

OSCE and energy security

- Energy security involves a number of complex factors related to international trade, supply and pricing. Today's strategic decisions will have important consequences for decades to come and can positively contribute to global economic stability.
- To prevent and resolve energy-related disputes, the international community needs to engage in dialogue to enhance transparency, reliability and co-operation in the energy field.
- The OSCE's core mandate is security and it is within this framework that the Organization is addressing energy issues – security of delivery, security of demand, security of transport and transit and capacity to overcome a possible disruption, thus playing a complementary role alongside other international and regional organizations.
- The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization with 56 participating States that include key energy producers, consumers and transit countries.
- As a political platform, the OSCE can contribute to promoting political will for improved co-operation. As a regional organization, the OSCE can advance regional developmental processes; as an organization with a crisis resolution mandate, the OSCE can contribute to solving potential energy disputes.
- The OSCE Strategy Document for the economic and environmental dimension adopted in Maastricht in 2003, as well as successive Ministerial Council Decisions adopted in 2006, 2007 and 2009, recognized that energy security is an integral part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security.
- The Vilnius meeting follows on a number of OSCE activities, including a conference on strengthening energy security in the OSCE area in Bratislava in July 2009, a Central and Eastern Europe expert workshop on energy infrastructure security in Minsk in December 2009, and conferences in Ashgabat on strengthening regional co-operation in Central Asia for promoting stable and reliable energy in February 2010 and May 2010.

OSCE and energy security

Challenges to be discussed include:

- Securing investments to ensure the necessary conditions for the development of the energy sector. A number of countries, including some OSCE participating States, face significant difficulties in securing delivery of energy quantities consistent with the needs of their population. New transport infrastructures need to be built, including in the gas sector in order to bring gas to the markets;
- Updating national and international legal frameworks. Natural resources, particularly in the energy sector, are traditionally treated by governments as a matter of national sovereignty, and political will is needed if there is to be real progress with respect to deregulation, privatization and liberalization;
- Developing a comprehensive approach with regard to risks related to critical energy infrastructure, as well as technical disruption, natural disasters and potential terrorist threats. Disruption of critical energy infrastructure would have a serious impact on the health, safety, security and economic well-being of citizens, and the role of both state authorities and of private companies needs to be addressed;
- Promoting robust domestic energy policies, including better management of the energy mix, as well as a co-ordinated approach to develop alternative and non-fossil energy sources in order to contribute to lessening greenhouse gas emissions.

The OSCE Secretary General will submit a report to participating States based on the outcomes and recommendations of the meeting in Vilnius, as well as on consultations with States and relevant international organizations and agencies.