

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND
AT THE CONCLUDING MEETING OF THE 21st OSCE ECONOMIC
AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Prague, 11 to 13 September 2013

**Increasing stability and security: Improving the environmental footprint of
energy-related activities in the OSCE region**

Opening plenary session

Mr. Chairperson,

The theme of this year's forum is also relevant for Switzerland. Exactly one week ago, the Swiss Government adopted the message on the Energy Strategy for 2050, a package of measures for ensuring our country's long-term energy supply.

Today, the Swiss per capita energy use – and hence environmental footprint – is large. It currently amounts to a continuous output of around 6,400 watts, and is thus still far away from the goal for which we are striving – a 2,000-watt society. Comprehensive measures are therefore needed. In this regard, the new energy strategy pursues several lines of attack. The following points should be emphasized in particular:

First, the strategy calls for energy and electricity consumption to be reduced through economical use of energy and strengthened efficiency measures. Compared with the reference year (2000), energy consumption will be reduced by 16 per cent by 2020 and by 43 per cent by 2035. Secondly, the renewable energy share will be expanded. This is all the more important as Switzerland has decided to make a strategic exit from nuclear power. Already today, around half of the electricity produced in Switzerland is obtained from hydroelectric power. In the future, the share of other alternative technologies (solar energy, biomass, biogas, wind power and waste-to-energy) in generating electricity will increase. Lastly, the planned conversion of the network to smart grids, and an optimal connection to the European network, should bring with them savings in consumption.

Mr. Chairperson,

The theme of energy and environment is very broad. In our view, the discussions over the next three days should lead to our reaching agreement on the areas in which the OSCE and its participating States should become involved. In particular, we should be clear as to where we need to strengthen or better focus the OSCE's commitments. The negative consequences of energy-related activities on the environment affect us all. They can

undoubtedly have repercussions for our security. On this basis, we should welcome a focused commitment by the OSCE. There are several points of contact with the Declaration on Strengthening Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism that our ministers adopted in Dublin. We feel it is important, however, for the OSCE's commitment to be concentrated in a few fields: (a) those in which it can bring added value, and (b) those from which a majority of participating States can derive benefit. In this connection, we look forward with interest to a draft ministerial decision by the Ukrainian Chairmanship in this realm.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, allow me to take a brief glimpse at the next forum. In recent decades, not only has the economic damage wrought by disasters increased, but so have the frequency, intensity and spatial dimensions of extreme environmental events. Mitigating the dangers and consequences of such natural and man-made disasters is therefore a priority from the security, economic and environmental-policy perspective. Co-operation between participating States and international and non-governmental organizations through preventive, coping and recovery measures in the event of disaster plays a central role, as was already envisaged in the OSCE Istanbul Summit Declaration of 1999. It is on this basis that Switzerland, in the context of its Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014, would like to further explore this theme under the title "Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area", as was decided on at the 962nd meeting of the Permanent Council on 25 July 2013.

For the time being, however, we look forward to the next three days and to fruitful discussions on the theme of the 21st OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.