



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PROGRAMME

Preparatory Seminar for the Eighth Economic Forum

'Environmental Impact of Conflicts and Rehabilitation Measures'

Sarajevo, 13-14 December 1999

NB: Even though the seminar will take place in Sarajevo, the aim of the event is to cover this topic throughout the OSCE area and not to concentrate exclusively or even primarily on southeastern Europe.

1st day

- 0900 Registration begins
- 1000 Formal Opening of the Seminar
- Statement by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Husein Živalj
- Statement by the Austrian Ambassador to the OSCE, Dr. Jutta Stefan-Bastl, representing the Chairman-in-Office for the Year 2000
- Statement by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Mr. Thomas L. Price
- 1015 **Opening Plenary**
- 1015 *Direct Environmental Effects of the Kosovo Conflict:* Statement by Mr. Pasi Rinne, Senior Advisor to the Chairman, UNEP Balkan Task Force
- 1030 *Indirect and Long-term Environmental Effects of Conflict:* Statement by Mr. Branko Bosnjakovic, Regional Advisor on Environment, UNECE
- 1045 *The Role of NGO's in Assessing and Responding to the Environmental Impacts of Conflict:* Statement by Mr. Jernej Stritih, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre, Szentendre
- 1100 Plenary Discussion of Keynote Addresses

Working Group 1: Direct environmental effects

Moderator: Mr. Gary Vest, U.S. Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
Rapporteur: Mr. Johannes Rath, Director of Central Laboratory, Department of Biology,
University of Vienna, Austria

Lead Speakers:

Mr. Toni Popovski, Minister of Environment of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Mr. Ram Aviram, Director for Water Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel
Mr. Harald Egerer, Consultant, UNEP
Mr. Philip Weller, Director, WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Office
Mr. Andy Garner, Consultant, UNDP

WG 1 will address issues such as public health, refugees, waste processing, transboundary water pollution, air pollution, etc., including examples from recent conflicts in the Balkans, 'frozen' conflicts in the OSCE area, as well as situations in other areas involving both participating States and partner countries, e.g. Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

Working Group 2: Indirect effects and environmental rehabilitation

Moderator: Ambassador Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl, Permanent Representative of Austria to the UNOV
Rapporteur: Mr. Oscar De Soto, First Secretary, U.S. Mission to the OSCE

Lead Speakers:

Mr. Arkady Capcalea, Minister of Environment of Moldova
Ms. Liz Hopkins, Regional Director, IUCN
Mr. Philip Rushbrook, WHO
Mr. Branko Bosnjakovic, Regional Advisor on Environment, UNECE
Dr. Peter Literathy, Director, Institute for Water Pollution Control (representing Green Cross International)

WG 2 will focus on indirect and/or long-term effects linking environmental questions to humanitarian issues such as institutional issues, health, soil and water issues, biodiversity, and disposal of munitions, including examples from the Balkans, the Caucasus, Moldova, and the Mediterranean region.

1300 Lunch break

1500 Working Groups resume for 90 minutes

1630 Coffee break

1645 Working Groups resume for 90 minutes

1830 Reception given by the Host Government

2nd Day

1000 Working Groups resume for 90 minutes

1130 Coffee break

1145 Working Groups conclude in 90 minutes

1315 Lunch break

1500 *Remedies: what constitutes rehabilitation?* Keynote Address by Mr. Timo Mäkelä, Head of Unit, Environment Directorate General of the European Commission, followed by a plenary session, to include presentation of Working Group reports, with discussion to focus on this Address and practical remedies in light of both the Working Group discussions and the possible future role of the OSCE in this field

1630 Coffee Break

1700 Reading of the Chairman's Summary
Formal Closing of the Seminar by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Husein Živalj

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CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

On 13-14 December 1999, the OSCE held in Sarajevo, in co-operation with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the second sub-regional Seminar in a series of three designed to prepare participating States for the Eighth Economic Forum. Representatives of 22 OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, several OSCE Missions and field Offices, the Secretariat, as well as numerous international organizations and NGOs from throughout the region, participated in the Seminar.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Husein Zivalj, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who welcomed participants on behalf of the Foreign Minister. Participants were also welcomed by Ambassador Jutta Stefan-Bastl, Permanent Representative of Austria to the OSCE, who represented the Chairman-in-Office for the year 2000 and asked participants to make concrete suggestions for follow-up at the Eighth Economic Forum. The OSCE Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities stressed the importance of the economic dimension in the work of the OSCE and reminded participants that much needs to be done by participating States before long-standing commitments regarding economic and environmental aspects of security in the OSCE area were fulfilled.

During the opening plenary, participants recognized the severe impact of armed conflict and refugees on the environment, and emphasized that environmental damage was not only an effect but also as a cause of conflict. They noted the recently growing awareness of the destabilizing effect of environmental damage and recommended that appropriate international organizations develop a more systematic approach to assessing the environmental impact of armed conflict. The OSCE could play an important role in this specific field of conflict prevention by lending the necessary political impetus towards fostering international co-operation in that regard.

Keynote speakers also assessed the impact of the Kosovo conflict on the environment, describing direct and indirect environmental effects of conflict on air, water and soil. They discussed possible rehabilitation measures and the scope for trans-boundary co-operation and emphasized the role of NGO's in assessing and responding to environmental impacts of conflict. Furthermore, they underlined that reconstruction and rehabilitation should contribute to overall sustainable development in the region.

The two Working Groups focused on direct environmental effects, indirect effects and environmental rehabilitation. The Working Groups stressed that trans-border co-operation on environmental issues is an important tool for strengthening democratic institutions and for the prevention of conflict. The Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation's joint environmental expertise can be drawn upon in this regard to enhance our overall ability to prevent conflict. Participants recommended that the Stability Pact Meeting scheduled in Rome on 17 December also focus on the environmental concerns raised at this seminar as an overarching concern in the rehabilitation process.

The seminar was attended by several Ministers of Environment, who participated actively in the Working Groups. Like other speakers, they emphasized the severe impact on environment and public health of wars in the region, noting that effects of those conflicts are still being felt. They articulated a desire for help in identifying appropriate sources of international assistance and expertise in redressing some of this damage. Participants recognized that certain types of damage are irreversible and therefore stressed the paramount importance of preventing conflict. They also emphasized the need to carry out environmental follow-up work in the aftermath of armed conflict and the resultant displacement of persons. Several speakers praised the role of the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) in building institutions and promoting public participation, and underlined the importance of regional co-operation in solving environmental problems. It was also pointed out that environmental co-operation between local parties involved might serve as a confidence-building measure.

In the closing plenary, Mr. Timo Mäkelä from the Directorate General for Environment of the European Commission, described the European Commission's proposal for an environmental reconstruction programme for South East Europe. Echoing both the opening plenary and the discussion in Working Groups, he underlined that environmental co-operation could foster wider regional co-operation and thereby contribute to the reinforcement of the civil society and sustainable development in the region. He also called for greater engagement and activity on the part of local and regional actors.

The seminar suggested that the OSCE could play a catalytic role in helping participating States to find assistance in addressing the environmental impacts of conflict. It could also help in the overall peace-building process by facilitating transnational co-operation on environmental problems as a confidence-building measure. By integrating the areas of security and the environment, the OSCE could play a key role in bringing environmental concerns from the grass roots level to the attention of political and security decision-makers.

**Preparatory Seminar for the Eighth Economic Forum
"Environmental Impact of Conflicts and Rehabilitation Measures"
Sarajevo, 13-14. December 1999**

Report of the Rapporteur: Johannes Rath (Austria)

Working Group 1: Direct effects and Rehabilitation

Moderator: Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security Gary Vest (USA)

1. Approximately 40 participants representing OSCE participating States, Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, UNEP, UNDP, EC, NATO and NGO' s took part in the working group.
2. The moderator pointed out in his introduction the presentations and discussion should lead: First to a better knowledge of the specific environmental problems arising in the sequence of a conflict; and second to discuss the role of the OSCE in the context of activities of other international organisations.
3. Keynote speakers gave introductions to specific environmental problems arising from military conflicts. Areas touched in this presentation were:
 - The environmental impact of refugee camps with focus on waste problems;
 - The potential health impacts of depleted uranium use during the war;
 - The problems in distinguishing between contamination which has been accumulating over a period of years and those introduced by the conflict;
 - The transboundary effects of pollution e.g. pollution of an international river system;
 - The transfer out of the conflict area and safe decontamination/disposal of hazardous waste;
 - Multilateral regional co-operation in resource management (water resource partitioning semi-arid and arid regions, river management) allows planning ahead the management of the limited resources.
4. Several observations were made by the speakers and members of the working group to encourage actions to prevent, minimize, and remediate the effects on the environment in the event of a conflict. These observations were discussed and supported by many members of the working group. The observations discussed were:
 - 1) The OSCE should encourage the establishment of conflict related environmental impact assessment methodology and a conflict related monitoring methodology.
 - 2) Competent international organizations should support national authorities during and after conflicts in standardizing environmental impact analyses and health risk assessments and in contingency planning, reconstruction and rehabilitation.
 - 3) Appropriate international organizations should facilitate on site monitoring (short and long term) of conflict related impacts to the environment. Diversity of conflict related

consequences to the environment might make it difficult to standardize such as post-conflict monitoring programmes.

4) The OSCE should support the joint appeal of UNEP/UNDP under the United Nations interagency co-ordinated appeal by OCHA to have the power to address and remediate the environmental emergencies (i.e. chemical hot spots identified by the BTF) resulting from the Kosovo conflict as a humanitarian issue.

5) Appropriate international organizations should facilitate effective working relationships (including cross-border interactions) between NGO's, governmental agencies and international organisations. They also should facilitate transparent processes that emphasise access to information and appropriate opportunities for public participation in reconstruction and rehabilitation decisions.

6) Implementation and enforcement of existing international instruments addressing collateral environmental damages in conflicts should be further facilitated.

7) Appropriate international organizations should support the organization of a scientific symposium on environmental impacts of conflicts in spring 2000.

8) The OSCE can draw upon the expertise of its partner countries in conflict prevention, inter alia, in regard to international water management.

9) The OSCE recognizes that the sound management of hazardous wastes is a major concern during the conflict cycle and supports the co-operation of appropriate international organizations to prevent or remediate any adverse effect of hazardous waste to human health and to the environment.

10) The OSCE should support the activity of REC's towards assessing regional environmental reconstruction.

5. Conclusions:

Conflicts have negative effects on the environment that go beyond the actual conflict zone. The rehabilitation of conflict-related environmental damages is an integral part of international security and peace. The comprehensive political approach of the OSCE to international security and co-operation should take into account the specific destabilising effects of conflict related environmental damages. NGO's and REC's have a very important role in building up awareness of problems and in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of conflict-related damages to the environment.

**OSCE Preparatory Seminar for the Eighth Economic Forum
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Report of the Rapporteur Oscar De Soto (USA)

Working Group 2 – Indirect Effects and Environmental Rehabilitation

Moderator Ambassador Irene Freundenschuss-Reichl (Austria)

Working Group 2 discussions were focused on two main topics. The WG participants first examined ways in which environmental cooperation contributes to building peace and stability. Second, the WG reviewed how post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction activities should promote sustainable development.

Throughout the two days of discussions, delegations agreed with central importance of ideas presented by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) on the need to promote credible democratic institutional development and to build mechanisms which take environmental factors into account during rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. Participants emphasized the importance of transboundary cooperation since environmental problems do not stop at national borders and cooperation as a confidence building measure. They also agreed on the importance of promoting a working civil society, with a strong NGO movement, transparent decision-making, open public participation, and an impartial, independent judiciary as well as on the need to support the rapid integration of countries in transition to work effectively with international institutions and organizations. WG participants recognized that the severe economic situation in countries in the region and disparities in development made implementation of these principles and performance uneven. Representatives also stressed that an important environmental effect of conflict is its adverse impact on human health.

During discussions on ways in which environmental cooperation contributes to building peace and stability, WG 2 participants:

1. Called for enhanced efforts to strengthen practical environmental cooperation at the local level. Cooperation among municipal or district authorities, with involvement of NGO's and the public, should focus on practical economic activities such as sharing of resources, pollution abatement, etc. Local cooperation can overcome political obstacles at the national level and lead to central government support. Such activities need modest assistance from the international community and should be focused on important, transboundary projects.
2. Encouraged initiation of IUCN "Parks for Peace" programs that provide guidelines and criteria which foster regional cooperation. Southeast Europe region is well suited for such programs because many of its bio-diversity areas are in transboundary areas and they are important economically as watersheds.
3. Urged better and more frequent use of existing frameworks such as UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) conventions and other sub-regional frameworks that have environmental components (Southeast Europe Cooperation Initiative – SECI, Central Europe Initiative – CEI, Black Sea Economic Cooperation – BSEC, Danube River Protection

Convention, Council of Baltic Sea States -- CBSS, etc.) Many of these initiatives require joint bodies and would stimulate bilateral cooperation.

4. Endorsed the ECE/SECI proposal for the development of a regional cooperative initiative for the Adriatic Sea catchment area patterned after the Danube River Protection Convention and CBSS. This proposed initiative is on the Stability Pact, Table II agenda and should be elaborated as soon as possible.
5. Consider the establishment of national and regional environmental intervention groups and contingency plans to address environmental incidents through cooperation on rapid clean-up operations.

During discussions about how post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction activities should promote sustainable development, WG 2 participants:

1. Urged cooperative efforts to get environmental concerns high on national government's agendas when developing rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. This requires active public participation, strong civil society and democratic institutions, and the establishment of environmental impact assessment mechanisms to build consensus for targeted investments in market-based development projects that are sustainable.
2. Stressed that the Stability Pact provides an important framework that should be used fully to develop initiatives that address environmental priorities. Participants encouraged governments, including local government authorities, private sectors, and NGO's to work together to develop regional or transboundary initiatives focused on ensuring environmental priorities are on the Stability Pact agenda.
3. Supported objectives of the October 4, 1999 SECI/ECE meeting on the Stability Pact that underscore the importance of promoting civil society, a focus on meeting citizen's needs, the involvement in decision-making of NGO's, and strengthening institutional capacity of local authorities at municipal levels. For the success of environmental projects, it is very important that any initiatives be fully backed by national governments, not solely environment ministries or NGO's.
4. Urged continued involvement of the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) in environmental programs in Southeast Europe. In particular, the establishment of counterpart programs for small municipalities would help build local capacity to arrange funding and seek private sector investment, especially for projects (e.g., local water treatment) with financing requirements too low to meet traditional international financial institution thresholds.
5. Welcomed IUCN and REC interest to work jointly with the government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to develop a regional environmental plan for Southeast Europe.
6. Encouraged better international community cooperation to develop rapid assessment of the impact of conflict on human health, including through the establishment of agreed standards of assessments. The development of a central clearinghouse or registry to identify which donor organization is funding what projects would improve both general efficiency of programs and funding mechanisms aimed at rapidly restoring social services after a conflict.

The importance of the development of strict standards for quality control of medicines provided during or after a conflict was stressed.

7. Urged the implementation of the UNEP Balkans (Habitat) Task Force recommendations on the Kosovo conflict.
8. Called for further cooperation in humanitarian de-mining activities, including those promoting mine clearance and social, economic and environmental rehabilitation.



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