



Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Poland
to the Organization for Security
and Co-operation in Europe
in Vienna



Annotated agenda 2021 OSCE Mediterranean Conference

Road to resilience: post-pandemic recovery and security in the OSCE and Mediterranean regions

Vienna, Austria, and online, 12-13 October 2021

Introduction

At the 2020 OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Vienna – the first one to take place in a virtual format due to COVID-19-related restrictions – Ministers and other high-level representatives of the OSCE participating States and the Partners for Co-operation met at a critical moment and shared their mutual concerns about the multiple challenges that the spread of the novel virus had raised for their societies, from public health through employment and education to security. With the pandemic still in full force, they concurred that overcoming the crisis would require reviewing existing models of development and governance. In a spirit of genuine partnership, they noted that a return to normalcy would not be possible without a stronger focus on sustainability and a renewed commitment to international co-operation.

Against this backdrop, Poland as the Chairmanship of the 2021 OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group fostered dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation on a range of crucial topics throughout the year, with a view to tackling ongoing challenges as well as seizing available opportunities beyond the crisis. Topics of dialogue included: post-pandemic recovery; transnational organized crime; and youth.

As a coronation of this programme, the 2021 OSCE Mediterranean Conference will address the topic of “Road to resilience: post-pandemic recovery and security in the OSCE and Mediterranean regions”. The event shall start with a high-level political segment addressing “Security and co-operation in the Mediterranean in light of the COVID-19 pandemic”. Thematic sessions shall then tackle specific aspects, including promoting sustainable and “green” recovery, fighting pandemic-related transnational organized crime, and combating human trafficking in labour markets affected by the pandemic.

The Conference shall provide a platform for “advancing a common approach in tackling challenges ... and seizing emerging opportunities, in a spirit of genuine partnership, co-operation, and

ownership”, as called for by the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (MC.DOC/4/18). Among other issues, the Conference shall enhance a discussion on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the security link between the OSCE and Mediterranean regions and how comprehensive security should be understood and operationalized in a post-pandemic context.

Tuesday, 12 October 2021

12.00-12.55 – Registration of participants

12.55-13.00 – Technical introduction and welcome

13.00-13.30 – Opening remarks

Chair: Mr. Adam Hałaciński, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the OSCE

Speakers:

1. H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Poland
2. H.E. Ms. Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
3. H.E. Ms. Megi Fino, Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Albania
4. H.E. Ms. Helga Schmid, OSCE Secretary General

13.30-15.30 – High-level political segment: Security and co-operation in the Mediterranean in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

Chair: Mr. Adam Hałaciński, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the OSCE

Speakers:

Please see the attached annex

After the high-level political statement, the floor will be opened for statements from other delegations

Rapporteur for Opening Remarks and Political Segment: Ms. Katarzyna Banaszkiwicz, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the OSCE

15.30-16.00 – Coffee break

16.00-18.00 – Session I: Strengthening international co-operation in fighting transnational organized crime prompted by the pandemic

During the pandemic, organized crime groups (OCG) have taken advantage of the economic recession to create new avenues of profit. The risk to exploit the socio-economic vulnerabilities of some parts of the public, directly and indirectly increased significantly. By creating dependencies among small- and medium-sized enterprises facing financial difficulties, OCG have managed to fuel money-laundering activities and increase illegal profits. Furthermore, the urgent need to procure medical products and equipment prompted them to penetrate the market with counterfeit goods.

As large sums of public funds are allocated to mitigate the economic consequences of COVID-19, strong institutions and good governance will be more important than ever. Although checks on public tenders are designed to root out criminal enterprise, the large scale of planned investments in wake of the coronavirus pandemic, and the pressure that state institutions are under to provide ad-hoc and un-bureaucratic support to businesses, could mean that these processes are less likely to detect illegitimate businesses.

Safeguards need to be in place to reduce risks of corruption in the disbursement of public funds. Strengthening international co-operation in criminal matters, including cybercrime cases, through an early exchange of information among states, and continuing recovering criminals' assets remain crucial to address organized crime activities.

Chair: Alena Kupchyna, OSCE Co-ordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats

Speakers:

1. Ms. Louise Shelley, Omer L. and Nancy Hirst Endowed Chair, Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC), University Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, United States
2. Ms. Anita Ramasastry, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Corruption
3. Ms. Faouzia Mebarki, Permanent Representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the International Organisations in Vienna
4. Mr. Motasem Al Qassaymeh, Public Security Directorate, Ministry of Interior, Jordan
5. Ms. Alexandra Antoniadis, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission
6. Mr. Fabian Zhilla, Senior Legal Consultant, Canadian Institute of Technology in Tirana, Albania

Rapporteur: Denise Mazzolani, Deputy Head, Strategic Police Matters Unit, Transnational Threats Department, OSCE

18.30-20.00 – Reception

Registered participants shall receive a separate invitation for this social event

Wednesday, 13 October 2021

10.00-12.00 – Session II: Combating trafficking in human beings in labour markets affected by the pandemic

The pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and created new ones – labour market disruptions across the OSCE have created conditions that traffickers are increasingly exploiting. The scale of trafficking and the limited resources States have available to combat it put extra pressure on law enforcement and labour inspectorates to swiftly identify signs of exploitation, as more and more people in difficult situations are likely to fall prey to recruitment into exploitation.

However, this environment also presents an opportunity for a strategic shift in anti-trafficking response. In the challenging post-COVID economic environment, States can take the opportunity to integrate their traditional anti-trafficking approach with measures to prevent exploitation from occurring in the first place. Even before the pandemic hit, preventing labour exploitation in supply chains had emerged among the most promising anti-trafficking strategies to address the ‘demand’ fuelling exploitation; now these approaches have gained even greater relevance.

The OSCE has led the global conversation on this topic and produced some of the most innovative and discussed tools, including a Model Law and guidelines for action. The 2021 Mediterranean Conference is an opportunity for States to exchange their experience and best practices on the topic, identify common solutions and adopt joint strategies to ensure that the necessary post-COVID recovery is built on solid foundations free from exploited labour.

Chair: Mr. Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Speakers:

1. Mr. Dominique Potier, Member of the National Assembly, France
2. Mr. Keith Shannon, Envoy for Migration and Modern Slavery, United Kingdom
3. Ms. Diane Schmitt, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator
4. Ms. Naela Gabr, Chairperson of The National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons, Egypt
5. Ms. Dina Dominitz, National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Israel
6. Mr. Talal Awalmeh, Public Security Directorate, Ministry of Interior, Jordan

Rapporteur: Andrea Salvoni, Office of the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

12.00-13.30 – Lunch

14.00-16.00 – Session III: Sustainable recovery as a springboard from socio-economic crisis to security

Starting with 2020, the struggle with COVID-19 crisis has reversed many years of development gains globally and in the OSCE and Mediterranean areas. As the COVID-19 crisis continues, it continues to amplify existing fragilities and inequalities, imperilling progress towards sustainable development. As the pandemic is unfolding, climate change is emerging as another profound global crisis posing growing risk to economies, societies, and the environment. The recent assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) notes that warming across the Mediterranean will be about 20 percent higher than global averages in the decades to come. Among other pressing challenges, efficient and cooperative water management will be key to resilience. All this demonstrates the urgency and necessity of a transformative approach that would turn the pandemic into an opportunity to recover and build back better.

A shift towards more resource-efficient and low-emissions economies is not only a prerequisite for meeting the climate commitments but can also be a driver for increased prosperity and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Pursuing an inclusive approach in recovery and paying particular attention to women and youth as agents of change are also key to accomplish a green and prosperous transition and ensure sustainability.

The 2021 Mediterranean Conference provides an opportunity for States to exchange experiences and best practices on these topics, particularly on the eve of major global events, such as the COP26, and explore prospects for enhanced cooperation and partnerships around them to further advance common security in the Mediterranean.

Chair: Mr. Andrea Dessi, Senior Fellow, Mediterranean and Middle East Programme, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Italy

Speakers:

1. Mr. Ahmed Bakr, Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Nile Water Affairs, Egypt
2. Ms. Sarah Wilner, Director, MASHAV Carmel Training Center, Israel
3. Mr. Azzedine Farhane, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the International Organizations in Vienna
4. Mr. Samir Graiche, 1st Secretary, Permanent Representation of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the International Organizations in Vienna

Rapporteur: Maksym Mishalov Dragunov, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

16.00-16.30 – Concluding remarks

Chair: Philippe Tremblay, Head of External Co-operation, Office of Secretary General, OSCE

Speakers:

1. Mr. Bogusław Winid, Head of the OSCE Task Force, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland
2. Mr. Pascal Allizard, OSCEPA Vice-President
3. Mr. Igor Djundev, Permanent Representative of the Republic of North Macedonia to the OSCE

Rapporteur: Emiliano Alessandri, External Co-operation, Office of Secretary General, OSCE