

TALKING POINTS OF THE DELEGATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Distinguished Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to thank the OSCE and the Belgium Chairmanship for preparation of the draft paper (Doc. EF.GAL/9/06) on the results of the 14<sup>th</sup> Economic Forum to facilitate our discussion on the follow-up activities. I would also like to praise the general good quality of the paper and present our comments.

1. We welcome in principle the cooperation between the OSCE and the UNECE on the implementation as a pilot project of the International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods of 21 October 1982. Nevertheless, we presume that this does not imply a general approval on broad involvement of OSCE in the realization of other UNECE Conventions that might go beyond the OSCE mandate. We would like the OSCE to find its niche in the area of economic cooperation where it fits best, and this was mentioned by our delegation on a number of occasions.

Such areas could be in our opinion good governance, security issues, harmonization and capacity building towards removal of obstacles at border crossing, certain environmental areas and very few others. We note that the chosen pilot project is in the mentioned areas. Our delegation believes that sharper focus on chosen niche areas would produce better results and enable avoidance of overlapping and duplication of the activities by other relevant organizations.

2. We would support the OSCE involvement together with the Office of the UN High Representative for the least developed, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states in preparation of indicators for monitoring the progress of the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action, and assistance to Participating States in fulfillment of their commitments under this Program.

3. We support the OSCE intention to organize a yearly stocktaking meeting on transport security in order to exchange information, create synergies, focus on challenges and identify the gaps.

4. In the section on transport and conflict resolution we have a number of observations:

- Needs assessment in the field of transport in conflict affected areas and areas with frozen conflicts should be carried out only upon consent of the relevant parties;
- Work at the level of regional and local authorities towards re-opening initially secondary transport links should be limited to those links where such re-opening is realistic;
- Pending progress on conflict issues the OSCE assistance towards improving security and governance and enhancing capacities of Ministers of Transport of the countries concerned in order to be able to more speedily rehabilitate physical infrastructure when a window of opportunity opens, should be carried out upon consent of relevant parties, due to the political sensitiveness of the matter;
- Conflict settlement initiatives including, where feasible through economic means, should be carried out in dialogue but not imposed upon a party or parties in order for this dialogue to become a truly confidence building measure.

5. In conclusion we would like to support the Norwegian initiative to share its experience gained in the Nordic region and in the Euro-Artic region, in particular in the area of security issues on international maritime transport. We would like to thank the Norwegian Government for its intention to organize a respective workshop on 16-18 October this year, and our relevant authorities will accordingly submit their inputs to the agenda of this workshop.

Thank you for your attention.