



EUROPEAN UNION

21st OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum Concluding Meeting

Prague, 11 – 13 September 2013

EU Closing Statement

Final

The European Union would like to thank the Ukrainian Chairmanship and the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities for organising the 21st OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, as well as the Czech authorities for hosting this event. It has been our pleasure to take part in the concluding meeting of the Forum here in Prague, which marked the culmination of a series of constructive discussions within the wider scope of the work of the Second Dimension. We consider this input valuable as we progress towards the Ministerial Council in Kyiv.

We welcome the Ukrainian Chairmanship's choice to designate the environmentally sustainable energy management as the overarching theme of the EED this year. The focus of this year's EEF on improving the environmental footprint of energy-related activities in the OSCE region reflects well the need for our Organisation's more active future engagement in addressing the link between energy, environment and security, and advancing energy sustainability.

In this context, we support the efforts towards enhancing trans-boundary cooperation in environmental and energy issues, with a view to increasing security and stability. Moreover, it is indispensable that the strengthening of international and regional cooperation be linked to more effective implementation of relevant legal instruments, mechanisms and commitments.

Good governance and transparency is an area in which the OSCE has acquired expertise, notably with the renewal of commitments in the Dublin Declaration on Good Governance. This document contains the acquis on which we should build, in order to entrench the principles of good governance and transparency in the fields of

energy and environment. Good governance and transparency is key across all three dimensions. We are in favour of strengthening transparency and accountability, inter alia in the domain of extractive industries, and participation of civil society. In this vein, we support the idea of endorsing and promoting the EITI principles in the OSCE region.

Another existing set of international commitments to the implementation of which we attach great importance is the Aarhus Convention. In this regard, we welcome increased cooperation between the public and the private sector, as well as more active involvement of the civil society. Ensuring public participation in decision-making processes is important for the EU.

We acknowledge and value the OSCE's role as a platform for dialogue, exchange of information and best practices on broader energy issues. We experienced this first-hand within the framework of this Forum, as we had the opportunity to gain an insight in various aspects of the environmental facets of energy-related activities. We have appreciated the inclusion of a side event concerning the issue of Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection, which we consider a topic of direct relevance to the theme of the EEF, in so far as it is linked to energy security issues and touches upon environmental aspects of energy-related activities.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that we stand ready to constructively engage in a process, which will pave the way to a fruitful Ministerial Council in Kyiv, on the basis of, and as a follow-up to, the momentum that the 21st EEF has created.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and SERBIA*, the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of MOLDOVA, align themselves with this statement.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.