Tbilisi for judges from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus region. The workshop aims at enhancing and exchanging knowledge and experience among the judiciary on procedural requirements of the Aarhus Convention.

We will also continue our direct support to civil society organizations that address environment and security challenges at community level, mainly through the **CASE NGO Small Grants programme**. Since its launching in 2009, a total of 63 NGO projects received CASE support in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan.

As you can see, all these activities require **effective partnerships**, be it at the *national level*- among government agencies, civil society and Parliaments-; at the *regional level* among

countries; or at the *international level* among different international actors- such as the Environment and Security Initiative.

Referring to partnerships, I would also like to emphasize **our engagement with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation**. Sharing good practices and experience beyond the OSCE region is one of the areas we engage in with Partners for Co-operation. This year we will consolidate the results of our co-operation with Mediterranean Partners within the so called Valencia follow-up process that promotes a dialogue on environment and security issues. As part of this process, my Office organized two expert-level workshops – one in Amman in 2012 and the other one in Vienna last December - to map environment and security challenges in the region and enable sharing of experiences.

At the end of my statement, I would like to highlight some planned activities in the field of **Energy** that will build upon activities undertaken in the past years, also taking into account the two decisions adopted at the 2013 Ministerial Council in Kyiv.

Given the close linkages between energy, environment and security in the OSCE area and beyond, sustainable energy will continue to feature prominently in my Office's work. We are planning a range of activities in co-operation with the OSCE field operations in order to promote best practices and continue capacity-building in the area of sustainable energy, in line with MC.DEC/5/13.

The dissemination of knowledge on ways to increase the protection of Non-Nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure is another tool to strengthen energy security in the OSCE region. In this context, and to implement MC.DEC/6/13, my Office is currently developing a *Handbook of Best Practices to Protect Electricity Networks from Natural Disasters*. We hope to be able to release it later this year.

Finally, I would like to refer to the importance of expanded co-operation with specialized international energy organizations in order to take advantage of their unique knowledge base. My Office will continue to work with the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division, Energy Charter Secretariat, the IEA, and NATO as well as with the organizations which make up the Vienna Energy Club. (*Energy Community, IAEA, IIASA, IPI, OFID, OPEC, UNIDO, REEEP, SE4ALL.*)

Thank you for your attention.