

22ND ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to
promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area”

COMPILATION OF CONSOLIDATED SUMMARIES

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
Wallnerstrasse 6, 1010 Vienna; Tel: + 43 1 51436-6675; Fax: 51436-6251
email: pm-oceea@osce.org; www.osce.org/eea



22ND ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area”

COMPILATION OF CONSOLIDATED SUMMARIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

22^{ne} OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum
CONCLUDING MEETING
Prague, 10-12 September 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
RAPPORTEURS' REPORTS	11
Opening Plenary Session	11
Review of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of disaster risk reduction	16
Session I: Flooding disaster in South Eastern Europe – Lessons learned and the role of the OSCE	19
Session II (Panel Debate): Disaster Risk Reduction on the global agenda: implications for the OSCE area	22
Session III: Slow-onset natural disasters as triggers of tensions and opportunities for co-operation	26
Session IV: A co-operative response to environmental challenges: OSCE experience and lessons learned for the future	30
Session V: Facilitating disaster preparedness and response through innovation, technology and information, and Public-Private-Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction	33
Session VI (Panel Debate): How to achieve resilience in the OSCE area?	37
Session VII (Panel Debate): The Role of the OSCE in responding to environmental challenges	41
Concluding Plenary Session: Follow up to the 22 nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum	47
ANNOTATED AGENDA	51

**22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum
SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING
Montreux, Switzerland, 20-21 May 2014**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	65
RAPPORTEURS' REPORTS	69
Opening Session:	69
Session I: Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level	73
Session II (Panel Debate): Cross-dimensional Impacts of Natural and Man-made disasters	77
Session III: Coping measures to reduce disaster risks at an international, cross- border and national level	84
Concluding Discussion/ Closing Statements	87
ANNOTATED AGENDA with an outline of the Field Visits	90

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum
FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING
Vienna, 27-28 January 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	99
RAPPORTEURS' REPORTS	103
Session I: Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages	103
Session II: Behind Natural Disasters – The human-environment interaction: Case studies 1	107
Session III (Panel Debate): Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?	110
Session IV: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 2	114
Session IV - Cont.: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case Studies 3	117
Session V (Panel Debate): Role of civil society in disaster-risk management	121
Concluding Session: The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum	125
ANNOTATED AGENDA	127

ANNEXES

Annex 1:	Permanent Council Decision on Theme, Agenda and Modalities for the twenty second OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (PC.DEC/1088/13)	135
Annex 2:	Background Paper of the incoming Swiss Chairmanship on the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22 nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF.GAL/3/14)	138
Annex 3:	Background Paper of the 2014 Swiss Chairmanship on the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22 nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF.GAL/10/14)	148
Annex 4:	Chairmanship's Perception Paper on the outcomes of the two Preparatory Meetings of the 22 nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF.GAL/15/14)	162
Annex 5:	Opening and Closing Remarks of the Concluding Meeting of the 22 nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum	169
Annex 6:	Opening and Closing Remarks of the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22 nd Economic and Environmental Forum; Field Visits assessment	187
Annex 7:	Opening and Closing Remarks of the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22 nd Economic and Environmental Forum	207

PLEASE NOTE:

All documents and speakers' presentations of the respective Forum Meeting are available on the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum website:

Concluding Meeting: www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_2014

Consolidated Summary (EEF.GAL/21/14/), <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/125188>

Second Preparatory Meeting: www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep2

Consolidated Summary (EEF.GAL/18/14), www.osce.org/cio/121180

First Preparatory Meeting: www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep1

Consolidated Summary (EEF.GAL/09/14/Rev.1), www.osce.org/eea/116192

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum CONCLUDING MEETING

Prague, 10-12 September 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Concluding Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area” took place in Prague, Czech Republic, on 10-12 September 2014. Seven thematic areas were addressed during the three-day meeting:

- Flooding disaster in South Eastern Europe - Lessons learned and the role of the OSCE;
- Slow-onset natural disasters as triggers of tensions and opportunities for co-operation;
- A co-operative response to environmental challenges: OSCE experience and lessons learnt for the future;
- Facilitating disaster preparedness and response through innovation, technology and information, and Public-Private-Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction;
- How to achieve resilience in the OSCE area;
- The role of the OSCE in responding to environmental challenges.

A last session devoted to the possible follow-up to the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum concluded the event.

More than 200 participants, including official representatives of OSCE participating States, Field Operations, as well as experts from international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the business community and academia attended the meeting and engaged in the discussions.

The CiO and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Didier Burkhalter, opened the event with Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic, and Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the OSCE.

The two key note speeches as well as many other interventions during the Concluding Forum emphasized the urgency and relevance for the OSCE to step up its activities on disaster risk reduction as well as climate change adaptation.

The review report by the UNDP on the Implementation of OSCE Commitments in the Field of Disaster Risk Reduction provided a comprehensive overview and a set of recommendations for further engagement.

Several participants highlighted that the OSCE’s comprehensive and co-operative approach to security and its experience in addressing environmental challenges provides the right basis for the Organization’s further engagement in the field of disaster risk reduction (DRR).

It was underlined that the OSCE is a recognized platform for dialogue where security implications of global, regional, national and local disaster related challenges can be discussed. It was also emphasized that the OSCE should co-operate and co-ordinate with other specialized organizations active in the field of DRR

Main conclusions and recommendations

A number of concrete proposals were also put forward by speakers and participants:

- It was highlighted that natural and man-made disasters do not respect political borders. In this regard, it was acknowledged that the OSCE could play an important role in the field of disaster risk reduction, by fostering **trans-boundary co-operation**. The OSCE could also work as a platform for sharing experiences and best-practices on prevention and management of and preparedness for disasters. Furthermore, participants considered that disaster risk reduction efforts could also contribute to building confidence and trust.
- The OSCE should further advance its assistance to participating States in **managing shared natural resources**. Many participants agreed that the joint management of shared natural resources could foster co-operation among neighbouring countries and communities. Strengthening capacities for **wildfire management** and promoting co-operation for management of **transboundary water resources** were highlighted as good examples of OSCE's engagement that should be continued and further enhanced.
- Some participants encouraged the OSCE to **integrate and to mainstream DRR in its projects and programmes**, in particular within the Economic and Environmental Dimension. It was suggested that disaster risk reduction and management could be incorporated in the agenda of future OSCE Economic and Environmental Fora. Participants welcomed the fact that the topic will be part of the 23rd Economic and Environmental Forum of 2015 which will focus on "Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability through co-operation"
- The importance of **multi-stakeholder engagement**, including state institutions, local authorities, civil society organizations, academia and media, was underlined and further co-operation between the OSCE and these stakeholders was encouraged. It was also suggested that the OSCE could foster knowledge-sharing among national platforms, strengthen national capacities on integrated DRR, including for the development of **national disaster risk management policies**.
- The links between **climate change and disasters**, as also reflected through the increase of frequency and magnitude of natural disasters, as well as climate change and security were highlighted. In this regard, several participants highlighted that - as DRR should go hand in hand with climate change adaptation and mitigation- the OSCE is well placed to contribute a security perspective to the global climate change negotiations.
- It was suggested that the OSCE could bring its comprehensive approach to security into the ongoing global processes for the **post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the post 2015 Development Agenda**, as well as the **2015 agreement on climate change** by introducing the linkages between climate change, disaster risk reduction and security to on-going discussions.

- The importance of enhanced co-operation and co-ordination of activities on DRR between the OSCE and relevant **international and regional organizations** was emphasized and the **OSCE's engagement in the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative** was praised. The work of the OSCE, within the framework of ENVSEC, in addressing management of natural resources, climate change and security, hazardous waste management and public participation was recognized by many participants. A continued active engagement of the OSCE in the ENVSEC Initiative, a robust mechanism for co-ordination and co-operation among international organizations, was encouraged.
- The importance of providing the public with accurate and timely information on DRR was underlined. **Raising public awareness** on the potential risks of disasters, including slow-onset disasters, and promoting community-based DRR were considered as a priority and the potential of the Aarhus Centres in this regard was widely acknowledged. The OSCE was encouraged to further expand the **Aarhus Centres Network** and strengthen their capacities on DRR. The **CASE NGO Small Grants Programme** also offers a mechanism for strengthening local capacities in community-based DRR. It was proposed that the OSCE, in particular its **field operations** could further assist participating States in disaster monitoring, forecasting and early warning.
- The need for **new technologies** aiming at improving resilience and public safety was underlined. Participants suggested that the OSCE could provide a platform for an exchange of technological developments on DRR among participating States.

REPORTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS

Opening Plenary Session

Moderator: Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Ms. Riccarda Caprez, Scientific Officer, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

Welcoming remarks:

H.E. Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic

H.E. Didier Burkhalter, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, President of the Swiss Confederation, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General, OSCE

Keynote speakers:

H.E. Margareta Wahlström, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Prof. Thomas Stocker, University of Bern, Co-Chair of Working Group I, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Followed by a general welcoming to the 22nd EEF by *Mr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities*, H.E. *Mr. Lubomir Zaoralek, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic*, reiterated the importance and urgent need to fostering co-operation and build confidence across Europe. He also referred to the situation in Ukraine, which shows how easy it is to destroy trust. The Minister briefly outlined the preparatory work of the meetings in Vienna and Montreux which showed that the OSCE can play an important role in the field of disaster risk management, in particular through fostering trans-boundary co-operation, promoting a dialogue including all relevant stakeholders but also through capacity building in countries of the OSCE region in the field of integrated risk management, and last but not least through confidence building measures. H.E. Mr. Lubomir Zaoralek concluded his remarks by thanking the Swiss Chairmanship and welcoming the incoming Serbian Chairmanship.

H.E. Mr. Didier Burkhalter, OSCE Chairman in Office (CiO) and President of the Swiss Confederation, emphasized the comprehensive security approach of the OSCE and the need of comprehensive measures in general to address the complex and often transnational security challenges in our globalized world. The OSCE would still have considerable room for improvement in enhancing its capacity to act, in all three dimensions. Referring to the economic border lines and frictions within the OSCE region that have contributed to a rapid decrease in security in the past few months, the CiO sees the OSCE as a useful platform for addressing some of these problems and finding ways of mitigating them in co-operative ways – without seeking to picking up functions of the specialized organizations like WTO or OECD, but as a security organization. The OSCE, according to the CiO, should play a bigger role at the interface of security and economics. With regard to the Ukrainian crisis, the OSCE could specifically play a role accompanying measures to rebuild confidence and assure verification of commitments through transparency, monitoring and reporting. Building up these kinds of capacities within the economic and environmental dimension could make a vital contribution to strengthening pan-

European security and stability. He further assured the Chairmanship's full and continuing commitment in helping de-escalate and resolve the crisis. Another point the CiO emphasized is the second current priority of the organization, which is the expansion and strengthening of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM). He also announced the technical and financial support of Switzerland to the SMM. As a third priority, the CiO mentioned the OSCE's assistance with the broader processes of reconciliation and reform in the Ukraine. A successful strengthening of the organization's comprehensive security approach would also encompass a strengthening of its second dimension. The promotion of an integrated disaster risk management approach was described by the CiO as particularly suitable for fostering co-operation since it can mobilize people to work together beyond borders and despite conflicts and because it concerns all three dimensions of the OSCE and is likely to spur cross-dimensional co-operation in the spirit of comprehensive security. Based on the discussion held at the two preparatory meetings in Vienna and Montreux, the Chairmanship proposes, as a first point, to work in the following three areas: address disasters smartly, on the prevention side, to pursue an integrated disaster risk management approach and to facilitate cross-border engagement in addressing environmental challenges. As a second proposal of the Swiss Chairmanship for the OSCE the CiO mentioned the adoption of an integrated risk governance approach, as an integral component of a comprehensive security perspective. In a third point, the Swiss Chairmanship would propose to strengthen cross-border co-operation, bearing in mind the trans-border and global characteristics of disaster risks. Further, the Swiss Chairmanship would also encourage OSCE participating States to demonstrate political leadership at the regional and the global level by bringing the comprehensive security approach into the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and promoting the notion of integrated disaster risk management. Finally, the CiO appealed for ambitiously working together on the road to Basel towards a strong commitment of the OSCE in the second dimension. This will help to build trust and reconsolidate European security as a common project across the OSCE area.

Followed by welcoming all participants to the forum, *H.E. Mr. Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Secretary General* in a first point acknowledged the importance of the rapid and effective response to the recent floods in the Balkans, enabled through a wide range of actors, including the OSCE and its participating States. The Secretary General underlined the OSCE's added value and strengths in addressing DRR issues with specific reference to the OSCE's role as a platform for multi-lateral and multi-stakeholder dialogue, its comprehensive mandate to address disaster risks from a cross-dimensional perspective, its field operations, its partnership in the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), and the wide network of Aarhus Centres. He further stressed the need to engage all stakeholders in finding solutions to environmental security challenges and referred to the main outcomes of the OSCE Security Days Event on Water Diplomacy which brought forward new perspectives into OSCE debate on environmental security. He further welcomed the incoming Serbian Chairmanship and the selected priority in the second dimension on water governance – a topic that can perfectly build upon the work done by the Swiss Chairmanship and will again show the importance of strategic co-operation and strong partnerships.

Keynote speakers:

The first keynote speaker, *H.E. Ms. Margareta Wahlström, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction*, prepared the ground for all the discussions to be followed throughout the forum. Ms. Wahlström not only emphasized the importance to

discuss the topic DRR also within the OSCE referring to the World Conference of Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 in Sendai but also to the Post-2015 Agenda on Sustainable Development to be adopted next year, saying that reducing risks of natural hazards indeed is a huge pillar for sustainable development. Ms. Wahlström pointed out the relevance of preventing measures to disaster risks also from an economic point of view, e.g. by an estimation of economic losses of 100 billion USD a year worldwide, whereas this trend is supposed to increase with growing economies. Ms. Wahlström further referred to the increasing significance of disasters for supply chains, such as e.g. the cascading effects after the Tsunami in Fukushima in 2011 have shown for the energy sector. Quoting a US governor she stated “that we are the first generation that feels the effects of climate change and the last one that can do anything about it”. Regarding the Second Dimension of the OSCE, Ms. Wahlström clearly recognized the potential to contribute its share. The global and regional level has multi-stakeholder character and the OSCE in her view is best placed to detect important gaps and include all sectors of the society, which is needed for addressing the challenges of DRR. Ms. Wahlström also clearly stated that in a future framework, disasters and conflicts cannot longer be tackled in isolation. The management of trans-boundary resources and trans-boundary natural disasters is a lot about building trust. Six months from the Third World Conference on DRR in Sendai, Ms. Wahlström sees the discussions of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum as most timely and she invited all states to actively participate. Ms. Wahlström also welcomed the presence of the OSCE in this context in achieving an inclusive, ambitious and effective outcome.

Complementary to the first keynote speech, *Prof. Thomas Stocker, Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the Working Group 1*, informed the audience of the most up-to-date findings on climate change. First Prof. Stocker called the forum’s attention to summary and headlines for policymakers of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report accepted by all governments. Prof. Stocker summarized the IPCC report pointing out the following findings: the warming of the world is a fact, the five hottest summers in Europe e.g. took place after 2001; there is no doubt that humans influence on the climate system by increasing the atmospheric concentration of CO₂; the risks of disasters are a combination of hazards, vulnerability and exposure, whereas hazards are directly influenced by climate while vulnerability and exposure are socioeconomic processes. The impacts of the changing climate though affect both, the climate itself and the socioeconomic processes; adaptation and mitigation choices in the near term will affect the risks of climate change throughout the 21st century; climate change related risks from extreme events, such as heat waves, extreme precipitation and coastal flooding are already perceptible and will increase further at higher temperature (with high confidence for heat waves); predicting trends for cyclones is more difficult, but they will be associated with economic losses; consistent with a significant lack of preparedness for current climate variability in some sectors, the impacts of such climate-related extremes include disruption of food production and water supply, damage to infrastructure and settlements and morbidity and mortality. Prof. Stocker concluded his speech by stating that a two degrees warmer world, as we experience now, is already different. But a 4.5 degrees warmer world (continuing with business as usual) will be fundamentally different, in particular the water cycle being a major concern. Today, he highlighted, we have a choice.

Then the floor was opened for interventions.

The representative of Uzbekistan referred to the domestic stable economic growth the country has experienced since its independence, pointing out that also decisions by the government to establish medium-term programs that stabilize environmental security contributed to that development. The delegate further emphasized the ongoing disaster of the shrinking Aral Sea with severe consequences such as droughts and desertification and the need of structural changes, joint forces on national, regional and international levels in order to address these effects.

The representative from the United States identified four points of major importance for the future of the second dimension of the OSCE: 1) the need of committed attendance through higher level delegations, 2) as a security organization to focus on the security implication of the economic and environment dimension, 3) the strengthening of ties between the secretariat and the field operations as a valuable opportunity and 4) good governance underpinning all discussions.

Italy on behalf of the EU (aligned the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia and Georgia), expressed its commitment to play a constructive role in the ongoing negotiations in the run-up to Sendai conference on the basis for the following five principles: improving accountability, transparency and governance; role of targets and indicators to measure progress and encourage implementation; strengthening the contribution of disaster risk management to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; addressing vulnerabilities and needs in a comprehensive framework; ensuring coherence with the international agenda, including the 2015 agreement on climate change. The EU further emphasized their interest in learning more about how the OSCE, as a regional security organisation under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, can become involved in these global discussions. They agreed with the Chairmanship that the OSCE should effectively utilize its comparative advantages and its strengths in the field of disaster risk reduction while avoiding duplicating activities in areas where other and better placed institutions are already leading efforts.

The representative from the Russian Federation emphasized the room for improvement especially for regional and sub-regional mechanisms for a better disaster risk management and the need for the OSCE to find its own niche in this work. The OSCE has already experience in providing assistance in the field of emergency situations through the OCEEA, field operations and the Environment and Security Initiative. The delegate then shared a series of examples of co-operation between the Russian Federation and countries of the Western Balkan as well as the EU.

The representative from Turkey accentuated that the OSCE is uniquely equipped to address the needed security perspective of disasters and called for concrete deliverables of the discussions. He informed the meeting about the upcoming OSCE regional fire management training that will be hosted by Turkey in October. The delegate further informed of his country's recent increase of funding for humanitarian assistance.

The representative from Belarus welcomed the timely choice of the theme of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum. He recalled the tragedy of Chernobyl in 1986 and added that

environmental issues, including the impact of natural and man-made disasters, are an integral part of the concept of comprehensive and cooperative security of the OSCE. The delegate pointed out that part of the OSCE's expertise is related to the improvement of co-ordination and co-operation between participating States in this area and the conduction of considerable practical work through the executive structures and the field presences. The representative added that Belarus has been consistently in favor of strengthening the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE, including by contributing to the discussions and the work carried on natural and man-made disasters, through regional and international efforts in this field.

The representative from Azerbaijan pointed out that whereas some OSCE documents include certain elements related to natural and man-made disasters, it is the first time that the OSCE is comprehensively looking at the topic of DRR. In this vein, before considering possible role by the OSCE in the field of disaster risk reduction, it is important to conduct a thorough assessment and review of the work carried out so far. The OSCE should build on the successful co-operation that the OCEEA has established with specialized institutions, and this co-operation might be further expanded. OSCE can add a security component to these organizations and can play a role as a platform for sharing national experiences among its participating States. This is also significant since many disasters, such as technological accidents, including those with a transboundary impact, might be prevented as a result of measures undertaken by States at a national level. Ensuring transparency, access to information, comprehensive and impartial Environmental Impact Assessment procedures also constitute a major component of the activities aimed at reduction risks and prevention of disasters. While considering confidence-building potential of co-operation in the field of addressing environmental challenges and disasters, the delegate emphasized that such potential might exist in cases where environmental and disaster-related challenges themselves are at the core of the existing or possible tensions. However, in the delegate's view, co-operation cannot build confidence in cases of conflicts caused by other factors, and hence can only be considered after security concerns have been addressed and impediments to regional co-operation have been eliminated.

The representative from Slovenia reported on the sleet that recently occurred in a Slovenian forest and heavily hit the electric grid. The representative highlighted the importance of good co-operation also for the long term effects and the main lesson learned from that event, namely the need for preventive measures to reduce negative impacts of such disasters. The delegate further pointed out the importance of coherence between the HFA2, to post-2015 Development Agenda and the future agreement under UNFCCC.

The representative from Armenia stressed the need for the Second Dimension of the OSCE to capitalize on its experiences and expressed its hope that these and the forum's findings will deliberate successfully.

Speaking in a national capacity, *the representative from Germany* assured his country's commitment to reenergize the second dimension of the OSCE. The German representative emphasized the comparative advantages of the OSCE, on which the Organization's work should focus on. He indicated that it is important to take as starting point the fact that the OSCE is a security organization, and it has to avoid duplication. The German representative suggested to clarify where the OSCE can make a difference by fostering dialogue. In this regard he pointed to

Central Asia and South Caucasus as potential areas where such a dialogue should be promoted. He finalized by underlining the importance to have a preventive approach to disasters.

Review of the implementation of OSCE commitments in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Ms. Nino Malashkhia, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Ambassador Thomas Greminger opened with the presentation of a **video-clip** on the first and second preparatory meetings in Vienna and Montreux.

Ambassador Greminger stated that the concluding meeting in Prague provides the opportunity to benefit from the results of the review of implementation of commitments of the OSCE participating states. In 2014 the review process was carried out by UNDP, a key player in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and one of the main partners of the OSCE within the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative. Ambassador Greminger stressed that the OSCE through its partnership within the ENVSEC Initiative delivered a number of concrete results. He emphasized that through the Memorandum of Understanding signed last year between the OSCE and UNDP the two organizations have a broader strategic framework for co-operation in addition to their cooperation in the framework of ENVSEC. DRR is one of the key priority areas for co-operation between these two organizations.

Main speaker: Ms. Elena Panova, Senior Programme Co-ordinator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Ms. Elena Panova started her presentation with a brief overview of the objectives of the Review Report. The objective was to assess the commitments of the OSCE in the area of DRR and their implementation status. The assessment was carried out with the aim to support OSCE participating States in enhancing their policy objectives in DRR. The review allowed identifying the areas where OSCE can bring added value to the international DRR agenda and added value to addressing DRR challenges. The report provides recommendations to participating States for strengthening the implementation of commitments and fostering co-operation in the area of DRR.

The speaker presented information about prevailing disasters in the OSCE area based on their origin. These are: *Geologically Related Disasters, Water and Climate (Hydro-meteorological origin) Related Disasters, Biologically Related Disasters* including exposure to pathogenic microorganisms, toxins and bioactive substances, *Technological Disasters and Forest Fires*. The scale of impact of these disasters is closely interlinked with the high population density and the changing climatic conditions. Ms. Panova stressed that the most frequent disasters in the OSCE area are storms and flooding. In terms of impact on population, floods are the most severe disasters, while storms are costliest, as they account for 62 % of all damages.

The presentation then focused on two prevailing disasters that pose significant security challenge in the OSCE area. These are floods and earthquakes. The speaker brought to the attention of participating States the fact that earthquakes pose high risks to five capital cities in Central Asia, where the probability of the XI MSK earthquake in the next 20 years is 40% or higher. High risks are mainly associated with the lack of awareness and knowledge of modern seismic construction techniques, and weak reinforcement of construction norms.

The speaker highlighted the negative impacts of the climate change in respect to increased frequency and magnitude of disasters and their implications for food security, health, migration and conflicts. She underlined the importance of preparedness and indicated that every EUR spent on flood protection could avoid 6 EUR damage costs. Ms. Panova referred to the project implemented by the OSCE to develop climate change and security scenarios through participatory workshops. In the Western Balkans, the water and energy sectors were identified as the most vulnerable. In Eastern Europe food security was identified as the priority security concern for the region. In Southern Caucasus water, agriculture and energy are the most pertinent challenges along with extreme weather events. In Central Asia the water-energy-agriculture nexus was identified as the biggest challenge for the region.

Ms. Panova briefly spoke about the international frameworks for DRR. It was stressed that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide overall framework for DRR. The achievement of these goals contributes to reduced vulnerabilities for communities. The SDGs are expected to be adopted next year. Ms. Panova emphasized that mainstreaming of DRR and climate change in SDGs is considered as priority. Post 2015 Hyogo framework for action is being currently negotiated. She stressed the importance of OSCE engagement in these processes.

Ms. Panova also spoke about the international practices for DRR. In this regard she mainly focussed on 4 main trends: Mainstreaming DRR into Development, Mainstreaming DRR into Security, DRR and climate change adaptation. Speaker also highlighted the importance of involvement of communities. The latter have local knowledge and can organize themselves and be a key player when response to disaster needs to be implemented.

The speaker briefly spoke about the main stakeholders of the DRR – government, local authorities, communities, civil society, private sector, other partners. She also brought to attention the fact that 46 participating States have nominated an HFA focal point and 29 participating States have created national platforms for DRR. These National Platforms demonstrate a good example of implementing DRR commitments.

Ms. Panova presented the OSCE commitments made in the area of DRR from 1999 till present. She highlighted the major focus of commitments in relation to DRR in the key OSCE documents. Ms. Panova stressed the strong institutional commitment of participating States but also highlighted the need to strengthen the operational and financial basis of the OSCE to work on DRR.

The speaker indicated that there are many regional and sub-regional organizations and agreements that play prominent role in DRR and listed the following : **Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)** agreement on collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response

to Natural and Man-made disasters; **Council of Europe (CoE)** European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) creating framework for collaboration on the issues like hazard and risk analysis, risk prevention, risk management post crisis analysis and rehabilitation of affected areas; **European Union (EU)** promotes disaster risk evaluation, prevention and mitigation from hazards, information to the public, preparedness and response, and analysis after the disaster; Common Emergency and Information system of EU; **Central Asia Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Co-ordination Centre** established in 2013 in Almaty as a bilateral mechanism between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan for capacity building of stakeholders in the area of DRR and response. **Central Asia and Caucasus Disaster Risk Management Initiative** – established by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery and UNISDR under the umbrella of CAREC. **Central Asia Climate Risk Management Programme (CA-CRM)** managed by UNDP. It assists Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to adjust their national development processes to address risks posed by current climate variability and future climate change; **Central Asia Regional Risk Assessment (CARRA I)** – provides an umbrella platform for donor DRR work plans, embracing all major donors, as well as national partners in Central Asia and Afghanistan; **Central Asia Resilience Alliance (CARRA II)** that aims at enhanced regional DRR capacities and knowledge, risk management in uranium legacy sites and vulnerability reduction, targeting especially vulnerable social groups.

In assessing the implementation of DRR commitments by participating States, Ms. Panova noted that at national level efforts are made to move from a culture of reactive response and recovery to a proactive risk reduction and prevention. However, the challenge to sustain long-term commitment and adequate financial resources for DRR still remains. There are gaps in the overall capacity of national hydro-meteorological services; the capacity-building for DRR and climate change adaptation also remains underdeveloped.

The speaker spoke highly of the ENVSEC Initiative as providing the appropriate mechanisms for engagement to the OSCE and other partners, and praised the Aarhus Centres for providing the platform for working at community level.

Finally, Ms. Panova listed the main recommendations. The report calls for:

1. Systematic institutionalized co-operation between the OSCE participating States on disaster risk reduction
2. The OSCE should co-ordinate its activities on disaster risk reduction with other international and regional organizations active in this field taking into account the added value of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and regional coverage and should further strengthen its engagement in ENVSEC as a robust mechanism for co-ordination and co-operation among international organizations.
3. The OSCE to engage with UNDP and other partners in reducing the risk and improving the security aspect around Uranium Tailings in Central Asia
4. The OSCE could explore possibilities of joining the CADRI inter-agency DRR capacity assessment platform
5. The OSCE could encourage participating States to establish and/or strengthen the national multi-stakeholder co-ordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction while providing participating States with support in such endeavors, including through joint efforts with other international organizations

6. The OSCE could institutionalise its position on DRR and CCA by developing the organization's position paper to address disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
7. The OSCE could further integrate DRR into the organization's work by mainstreaming DRR in relevant projects and activities and by recruitment of DRR practitioners
8. The OSCE should explore possibilities for practical engagement in the work on DRR capacity development for the CACDRRR, as well as other regional and sub-regional operational and information networks
9. The OSCE could advocate for inclusion of DRR considerations in the work of government agencies and the private sector
10. The OSCE should consider more substantial and regular engagement into the local-level work on DRR through, inter alia, strengthening of the respective capacities of Aarhus Centres and the CASE NGO Small Grants Programme
11. The OSCE could consider substantial and sustainable engagement with global DRR Stakeholders to contribute a security perspective to the shaping of global DRR Agenda, such as HFA 2, DRR Indicators for SDGs, DRR Political Champions Process

Ambassador Greminger concluded the session by highlighting the major recommendations: the need to reflect the security perspective into the global Disaster Risk Reduction Agenda (Hyogo Framework for Action 2) and into the Development Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals); as well as a more active engagement at community level. In this regard he stated that the potential of the Aarhus Centres network can be further utilized. He added that there is a need to enhance the partnership on DRR with other specialized international organizations, including through ENVSEC mechanism and encouraged participating States to share the best practices in the area of fire management and flood preparedness.

Session I: Flooding disaster in South Eastern Europe - Lessons learned and the role of the OSCE

Moderator: Mr. Goran Svilanović, Secretary General, Regional Co-operation Council

Rapporteur: Ms. Aisling Schorderet, Attaché, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE

Speakers:

Mr. Predrag Maric, Assistant Minister, Head of the Department for Emergency Management, Ministry of Interior, Serbia

Mr. Jan Lueneburg, Head of Democratization Department, OSCE Mission to Serbia

Mr. Samir Rizvo, Assistant Minister for International Co-operation, Ministry of Security, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr. Ahdin Orahovac, Deputy Director of Mine Action Centre, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dr. Robert Mikac, Commander of Civil Protection, National Protection and Rescue Directorate, Croatia

The focus of Session I was to reflect on the unprecedented flooding that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia in May 2014 and to listen to national experts and Ministers on their respective national responses and cross-border co-operation in the aftermath. The key

issues raised were the efficiency of cross-border co-operation in responding to the disaster and the panellists' vision of further potential for regional engagement.

Mr. Predrag Maric, Assistant Minister and Head of the Department for Emergency Management of the Serbian Ministry of Interior, noting the unprecedented nature of the flooding, elaborated on the impact of the disaster and the national response. Having surpassed the second flood alert level, a state of emergency was declared from 5-23 May and all government agencies were involved, with each Ministry establishing a Crisis Response Team. The Sector for Emergency Action deployed emergency evacuation units and the police, army and other services assisted with primary evacuation. The impact of the flooding on the water supply, infrastructure, agriculture, education and health sectors was highlighted in depth. Although all national resources were engaged in the effort, assistance was requested from international partners and 14 countries provided assistance to the government to assist in responding to the needs of the 180,000 affected. Mr. Maric thanked those that had provided support to Serbia, including through the EU Commission organised Donor Conference. He also underlined the need for international co-operation in the wake of disasters.

Mr. Jan Luenberg, Head of the Democratisation Department of the OSCE Mission to Serbia commended the government's efforts following the flooding as well as the broader solidarity and volunteerism demonstrated within the country. Mr. Luenberg outlined the assistance provided by the OSCE Mission, including the provision of small funds, volunteers, reprogramming to purchase aid, the purchase of equipment and awareness-raising activities. A Swedish financed guide on reacting to disasters and leaflet on animal husbandry protection were also distributed by the Mission. In terms of strategic assistance provided, it has offered to monitor the use of donor funds and analyse requests for their use and procurement policies. An analysis of procurement will be presented to the government in December. A programme to develop a sustainable training mechanism has been established along with the reprogramming of EU funds to provide mapping and upgrading of Roma settlements to 20 pilot municipalities. It has included DRR aspects in this mapping and upgrading project and underlined the importance a gender specific approach. The Mission also facilitated emergency management desktop exercises. In February 2014 an inclusive governance and flood risk management programme was discussed, with stakeholders agreeing to an action plan to be implemented in South East Serbia. However, this could not be implemented as the OSCE budget had not been adopted. Lessons learned following the flooding include the reaffirmation of Aarhus centres as an effective and efficient tool, the importance of cross-border assessment, regional co-operation and implementation of a gender perspective into policies.

Dr. Samir Rizvo, Assistant Minister for International Relations and European Integration of the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina outlined how recent flooding led to the biggest exodus of population from the country since the end of the conflict in the 1990's. The security threat resulting from the floods included the shift of minefields, the international implications of which were highlighted. The economic impact of the disaster is estimated to have reached €2billion, with the hardest hit sectors including agriculture, transport and production. The impact on the education sector, urban and rural housing, health insurance and employment were also relayed. The OSCE's role at the forefront of international action was commended including financial assistance in the region of €30,000 from the Organisation's Charity Fund. The role of the Mission in alleviating the harsh consequences of the flooding was also praised. Given the limited

capacity of Bosnia and Herzegovina to cope with an emergency of this magnitude, the importance of co-ordinating assistance from abroad was underlined. In this regard, Mr. Rizvo described the elaboration of procedures and institutional capacities at national and international level a priority, suggesting that the role of the OSCE could be crucial in this regard.

Mr. Ahdin Orahovac, Deputy Director of Mine Action Centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina spoke of the security implications of the shift of landmines following the flooding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He further elaborated on the regional synergy in emergency response, the technology development and the capacity building. Following three meetings by the Heads of the Regional Mine Action Centres of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia on the dangers of mines and UXOs, a team of experts was established to assess the damage and develop projects. The Mine Action Centre has developed a programme as a result entitled “Mine Action after the floods, regional synergy in emergency response, technology development and capacity building” approved and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia. The project will provide support to urgent demining and the assessment of the status of minefields by aerial re-survey and through the creation of a regional information network for mine action following a disaster. The three key pillars of this post-flood mine action incorporate the emergency response (lasting up to three months) and the development of technology and capacity building (each lasting 12 months). The envisaged outcomes for the project are the development of new digital orthographic photo maps and digital terrain models for minefields affected by flooding. Following this, a system will be established and an initial team trained for multi-sensor aerial training, resulting eventually in the creation of a regional mine action data repository, mixed teams of experts and recommendations and standard operating procedures for mine action after a natural disaster. It is envisaged that the lessons learned from the project will be disseminated at the Mine Action Symposium in Zadar in April 2015.

Mr. Robert Mikac, Commander of Civil Protection of Croatia’s National Protection and Rescue Directorate outlined the lessons identified from the Croatian experience of the floods. Describing co-operation as excellent between the three countries, he noted that there is little need for improvement but that better forecasting, modelling and data-sharing would contribute to strengthening a joint response. He underlined that there can be no talk of lessons learned yet, but rather, lessons identified and noted the co-ordination of various actors involved in the response as particularly challenging. Lessons identified included the need for quicker reaction and response time and strategic management in the field at local regional and national levels. He also noted the importance of improving the capacity of relevant stakeholders and reinforcing regional cross-border prevention, mitigation, co-ordination and co-operation in disaster risk reduction.

An intervention from a *delegate of the Czech Republic* focused on the importance of education and training in ensuring local resilience to disasters. The representative noted that a recent survey on flood protection in the country showed the gap in the dissemination of information at local level.

A representative from the Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina outlined the assistance it provided in the wake of the flooding including the field visits, needs assessment for returnees and the Roma community, co-ordination with other agencies and adjustments to programme work.

Ambassador Baer, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the OSCE, asked the panellists to identify any information that may have been missing or that could have improved their co-ordination and response to the disaster.

In reply to this, *all panellists* were in agreement that regional co-operation had been excellent following the flooding with Mr. Mikac describing it as being better than co-operation at political level and Mr. Rizvo noting again that the absence of mechanisms for co-operation beyond the region were the ones not yet well defined. He further suggested that mechanisms should be developed within the OSCE for co-operation and assistance following similar situations. Mr. Marci pointed out that the recent change to the law on emergency situations requires more to be done on prevention but noted that that financing and changing the perspective in Serbia to one of prevention would be slow work.

The representative from Armenia followed-up on a point raised briefly by Mr. Luenberg on the role of the media in disaster situations and possible OSCE assistance in this regard. Mr. Rizvo noted that there had been panic among the population following rumours that dams had been destroyed and that the media had assisted in mitigating the panic through the dissemination of information. He also praised them for their efforts in raising money for victims of the floods, with more money collected by these than by official institutions. Mr. Luenberg also made reference to the OSCE Mission's engagement with the media on how to report during a disaster situation and on the desktop exercises mentioned in his presentation. The Mission is currently also looking into how information is made available and noted that the OSCE has a role in this regard. Mr. Maric expressed his commitment to a free media and underlined the importance of being honest with citizens, noting that the authorities of countries need to co-ordinate and communicate in a concerted way to ensure that the messaging does not contradict or give any cause for alarm. He also added that resilience and readiness are key and that OSCE Missions also have a role to play in promoting trans-boundary co-operation.

A comment by the *Open Society* noted the link between conflicts and industrial accidents and suggested an OSCE role in this respect.

Session II (Panel Debate): Disaster Risk Reduction on the global agenda: implications for the OSCE area

Moderator: Dr. Josef Hess, Vice-Director of Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions, Switzerland

Rapporteur: Mr. Paul Hickey, Environmental Officer, OSCE Office in Tajikistan

Speakers:

H.E. Margareta Wahlström, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

H.E. Christian Friis Bach, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Mr. Raphael Dang, Climate Change and Environment Division Negotiator and post-2015 Agenda Task Force Co-ordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France

Mr. Tom Mitchell, Head of Programme, Climate and Environment, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Dr. Michael Staudinger, Director General, Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics, Austria

The moderator, Dr. Josef Hess, introduced the topic as being in line with OSCE recommendations in favour of substantial and sustainable engagement with DRR stakeholders to contribute a security perspective to the shaping of the global DRR agenda. Dr. Hess set the framework for the discussion as dealing with the latest developments in the field of DRR and its implications for OSCE activities and in the OSCE area in general. Dr. Hess went on to mention three important events in global DRR, namely the post 2015 process regarding the sustainable development goals, the upcoming 3rd UN conference on DRR scheduled for March 2015 and the upcoming 21st conference on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change expected to take place in Paris next year. He further stated that the proceedings of the forum thus far have shown that most disasters are climate related and proposed that the frequency and intensity of natural disasters has increased in line with the increase in global warming. Increased vulnerability to natural disaster arising from weak understanding of risks, inappropriate land-uses and land-use planning and inadequate construction quality were highlighted in his introduction. Finally, Dr. Hess put forward the key question for the panel on what role the OSCE and its participating states could play in shaping the post-2015 DRR global framework.

In her contribution, H.E. Margareta Wahlström, set the context of increasing frequency of natural disasters occurring in the world today. She referred to the actual ramifications of these events on agriculture, water availability, human health and that many of these effects are not fully appreciated by the public. This is why it is important that next year's UN conference on natural disaster focus on engaging as broad a range of stakeholders as possible on the topic of DRR. Hence the OSCE, as a large regional organisation and with its three dimensions and broad mandates has a role to play in furthering this engagement and is encouraged to take part in the consultations leading up to the UN DRR conference and bring its particular security perspective to bear on this. Ms. Wahlström pointed out that there are other regional organisations that have DRR experience and encouraged the OSCE to profit from their experience. Regional bodies are well placed to act as a broker for the more detailed agreements at national levels that will flow from the post-2015 DRR agreement and Ms. Wahlström opined that the OSCE can certainly contribute to this aspect of global efforts in DRR.

H.E. Christian Friis Bach commenced his contribution by referring to the economic losses as well as losses of life that arise from natural disasters and mentioned by way of example the figure of 100 billion EUR lost in the EU area due to natural disaster in the last decade. Mr. Friis Bach went on to point out that development and population growth has led to increased risk due to construction of buildings in disaster prone areas and poor construction materials and methods. This is why the UNCECE are determined to promote the adoption of norms and standards in construction and development which can reduce vulnerability to disaster and are working with UNISDR on this. The adoption of such norms by states helps the job of policy-makers, advances a coherent approach to disaster risk management worldwide, reduces trans-boundary risk and establishes a matrix for measurement of progress in DRR. With regard to trans-boundary effects, Mr. Friis Bach mentioned the UNECE Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the pilot programmes that are being conducted by many states under this convention as being an important contribution to DRR. He rounded off his contribution by pointing out that the management of the natural resources such as water can lead to increased international co-operation and encouraged the OSCE to take part fully in setting the international agenda in this regard, which can greatly improve DRR.

Mr. Raphael Dang spoke about the importance of engaging all levels of society in addressing climate change, which he stated is a driver of the increased occurrence of natural disasters. According to him, failure to act on climate change will lead to economic degradation and civil unrest. As an example of the impact of climate change, he mentioned the effects that are being experienced in Central Asia, where, he stated, the glaciers have been melting at an increasing rate. He underlined the link between security and the effects of climate change, for which the OSCE has a key role in ensuring that the security dimension remains to the fore of the global agenda in addressing climate change and its effects, which include the increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters.

Mr. Tom Mitchell started off his contribution by adding some international agreements and initiatives to the list already mentioned as being relevant to DRR, which included the World Humanitarian Summit and the Finance for Sustainable Development Meeting. He stated that DRR is probably the most common feature to all of these meetings and initiatives (including the UN DRR World Conference, UN Framework on Climate Change, etc) and therefore can encourage participants to effectively link the work carried out under these agreements and achieve a greater degree of coherence between them. Mr. Mitchell elaborated upon his understanding of coherence among organisations, governments and institutions as including coherence of language, targets, guidelines and indicators plus a shared conceptual framework. He then outlined some trends toward incoherence, including the treating of statistics on natural disasters in different ways to suit the perspectives of different international agreements and the increased fragmentation of funding for environmental programmes, which can lead to an unnecessary increase in the administrative burden on governments and organisations. According to Mr. Mitchell, the framework of international agreements on climate change and DRR are not sufficiently cross-referenced and are not bound together by a common understanding of the risk to security posed by the phenomena with which they deal. This, he said, is where there is room for the OSCE to ensure an understanding of conflict risk and trans-boundary impacts is properly integrated into the new post 2015 framework.

Dr. Michael Staudinger began his contribution by highlighting the latent disaster risks that are under-appreciated by many countries, including policy makers and key decision-makers. He pointed out that this is most prevalent in the case of low-probability, high-impact disaster risk and cited the tsunami in Japan which had an antecedent some centuries before that was not included in risk factoring. The impact of climate change, according to Dr. Staudinger, has emphasised the need for models to project the potential impact of natural disaster due to its causal relation with climate and weather. Furthermore, he emphasised that there is a need to bring the response to natural disasters to the local level as this is where many of the key decisions are made that can affect DRR. Finally, Dr. Staudinger stated that international co-operation is an indispensable component of DRR and cited an example from his own professional experience whereby a project aimed at standardising weather warnings, which demonstrated the importance of harmonising methodologies and challenging assumptions based on national experiences.

Upon the opening of the floor for contributions, *Professor Arnold Pork*, *The International Fund of Ecological Safety of Baltic Sea*, highlighted the serious threat posed to the Baltic Sea by chemical weapons that were disposed of there in the aftermath of the Second World War. The chemical weapons containers are increasingly liable to corrosion over time, which means that leakage into the sea is increasingly likely with catastrophic consequences for human health and marine life. He stated that information on this situation has been relayed to international bodies but too little

avail in terms of remediation or substantial attempts to address the problem. Prof. Pork suggested that the OSCE might be well placed, as a regional organisation with all of the main parties to the disposal of the chemical weapons represented among its participating states, to co-ordinate efforts to effectively manage and reduce this disaster risk.

Ms. Andrea Bianchini, Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, Italy, reported on recent initiatives of the Italian government in responding to natural disasters and managing disaster risk. She listed incidences of flooding and the extent of the area and population exposed to the risk of flooding and landslides in Italy, and stated that over the past 7 months the cost of such disasters has amounted to 3.4 billion EUR. She reiterated the economic case for spending money to reduce risk in terms of the small size of risk reduction expenditure relative to disaster recovery expenditure. Ms. Bianchini outlined the improved co-ordinating mechanisms put into effect by the Italian government, which is intended to ensure a preventative approach is adopted across all involved agencies and departments and affirmed her country's resolve to address climate change.

Mr. Andreas Stadler, Permanent Representation of Austria to the OSCE, put forward the thought that the OSCE can draw inspiration from the observation that water scarcity can lead to more co-operation rather than conflict.

Ms. Pavlina Rehor, Permanent Representation of the EU to the OSCE, posed the question to the panel of how the OSCE can contribute in concrete terms a security dimension to the global disaster risk reduction debate.

In response to Ms. Rehor's and Mr. Stadler's contributions, *Mr. Tom Mitchell* started by referring to the opportunities to add DRR to peace-building efforts, to ensure risk assessments include consideration of conflict risk in order to ensure interventions do not exacerbate that risk and to ensure disaster risk and conflict resolution are considered together in international agreements. He went on to point out that the current HFA-2 draft does not mention conflict prevention and that therefore there is an opportunity for the OSCE to help fill this gap. He furthermore ventured that the solidarity that comes from responding to disaster and disaster risk can be used to boost peace-building efforts between previous antagonists.

Sounding a warning regarding the dynamics of water scarcity, *Mr. Friis Bach* reminded the audience of examples where such scarcity has exacerbated conflict such as in Darfour. He also cited water scarcity in the Mediterranean basin and in Central Asia. He reflected that the OSCE's capacity to turn global agreements and agendas into local actions as a potentially key component in addressing such conflict risks and cited the Aarhus Centres as an example of this. The presence of the OSCE in the field and at a local level is, he said, a clear advantage in transmitting the global agenda to the local level.

Ms. Wahlström opined that the link between security and stability on the one hand and disaster risk reduction on the other should not be denied or set aside at the level of global dialogue. Further to this, she mentioned the prospect of policy-induced risk whereby policies in different areas of governance are not sufficiently cross referenced and therefore can become drivers of risk themselves. She also referred to a previous suggestion that disaster risk indicators should be integrated into environmental impact assessments. With reference to the contribution relating to *The International Fund of Ecological Safety of Baltic Sea*, she mentioned the problem of different national bodies and agencies with competencies over specific areas, for example, chemical spills

or pollution, as inhibiting a coherent, joint response from the international community in such cases.

In rounding off, *Mr. Mitchell* challenged the audience to approach the focal point of each of the international processes (e.g. HFA-2) in each of their countries and ask them to integrate DRR into those processes.

Mr. Friis Bach reiterated his recommendation that international standards and norms be disseminated throughout the OSCE areas in order to build resilience.

Ms. Wahlström followed-up on Mr. Mitchell's final statement by exhorting the participants to approach the foreign ministers of their countries to persuade them to bring DRR to the top of their agendas.

Mr. Staudinger proposed that the OSCE is an ideal framework for promoting acceptance of the facts behind disaster risk and promoting the implementation of responses at the local level.

Mr. Dang recommended that the sharing of experiences and information, and the integration of DRR into policy-making and decision-making at all levels is essential if progress is to be made on international targets and commitments.

Session III: Slow-onset natural disasters as triggers of tensions and opportunities for co-operation

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Yaroslav Yurtsaba, National Project Manager, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

Speakers:

H.E. Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

H.E. Aykhon Sharipova, Deputy Chairperson, Environment Protection Committee, Tajikistan

Prof. Boris Porfiryev, Deputy Director and Head of the Laboratory for Analysis and Forecasting of Natural and Technological Risks for Economic Development, Institute of Economic Forecasting, Russian Academy of Science, the Russian Federation

Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Executive Director, The Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC)

Slow-onset disasters are understood to be hazards which take significant time to generate a disaster. Economic losses and damages resulting from slow-onset processes may affect a large portion of the population, triggering or provoking conflicts. During the Session participants discussed the necessity to have concerted actions by all the stakeholders involved in slow-onset disasters in order to prevent conflicts or minimize potential risks. Speakers acknowledged that common problems linked to the use of shared natural resources can foster co-operation between neighboring communities and countries, thus preventing potential conflicts.

Ms. Barbut stressed that existing security tools are not enough to respond to the challenges posed by natural disaster risks. She added that only by preparing for disaster risks and by timely responding to natural disasters the world can mitigate the economic costs and consequences. *Ms. Barbut* pointed out that in the incoming years, slow-onset natural disasters will have a greater impact on people, triggering environmental migration. Thus, preparedness is of outmost importance. She added that resilience of communities could be improved if natural disaster response is better prepared. *Ms. Barbut* emphasized that slow-onset disasters could trigger serious socio-economic problems and pointed to Central Asia as one of the OSCE regions that could be affected the most. She added that country-specific DRR plans have to be introduced to manage natural disaster risks effectively. *Ms. Barbut* underlined that according to some estimates, land degradation might cost 40 billion US dollars per year. In this regard she emphasized that sustainable land and water management policies will achieve higher level of natural disaster preparedness and outweigh the economic investments.

Ms. Aykhon Sharipova outlined Tajikistan's climatic specificities and key environmental challenges to provide a context of her presentation. She explained that mudflows, landslides and deforestation are common in Tajikistan and cause serious economic problems. She provided rich statistical data on natural disasters in the country that jeopardize the achievement of the millennium development goals. *Ms. Sharipova* informed that in the past decade, a growing number of natural disasters has been registered in her country. In this regard, she shared with participants the Tajik government's actions to respond to the above-mentioned environmental challenges though the adoption of a national strategy of natural disaster management and by subscribing to a number of international framework conventions.

Ms. Sharipova mentioned the key governmental stakeholders tasked to improve resilience of the country vis-à-vis natural slow-onset disasters as well as principal international players that operate in this area. She stressed that there is a natural disaster risk reduction infrastructure in place but its efforts have to be strengthened. Since 2009, Tajikistan participates in the pilot program for 19 countries most vulnerable to climate change. Several national NGOs raise slow-onset natural disaster awareness among the general population. She explained that the key role is with the seven Aarhus Centers that have been supported by the local OSCE. *Ms. Sharipova* stressed that Aarhus Centers perform their role quite effectively, informing people on their right to environmental information and sensitizing them to environmental challenges.

Prof. Boris Porfiryev spoke of climate change as a major slow-onset hazard to economic development and public security. He explained two kinds of natural slow-onset natural disasters: droughts and land degradation. Speaking of economic costs of natural disasters, *Prof. Porfiryev* used the wildfires in Russia in 2010, which had a cost of about 0.4% the national GDP, as an example of the impact that such natural disasters can have on the national economy. The speaker underlined that climate change adaptation and disaster risk management have to be at the forefront of our efforts. There has to be an integrated approach to prevent natural disasters and/or minimize economic costs of slow-onset natural disasters.

Prof. Porfiryev outlined some recommendations how to effectively manage natural disaster risks. He stressed that we have to use common terminology (*lingua franca*) while addressing disaster risk reduction, impact parameters, preparedness, response and recovery. He proposed to look at this problem with a long term perspective, in order to be able to have a better picture and avoid

overlooking trends. Prof. Porfiryev pointed out that rather than fighting natural disasters, it is necessary to engage in risk reduction and prevention. The speaker suggested that the OSCE could be an interface between various players to develop a culture of risk resilience. He added that awareness raising should also be used as an important tool. The need to use new technologies to improve resilience and public safety was also underlined. The speaker stated that in the foreseeable future, we have to use accumulated knowledge on natural DRR and suggested that the OSCE could play an important role in this respect, as key regional security organization with some knowledge and expertise.

Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev concentrated on the response to natural challenges in Central Asia, and in particular on the ones related to water resources. He outlined key factors of water use sustainability and underlined that effective institutions are key to properly respond to natural disasters. Mr. Abdullaev also stressed that obsolete infrastructure is a major obstacle in effectively managing environmental problems. He explained that Central Asian countries are currently concerned with water, energy and food security. From an environmental perspective, protection, rehabilitation, environmental services, bio-diversity have come into the picture and feature prominently in the public discourse.

He continued by indicating that the countries of the region are confronted with the need for effective management of shared natural resources. In this regard, Mr. Abdullaev considers that this management should match the institutional setting to buttress the effective natural slow-onset disasters. The speaker pointed out that resource degradation; reduction of environmental resilience; and the inadequate environmental protection of infrastructures, result in the deterioration of local livelihood and represent a serious security concern. Mr. Abdullaev indicated that by setting environmental policies we have to keep in mind the interconnection of these factors. According to the speaker, we expect growing demand on power production and it has to be matched with adequate supply without harming environmental sustainability.

The speaker provided his vision on where and how the OSCE could intervene to provide solutions on natural disaster risk management. In this regard he believes that the OSCE could boost regional co-operation by setting-up competence centers on natural risk management and supporting national disaster risk management policies. Capacity building and knowledge management on environmental challenges and disaster risk management are also important to respond to the environmental challenges in an efficient manner.

The moderator opened the floor for interventions from the audience.

A representative of Uzbekistan indicated the relevance of the topic. He specifically referred to the issue of the Rogun Dam and the related expert assessment report of the World Bank. The speaker emphasized that the project of the hydroelectric power station is outdated and does not comply with the modern norms and standards. He also mentioned that the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan concerning the conclusions of the expert examination was stated at the relevant meeting of the involved countries on 18 July. The speaker said that any expert evaluation should include a complex assessment of the potential negative effects on environment and analysis of alternatives to the Rogun Dam's project. The representative of Uzbekistan turned to some fundamental issues with regard to the expert conclusion and underscored that the report did not take into consideration risks of man-made disasters, did not refer to the issue of right protection of the countries on guaranteed water volume and passage,

did not reflect in full environmental risks in the region, as well as did not contain an analysis of alternative approaches to solve the issue of power shortage in the winter period in Tajikistan. The speaker highlighted the importance of elaboration of alternatives to the Rogun Dam project and pointed out that the thorough assessment of the water issues can become a force to achieve balance in the region.

In response to the previous speaker, Ms. Sharipova mentioned that the issues highlighted by the representative of Uzbekistan were addressed in Almaty and the answers to them are available on the website of the World Bank. On a different note, Ms. Sharipova noted that the Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan could play an important role in preparing local communities to possible natural disasters. The speaker emphasized that the work on the regional level could be done through the Khorog Aarhus Centre in co-operation with Afghanistan. She concluded by saying that the Aarhus Centres can be used as a platform for natural DRR.

Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev indicated that in the last twenty years, Central Asian countries have been developing policies with a short-vision perspective. He suggested a policy shift in the region, particularly in the case of river basins, where Central Asian countries should design long-perspective planning and policies.

Prof. Porfiryev added that economy and civil protection long-term strategies should integrate a climate change perspective and therefore take into consideration the possibility of slow-onset disasters. He insisted on the need to harmonize the terminology related to climate change in order to make this matter more understandable for private investors and ensure their investment in DRR.

Dr. Josef Hess, Vice-Director of Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions, Switzerland, underlined the importance of raising awareness among populations on the potential risks of slow-onset disasters. He underlined that in the short-term, the monitoring, forecasting and warning of hazards should be improved. In the long-term, the planning of *climate-proof* infrastructure will play a key role in preventing a cascade of disasters happen, because the infrastructure is not prepared for the potential risks. He finalized by underlining the necessity to avoid hazardous areas and to promote local competences to handle disasters.

The Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the OSCE explained that almost 90% of the territory of Mongolia is affected by desertification and this poses a risk to the security of the country. He requested the support of UNCCD, in co-operation with the OSCE, to Mongolia in order to fight land degradation. He praised the Food For Thought paper drafted by the Chairmanship ahead of this meeting and the very topical recommendations included in it.

Ms. Barbut replied that there is a tendency to focus on the risk related to water, energy, food or environmental security, but it is important to bear in mind that all of them have the *land* as background. Therefore there should be a clear understanding of the interconnection of all factors in order to create synergies with a wider perspective. She suggested that the OSCE could work for the development of a water management system at the level of basins, ensuring and enhancing security and co-operation among the parties.

Session IV: A co-operative response to environmental challenges: OSCE experience and lessons learnt for the future.

Moderator: Amb. Andreas Papadakis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE

Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, Environmental Programme Officer, OCEEA

Speakers:

Major-General Nikolay Grigoryan, National Coordinator of the HFA and Deputy Director of the Rescue Service, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Armenia

Colonel Leonid Dedul, Head of the Department of the State System of Prevention and Liquidation of Emergencies and Civil Protection, Ministry for Emergency Situations, Belarus

Prof. Johann G. Goldammer, Head of the Fire Ecology and Biomass Burning Research Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman, Environmental Adviser, OSCE Mission to Serbia

Ambassador Andreas Papadakis opened the session, touching on the OSCE's role in disaster risk management. He referred to the OSCE's effective capabilities to facilitate experience on disaster risk reduction across the region, in particular, in the area of fire management. OSCE field operations, Aarhus Centers and the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) of which the OSCE is a member were highlighted as useful instruments in this regard. The Organization's security perspective was noted to be a valuable input into discussions on the global agenda.

Major-General Grigoryan outlined the Government of the Republic of Armenia's significant steps towards the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, including the integration of disaster risk reduction into Armenia's development policies and programmes. He listed the main recent achievements, including an approved national strategy for disaster risk reduction, integration of DRR issues into educational programmes, more attention to disabled people and gender issues and establishment of Armenia's national platform for disaster risk reduction in 2010.

Maj-Gen Grigoryan went on to give specific examples of co-operation with the OSCE. He welcomed the collaboration between the Ministry of Emergency and the OSCE on a number of issues, including wildfire management. Citing successful co-operation between the national platform for disaster risk reduction with the OSCE and UNDP in the area of seismic risk assessment, *Maj-Gen Grigoryan* noted the following areas for continued co-operation with the OSCE: development of Aarhus Centers' capacity for disseminating knowledge and awareness raising in the area of disaster risk reduction; development of joint projects with Aarhus Centers for assessment of risks at local level and mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in community development and implementation of joint regional projects for disaster risk reduction and climate change.

Colonel Leonid Dedul presented preventive measures undertaken by Belarus to mitigate the growing risks of forest fires on its territory. Referring to experience of responding to forest fires in the past years, he stressed that in 2014 authorities, including at local level, started to act well ahead of time with a set of measures including awareness raising targeting local population, restricted access to fire-prone areas of forest, and training exercises. Regular monitoring, including by aircraft assets such as UAV, played an important role as well. The areas

contaminated in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster were given special attention. As a result of all these measures, a vast majority of fires (90 per cent) in Belarus were eliminated at source this year.

Colonel Leonid Dedul noted the great importance of collaboration with neighboring States to be able to prevent and localize forest fires, giving an example of the increasingly effective co-operation with Ukraine's relevant authorities. Stressing the importance of investment in prevention, he welcomed the OSCE's further work with prevention of disasters, which would help minimize damages and loss of human life when emergencies occur. He also pointed out that there is a need for innovative solutions in the area of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation involving states, authorities, business, academia and people.

Prof. Johann G. Goldammer started by highlighting the role of vegetation fires as a major contributor to slow-onset disasters and environmental degradation, and additional challenges in areas contaminated by unexploded ordnance and landmines. He pointed out that secondary consequences of fires such as land degradation tend to be more harmful than fires themselves. Speaking of the results and major milestones of the two-phase project on fire management in the South Caucasus implemented by the OSCE within the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative, *Prof. Johann G. Goldammer* noted benefits of the project for the entire region through, inter alia, joint regional training supporting a culture of transboundary co-operation. He went on to cite a few lessons identified in the implementation of this project, including the need for a holistic approach, development of a cross-sectoral mechanism for initiating a dialogue in society, along with the need to formulate a consensus-based national policy with the involvement of all relevant national stakeholders. He also suggested that national measures should be properly embedded in an international context (e.g. through networks, bilateral and multilateral agreements).

In conclusion, *Prof. Johann G. Goldammer* shared several recommendations. It is necessary to maintain a medium- to long-term time scale for developing the ability of society to address wild land fire in a holistic approach from local to global. The OSCE should look at addressing vegetation fires from two perspectives: first, vegetation fires as drivers of land degradation, desertification and slow-onset disasters and second, vegetation fires in the context of the OSCE region. He added that fires may have an effect on the global system through the impact of black carbon in the context of climate change.

Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman started her presentation by highlighting public awareness as one of the key elements of effective DRR as local communities are on the frontline of both disasters' immediate impact and initial emergency response. Strengthening the awareness of the population was therefore the first step of community-based DRR. She noted that many of the Aarhus Centers supported by the OSCE are located in disaster-prone areas and that DRR activities have already been undertaken by about half of the Aarhus Centers. As a concrete example, *Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman* outlined the DRR activities of the Aarhus Centers in Serbia, namely the development of a flood risk reduction campaign for affected communities in the municipality of Zajecar and its further implementation by the Aarhus Centre in Nis. She also added that two Aarhus Centers in Serbia were engaged in collecting data on gender-specific impacts of the flooding and the outcomes of this analysis will be used to support Serbian authorities'

mainstreaming of gender into programmes and policies in the field of flood risk reduction and management.

Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman identified a few lessons learned over more than ten years of the Aarhus Centers' existence, which include the need for co-operation through networks with a wide range of state institutions, local authorities, governmental agencies, experts, CSOs, academia, media as well as the importance of creating synergies and avoiding duplication. She concluded by thanking the donors supporting a cross-regional project within the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative which will strengthen the capacities of Aarhus Centers in DRR in order to enhance awareness of local communities.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of the Aarhus Center in Kazakhstan identified the Aral Sea as one of the gravest environmental challenges in Central Asia and welcomed continued efforts to build confidence between states in preventing environmental risks. He welcomed further involvement of Aarhus Centers in addressing environmental challenges. He also encouraged the Russian Federation to ratify the Aarhus Convention.

A representative of a university drew attention to the problem of chemical weapons buried in the Baltic Sea. He suggested that robot-based modern technologies could be used for addressing this problem. He added that an international working group could be set up under the aegis of the OSCE to unite the efforts of experts and relevant experience for this cause.

A representative of Armenia's national platform for disaster noted the role of the national platform as a confidence-building mechanism for all national stakeholders in his country. He underlined the national platform's readiness to co-operate with national platforms of neighbouring countries for addressing disaster risks.

A representative of Lithuania inquired about the emergency preparedness of Belarus' newly constructed nuclear power plant. She also expressed concern about the potential risk of transboundary waters used for cooling its reactors.

In response, *Colonel Leonid Dedul* noted that the design of this nuclear power plant is modern and meets up-to-date safety requirements. Safety issues were also assessed to ensure the safety of cooling waters. Belarus is currently working on an external emergency plan for the nuclear power plant which also provides for notification procedures. There are already well-established contacts with relevant authorities in Lithuania on this issue.

A representative of Belarus added that Belarus is taking all necessary measures to ensure the safety of its nuclear power station under construction. He suggested organizing an expert-level meeting with Lithuania to discuss outstanding issues.

A representative of Azerbaijan expressed a view that technological accidents, including accidents triggered by natural disasters shall also be considered within the framework of the Forum's discussions on disaster risk reduction. She drew attention to the aging Metsamor nuclear power plant and to the new nuclear power plant which is planned to be built not in compliance with the

existing international legal framework. In this regard, she reiterated the importance of transparency and access to information. As regards to regional co-operation, she referred to successful examples of co-operation in the region and called to look at the basis for such a co-operation. Referring to transboundary watercourses, she underlined that in some cases measures undertaken at national level might be sufficient to prevent negative transboundary effects.

Maj.-Gen. Grigoryan commended the OSCE's experience in the area of fire management, in particular in the case of the South Caucasus.

A representative of Spain underlined the importance and cost-effectiveness of preventive efforts as compared to mere response in addressing disaster risks. She also noted that forest fires are a virulent problem in her country and Spain's co-operative efforts involving EU and neighbouring countries have proved essential in this regard.

A representative of Armenia stated that discussions of nuclear energy-related issues should take place within fora slated for and equipped for such issues.

In his final comments, *the Moderator* referred to the major points of discussion regarding the OSCE role: the OSCE's acting as a platform for knowledge sharing between national platforms for DRR; the OSCE is well placed to facilitate exchange of experience, good practices and lessons learnt in the field of disaster risk reduction; strengthening of the capacity of participating States in disaster risk management through the Environment and Security Initiative and field operations; the OSCE can further engage in raising awareness of DRR on accountability, good governance and transparency through the Aarhus Network and promote close cooperation with relevant international organizations.

Session V: Facilitating disaster preparedness and response through innovation, technology and information, and Public-Private-Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction

Moderator: Ambassador Ol'ga Algayerová, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE, Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Emre Gençtuğ, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the OSCE

Speakers:

Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the UN Office in Geneva and Co-Chair of the Bureau of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Thailand

Mr. Juan Carlos Villagran de León, Programme Officer, Head of UN-SPIDER, Bonn Office

Mr. Miloslav Ivica, Director, Department for Civil Protection and Crisis Planning, Ministry of Interior, Slovakia

Mr. Dougals Bausch, Senior Physical Scientist, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VIII, Denver Federal Center, the United States of America

The moderator, Ambassador Algayerová, opened the session by elaborating on the theme "facilitating disaster preparedness and response through innovation, technology and

information, and public-private partnerships in disaster risk reduction". She said that public-private partnership is an essential pillar of disaster risk reduction and that the private sector can make disaster management policies safer, as well as provide expertise in risk assessment. She also mentioned that ICT solutions like risk monitoring and analysis of scenarios can be useful in preventing disasters. Then she introduced the speakers and explained the topics of their presentations.

After the introductory remarks, *Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi* commenced his presentation by saying that as a Partner for Co-operation, Thailand is willing to engage with the OSCE, particularly in the topic of disaster preparedness and response, since it is a very important issue for his country. He then mentioned the human and economic losses caused by natural disasters giving recent UN data. He underlined the importance of disaster risk reduction and preventive measures, as well as, effective response plans to minimize impact and losses. He continued by saying that to be most effective and inclusive, disaster risk management should be based on a risk-informed culture, which requires freely available, publicly accessible, science-based and easy-to-understand information.

Ambassador Thongphakdi put forward the 2011 floods in Thailand, which led to huge economic damages and losses particularly in the private sector, reducing 1.1 per cent Thailand's potential GDP growth for that year, as an effective public-private partnership example. He stated that the large companies were hit hard with economic damages affecting the international supply chain, especially in the IT and automotive industries. This made clear that the private sector has a vital interest and crucial role to play in disaster risk reduction, since business infrastructure and personnel are vulnerable to disasters. He emphasized that disaster risk reduction should be seen as an investment and not as a cost and therefore it should become part of the core financial strategies of business corporations, because it is much less expensive to prevent or prepare for disasters than it is to respond to and recover from them. Ambassador Thongphakdi continued by saying that risk-transfer mechanisms such as insurance have become essential for both the public and the private sectors, to reduce economic losses due to disasters. He also explained that SMEs have a strong role in promoting disaster risk reduction since they tend to operate more locally than multinational corporations and their awareness of local issues is accordingly more detailed. They also have a strong interest in sustainability. Ambassador Thongphakdi emphasized the importance of using science and technology in disaster prevention. There is a continuing need to assess the impact of geological, weather, water and climate-related hazards, as well as to strengthen regional monitoring capacities and assessments.

Mr. Juan Carlos Villagrán de León started his presentation on early warning systems, saying that such systems reduce the impacts of hazards in the world. He explained how ICTs and Space-based applications contribute to early warning and response efforts. He also said that the use of tablets and smartphones, as well as social media and crowd-source efforts facilitate the co-ordination of response efforts on site and off site, help disseminate warnings and contribute to a rapid collection of data on damages. Mr. Villagrán de León stated that satellite imagery can contribute to forecast potentially catastrophic events, offer the most up-to-date view on the exposure of vulnerable elements, define evacuation routes and delineate the geographic area affected. He informed about the COPENICUS Emergency Mapping Service (EMS) that provides maps of the affected areas at the request of civil protection authorities at Europe level and International Charter-Space and Major Disasters at the global level. At the end of his presentation

Mr. Villagrán de León made some recommendations, saying that civil protection agencies should take advantage of the opportunities that the Space community is providing in terms of access to satellite imagery and software to process it. Emergency Operation Centers should assess how best to make use of mechanisms such as COPERNICUS-EMS and the Charter. The use of geoviewers and geographic information systems should be enhanced in early warning, response and recovery. Devices such as smartphones and tablets should be used routinely in damage and needs assessments, also in co-ordinating response efforts in case of disasters.

In his presentation, *Mr. Ladislav Szakállos* talked about the recent flood disaster and subsequent landslide that happened in Slovakia last July due to heavy rainfall. He used these floods as an example of effective public-private partnership in disaster risk reduction. He said that it is very hard to predict such disasters in advance, because weather conditions are becoming less predictable due to the climate change. He explained how the energy and telecommunication companies' sources were effectively used in recovery efforts after the disaster. He stated that his institution took necessary lessons from the disaster and has been currently reviewing the risk analysis of the disaster-prone territories of Slovakia to prevent such disasters in the future. As a lesson learned he said that mitigating disaster risks by comprehensive pre-assessments are crucial for disaster preparedness. He also added that full involvement of the private sector in the reconstruction efforts is important and without the help of the private energy companies they could not be successful in the relief and recovery efforts of the last disaster.

Mr. Douglas Bausch, made a presentation about U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) use of technology and analytics in disasters. He explained the risk models, integration of field observations, data analytics applications, FEMA's transparent approach in providing information to the public with easy and open access, also the use of crowd-sourced information in disasters. He said that the risk models help everybody to understand the information. He used FEMA's works during the Hurricane Sandy that happened in 2012 in the Eastern part of the United States as an example of effective use of technology and analytics in disasters, including crowd-sourced information as part of imagery assessment. He stated that there are serious vulnerable areas for disasters in the USA and they work to make them more resilient for future disasters. Mr. Douglas Bausch said that there is also a National Hurricane Center in the United States that uses imagery damage assessments in hurricanes and organize model disaster exercises. He stated that FEMA focuses on "*what if*" scenarios in its works. He explained that demographic assessment is necessary since the vulnerability of the people depends on their socio-economic levels. He informed that all geoviewers information are publicized outside by FEMA through their website, free smartphone applications and SMS-text-out system, and its imagery and assessment data are very transparent and open to public access. He added that they use these information systems to define the exact location of disasters, also to inform the people about the risk assessment by checking their locations online. As a conclusion he said that applying data analytics by using models and observation is crucial. Assessing impacts before, during and after disasters are important. Emergency management agencies should support risk-informed decision-making.

After the presentations *the Moderator* opened the floor for discussion by asking what do these ICTs mean for the OSCE, how important is to implement new technologies in disaster risk reduction, how can OSCE make better use of them and whether OSCE can facilitate public-private partnership in disaster risk reduction.

Prof. Arnold Pork, a representative of the International Fund of Ecological Safety of Baltic Sea, expressed his comments on the chemical weapons under the Baltic Sea and demilitarizing it.

Representative of the US said that although his country has all these technologies for disaster risk reduction, it is important for the OSCE to help bridging the gap with other participating States that do not have them and asked how OSCE can facilitate other countries' access to these technologies.

Representative of Canada asked Ambassador Thongphakdi, being the Co-Chair of the Bureau of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, how OSCE can contribute to the works of this Committee.

Representative of Romania asked about the details of the COPERNICUS Emergency Mapping Service, what it exactly shares and whether it shows only the affected areas.

Then *the Moderator* gave the floor to the speakers once again for their answers to the questions above and for their last comments.

Mr. Juan Carlos Villagrán de León replied to the question on COPERNICUS saying that the system shows only the affected areas, however additional products can be developed with different features. He added that cost-benefit analysis should be made for early warning systems. On the question of the gap between the countries' technological capacities in disaster risk reduction he said that through sharing of information and experience it can be closed. He added that OSCE should engage more in other regional and international mechanisms such as European Space Agency.

Mr. Douglas Bausch replied to the question on the use of new technologies. He mentioned that when doing risk modeling and interpreting the data not only scientists such as hydrologists, physicists, geologists and social scientists but also policy makers and emergency managers should be involved from the ground. So this is a multidisciplinary approach.

Ambassador Thongphakdi replied to the question on how he sees OSCE's role in disaster risk reduction as the Co-Chair of the Bureau of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. He said that the main responsibility lies in participating States, but since regional information is necessary for effective response to natural disasters, co-operation between the relevant national agencies in regional and sub-regional level is crucial to raise awareness and create a common strategy. The OSCE can play a regional co-ordinator role in this.

After the answers of the speakers, *the Moderator* rapped-up the session. She highlighted the main points of the session on using the new technologies and public-private partnership in disaster risk reduction. She said that co-operation is crucial within the OSCE in this field and specific commitments can be taken by the Organization. She added that the OSCE can work as a sharing platform for disaster risk management authorities to facilitate cross-border preparedness and that would be beneficial for the regional security in the end. She stated that working more closely with other international organizations such as the UN in this field is necessary.

Before closing the session, *the Moderator* mentioned the Ministerial Council Decision on the Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-Made Disasters adopted last year in Kyiv and the subsequent workshop on that topic which was organized by the OSCE Secretariat last

July. She reminded that a follow-up Bratislava Energy Charter Forum will be held on 10 October 2014 jointly by the OSCE and the Energy Charter Secretariat with the theme of “Securing Energy Supply - How to better protect energy networks from disruptions”. She invited all participants to the said event, saying that the Forum will elaborate more the connection between disasters and their impact on energy networks.

Session VI (Panel Debate): How to achieve resilience in the OSCE area?

Moderator: Dr. Timothy Prior, Head, Risk and Resilience Research Team, Center for Security Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

Rapporteur: Ms. Nana Baramidze, Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Speakers:

Mr. Mario Aymerich, Director, Environment and Regional Development Department, European Investment Bank

Ms. Rachel Scott, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, Resilience Group, OECD

Ms. Catherine Ebah-Moussa, Policy Officer, Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, Policy and Implementation Frameworks, European Commission

Mr. Daniel Kull, Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist, The World Bank

The moderator, Dr. Timothy Prior, opened the session by introducing the speakers and by outlining Resilience as the topic of the debate. More precisely, during the opening, the moderator prepared the basement for speakers and the audience to discuss the following topics related to resilience:

- Goals of resilience: who and what should become “resilient”: engineering, psychological, economic, ecological and community resiliencies;
- Contribution of civil society; and
- Investment in resilience and disaster risk reduction – incentives and opportunities for risk-sensitive investment

The Moderator also introduced the *United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* (UNISDR) definition of *resilience* as “the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions”. He stressed, that *resilience* is a result of factors which deeply rely on culture and society. Therefore, there can only be tailor-made strategies that individuals, communities and states have to develop to influence the factors for resilience. *Resilience* cannot be seen as a task for a community or a state only: it implies the interaction of all relevant stakeholders, at local, regional, national and international level. Climate Change adds another risk that needs to be considered when working on the resilience factors and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

After the introductory remarks, the Moderator encouraged the panel and the audience to a structured debate in a way that it would contribute to a common understanding of *resilience* and

to a better definition of the role of different stakeholders, including the OSCE in this process. Before giving the floor to the speakers, the Moderator noted that the OSCE has a mandate for comprehensive and co-operative approach, which makes it a good body for co-operation. He added that the OSCE through its mandate could play an auxiliary role in overcoming barriers connected to the joint activities for *resilience*.

During the panel debate the speakers and the Moderator touched such questions as a role of different stakeholders (governments, local authorities, civil society, and private sector) in enhancing resilience. They also outlined the possible efforts which could be undertaken by the OSCE in order to make Participating States more resilient, as well as the types of incentives could be put in place to increase investment in resilience DRR.

Moreover, according to the panel debate, the concept of *resilience* is closely linked to the concept of vulnerability: the more vulnerable the entity is, the more its resilience is likely to be reduced. Civil society alongside emergency authorities has therefore an important role to play: non-governmental organisations, religious bodies, volunteers, neighbours or businesses are often first responders and therefore have an essential role. It is therefore important that governments develop policies and tools to support the civil society to increase its ability to support the strengthening of resilience, for example through education and information, training or exchange of good practices. Here the OSCE can be used as an appropriate mechanism to support host countries in capacity building processes, as well as the OSCE supported Aarhus Centres, would be used as a good tool for education, awareness raising and prevention.

In this regard, the OSCE field operations could support states in their resilience risk assessment process and further monitor the risks too. Also, the Aarhus Centres could be a good instrument to promote awareness on resilience and risks associated with disasters. They (the centres) could facilitate the exchange of different practices in DRR as well as promote relevant actions on environmental governance, sustainable use of resources and climate change related matters.

In more details, on the debate:

First, the floor was given to *Mr. Mario Aymerch*, who emphasized that he is used to the word *resilience* from the perspective of Brazilian “smart/innovative cities”, but had never discussed *resilience* in the context of DRR. According to Mr. Aymerch over the past 15 years the European Investment Bank (EIB) has invested some EUR 16.5 bn in the area of natural and industrial Disasters through 74 operations, of which 88% in Europe. Flood related projects are the most frequent (32 operations), followed by earthquakes (12 operations). In relative terms, flood related projects absorb 42% of loan volumes, while earthquakes represent 14%. However, in recent years, snow avalanches, landslides, wind or hail storms and the rise of sea level are becoming more frequent and dangerous than ever. Due to the high number and relative dispersion of damages, in most cases the EIB loan takes the form of a multi-sector programme. According to Mr. Aymerch, *resilience* cannot be only achieved solely with private actions. The system is composed by stakeholders (some construction companies for instance), as well as private companies and there is a need to develop partnership with private stakeholders.

Next speaker, *Ms. Rachel Scott* also noted that *resilience* became quite active subject of discussions everywhere. The idea that communities, institutions and States need the right tools,

assets and skills to deal with an increasingly complex, interconnected and evolving risk landscape, while retaining the ability to seize opportunities to increase overall well-being, is widely accepted. In reality, however, it has not been easy to translate this sound idea into good practice, mostly because the right tools to systematically analyse resilience, and then integrate resilience aspects into our policies and programmes does not exist yet. Ms. Scott also stated that number of questions is being asked, all of which are interesting and very relevant to making resilience “real”, however she would intervene with the role of different stakeholders (governments, local authorities, civil society, and private sector) in enhancing resilience.

According to Ms. Scott, one must think about the incentives being provided by new policies and projects, to ensure they encourage optimal behaviour. Different actors have different pre-determined mind-sets about this (national policy makers will believe that risk should be managed at national level, community groups will believe the same risk is better managed at local level) and the better tools are needed to analyse where it is best to build resilience – at which layer of society.

Ms. Catherine Ebah-Moussa also agreed that *resilience* is becoming more and more important. She added that society needs to move from response to action to prevent disasters to happen and that OSCE Chairmanship was very timely in choosing the topic for discussions. Since DDR is a global risk and the crisis very close, we all have to connect, she said. Enhancing the European Union's resilience to crises, as well as its capacity to anticipate, prepare and respond to risks, especially cross-border risks, is amongst the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. According to the speaker, resilience is not a stand-alone objective. It needs to be embedded in various national policies to be sustainable, because it is very much a long-term task. It is also an objective that cannot be achieved solely through public action. Various stakeholders have today important impacts on the degree of resilience that can be achieved.

The last speaker of the panel, *Mr. Daniel Kull* began his speech by highlighting the importance of internalization of risks into the different company activities. He stated that undertaking the risk needs to be integrated into the socio-economic policy by integrating the cost-benefits. Mr. Kull added that this should be open for public discussion, as the social side needs to be considered on poverty side too. Cost-benefits of disaster risk management takes long time, therefore the importance of investing in *resilience* recognizes the need for improvement and helps target the funding. In order to really invest in resilience, companies need to internalize the costs of resilience into their actual financial scheme. In general, the understanding of risk needs to be integrated into the socio-economic policies, including the interpreting of cost-benefit. This topic should be also open for public discussion, in order to assure that the social side is covered. Cost-benefit analysis of disaster risk management requires long term investment too.

Before closure of the panel debate the floor was opened for questions, statements and discussion, where the topic of resilience, as well as its definition and the barriers for risk assessment were discussed.

The representative from joint UNEP/OCHA Environmental Unit asked about the added value of resilience in the design of policies and in the implementation of the programs. Her second question was about the views of the panelists on the OSCE role in forwarding the resilience agenda. She added that risks can be a challenge, but also create a new environment where you

can adapt and transform one's environment to make it better in the future, therefore transforming the risk in an opportunity.

Ms. Scott considered that the added value of resilience is that it has a system-based approach, that makes it able to cope with shocks with a holistic view on the whole risks landscape.

Ms. Ebah-Moussa completed by suggesting that the OSCE, together with its field missions, could help to monitor the risks in the participating States and contribute to good risk assessments. She added that the role of Aarhus Centres is important as well as the exchange of good practices in the different regions. OSCE could also contribute to the mainstreaming of DRR in policies aiming at enhancing resilience.

Mr. Aymerich indicated that the added value of the EIB in investing in a project is based in three pillars: eligibility, viability and the financial capacity of the EIB to mobilize the investment by other investors.

The Moderator asked panelists on their views on how a coercive society could be generated through the action of the OSCE to better promote resilience.

Mr. Kull answered that OSCE can promote the concept of solidarity, which implies that by promoting disaster risk reduction and management in others, we protect ourselves.

The representative of Overseas Development Institute asked the panel to comment on how resilience is used in the pre-zero draft of the post-2015 Agreement and whether or not it is in line with what the organizations they represent understand as resilience.

Mr. Kull explained that the World Bank does not have a definition of *resilience* but a number of strategies aiming at promoting resilience.

Ms. Scott expressed her view that a narrow definition of *resilience* could harm vulnerable communities and leave important aspects out. Therefore, rather than a definition, the key is to work in a same direction, in an overarching way.

The representative of the United States asked to *Ms. Ebah-Moussa* what are the barriers that the European Commission has seen in the conduction of risk assessments and how the OSCE could overcome these challenges.

Ms. Ebah-Moussa indicated that risks assessments are mandatory of EU member states, which have found indeed difficulties at the level of governments, because they are undertaken at regional level but then not consolidated at a national one. She added that tools are missing, in particular those related to technologies, the mappings of the risks and the consultation of the stakeholders involved in the assessment.

Ms. Scott added that the political will of governments is key in the conduction of timely and efficient risks assessments. From a structural point of view, countries lack ministries of disaster risk management, therefore often it is not clear who is in charge of these challenges. From an

economic point of view, Ms. Scott highlighted that there is not enough money or interest in funding the studies for the necessary scientific inputs.

Mr. Mario Aymerich underlined the importance of fostering trans-boundary cooperation in this area.

The representative Albania asked the views of panelists on the role of OSCE in good governance for resilience.

Mr. Kull replied that the World Bank, as a development bank, focuses on low income and medium income countries. On dealing with the fiscal balance of countries with limited resources, the financial risk is established after the conduction of a good risk assessment.

Mr. Aymerich clarified that the European Investment Bank is not a development bank.

The Moderator then asked to the representative of the OECD who, according to her organization, is responsible for achieving resilience.

Ms. Scott explained different organizations have different added values, depending of historical experience, mandates and resources.

Mr. Kull added that everybody has a share of responsibility, from the individual to the institutional perspective.

Mr. Aymerich proposed that banks reach an agreement on what should be the common characteristics that have to be agreed in order to fund the management of a disaster.

Ms. Scott added that it is important to have a clear understanding of the current risks faced by the world.

Ms. Ebah-Moussa proposed that the OSCE could integrate DRR and management in next year's Economic and Environmental Fora, including the 23rd EEF on water management and governance.

Finally, *Mr. Kull* shared his view that the OSCE can push to restructure the system to better integrate DRR and management in the conflict concept.

Session VII (Panel Debate): The Role of the OSCE in responding to environmental Challenges

Moderator: Ambassador Manuel Bessler, Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, Switzerland

Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

H.E. Dorin Duscic, Deputy Minister of Environment, Republic of Moldova

H.E. Diana Bejko, Deputy Minister of Environment, Albania

H.E. Teimuraz Murgulia, First Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia

H.E. Nurbek Sydygaliev, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations, Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Prof. Johann Goldammer, Head of the Fire Ecology and Biomass Burning Research Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

Introducing the panel debate, *Ambassador Bessler* noted that an organization that has at its core security and co-operation should provide a platform to address the global, regional, transboundary, national and local challenges of disasters. As these can lead to conflict, the panel wants to look at the role the OSCE can have in tackling these challenges.

H.E. Dorin Dusciac, Deputy Minister of Environment, Republic of Moldova, pointed to the fragile state of environment in Moldova, which is linked to climate change and natural disasters. Therefore, the government adopted several political documents that directly or indirectly include environmental challenges, such as the National Security Strategy 2011 or the National Environment Strategy 2014. He stressed that the region is affected by climate change, but mostly by climate variability which leads to increased weather-related natural hazards, as well as earthquakes and biological hazards. It is the obligation of the ministry not to allow these hazards to turn into disasters, but the achievements so far have been modest. Mr. Dusciac underlined that the role of the OSCE in promoting co-operation to meet environmental challenges cannot be underestimated and is highly valued. OSCE-supported environmental confidence-building measures in Transdniestria are ensured in a joint action plan on environmental protection. There were several successful environmental projects of the OSCE Mission to Moldova as well as more than 20 ENVSEC projects with neighbouring countries. The ENVSEC support was timely, efficient and with concrete results. He referred to the bilateral agreement on the Dniester River, which had been possible due to ENVSEC support, and urged Ukraine to follow Moldova in its ratification. The 2014 Association Agreement with the EU also has had an impact on regulations regarding DRR. Mr. Dusciac stressed that Moldova strives to reduce risk of flooding at its borders and that the OSCE should play a significant role in promoting co-operation for meeting environmental challenges in the region.

H.E. Diana Bejko, Deputy Minister of Environment, Albania, outlined that Albania is vulnerable to a number of natural and manmade hazards, such earthquakes, industrial accidents, floods, and forest fires. Albania is among the countries with the highest economic risks of multi-hazards and the vulnerability is grounded in a lack of infrastructure and safe building, as well as land use practices linked to rapid urbanization. In Albania's National Strategy for Security, climate change and cross-border security are mentioned as priority for investments. Lessons learnt from past events had shown that improvement of coordination between emergency groups at different levels is needed; evacuation proved to be difficult due to limited infrastructure; understanding of digital maps and simulation methods is lacking. Ms. Bejko stressed the importance of access to data on climate change, flooding, and precipitation. As a good example of a joint approach for DRR on shared water resources, she mentioned the MoU signed in 2011 between five riparian countries of the Drin River (Albania, Greece, Montenegro, Former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia, Kosovo¹). She also stressed the need for broad education of the most affected population; education for environmental behaviour is the best DRR investment. Responding to environmental challenges provided a meaningful role for the OSCE, she referred to the current project on strengthening the capacities of Aarhus Centres in DRR awareness- raising and underlined that awareness raising and public participation on DRR are important to reach rural communities and raise local ownership and sustainability. The speaker considered the network of Aarhus Centres in Albania is a proper regional structure for awareness-raising and public participation. The ENVSEC Initiative has been proven to be a good mechanism to address climate change, hazardous waste, and transboundary water management. The OSCE could support research to identify security and DRR implications, mainstreaming DRR in infrastructure projects, capacity building, and transboundary co-operation for shared resources. Preparedness for transboundary disasters remains a challenge. Finally, she mentioned that the Ministry of Environment is currently preparing a risk assessment on corruption in environment with OSCE support.

H.E. Teimuraz Murgulia, First Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia, referred to Georgia's exposure to many natural hazards and the increasing complexity of disasters. He stated that Georgia benefitted from OSCE activities in DRR, including identification, early warning systems, and response. The recent mudflow caused by a glacier that blocked a key road showed the importance of early warning and prevention. Mr. Murgulia also informed that the OSCE supported the establishment of Aarhus Centres in Georgia and considered that early warning and awareness are most important for avoiding human losses. Mr. Murgulia expressed his appreciation to OSCE's support in terms of liquidation and prevention of wildfires, also with regard to transboundary communication. This OSCE's support would allow smaller nations to be better prepared and respond. The HFA-2 process will require Georgia further develop DRR activities and co-operate with international organisations. Mr. Murgulia concluded his statement by stating that the OSCE is one of the most well established organisations to work in the security field and his government is highly committed to be a part of OSCE's cross-border security efforts.

H.E. Nurbek Sydygaliev, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations, Kyrgyzstan, opened his statement by informing that Kyrgyzstan faces a lot of population pressure, high levels of poverty, dwindling resources, and disintegrated infrastructure, which is also partly caused by wrong management of natural resources and environmental degradation. He informed that poverty is rising, also due to natural disasters that destroyed infrastructure and affected the environment. Therefore, DRR was a priority for the Kyrgyz government. He stated that mining in Kyrgyzstan was done in a wrong way, producing a lot of waste. Natural and man-made processes may lead to large scale catastrophes. Kyrgyzstan suffers each year 35 mln USD losses due to natural disasters. Kyrgyzstan has adopted the National Strategy for Sustainable Development for 2013-17 and the Integrated Strategy for Emergencies to 2020. Mr. Sydygaliev underlined the requirement to place environment at the centre of economic thinking. The Government of Kyrgyzstan strived to gradual change at economic aims to make them targeted at sustainable development. Environmental information needs to be transparent and accessible. Since natural disasters are

¹ *All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.*

one of greatest challenges around the world, international co-operation is necessary. Mr. Sydygaliev referred to the HFA-2 preparatory meetings for Central Asia and the South Caucasus held in April 2014 in Almaty, where the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Kyrgyzstan stated its commitment to regional co-operation and effective mechanisms for DRR. He also pointed to the important roles of volunteers in DRR. Central government and local authorities in Kyrgyzstan are implementing DRR measures, for example monitoring, early warning, capacity building, and increasing public awareness. Finally, he stressed the importance to mainstream mechanisms for risk mitigation in all policies and programmes and pointed to the co-operation between the national platforms for DRR between Kyrgyzstan and Armenia.

Prof. Johann Goldammer, Head of the Fire, Ecology and Biomass Burning Research Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), stated that natural ecosystems and cultural landscape often stretch over large areas and may cross national boundaries. Risks and consequences of disasters in these landscapes are therefore often shared by neighbouring countries. Long-term stability of natural and cultural landscapes is essential for sustainable delivery of valuable services to the environment and humans. A well-managed or protected and stable vegetation cover is essential for the protection and stability of the soil cover, which reduces the vulnerability of the soil to become affected by weather extremes and potentially resulting in excessive water runoff and floods. In well-managed forests and other fire-prone lands, which are stretching along national borders, the likelihood of wildfires and fire smoke to cross borders can be reduced. Landscape management aimed at reducing the occurrence and transboundary consequences of natural disasters and industrial accidents requires dialogue and co-operation, including building of technical and human resources capacities between neighbouring nations. The sharing of knowledge and expertise in the management of those natural resources that either could be causative agent of a disaster, or could become affected by a disaster, becomes increasingly important in the portfolio of OSCE activities, notably between participating states. The OSCE, through the ENVSEC Initiative and hand in hand with the UNECE, has demonstrated that in case of wildfire disaster risk reduction the development of national policies and management capacities benefited from regional co-operation. In this regard the OSCE with its comprehensive security approach can contribute to co-operation. Enhancing environmental emergency preparedness by sharing knowledge and initiating or strengthening the cross-boundary exchange provides an added value to the portfolio of international organizations and actors in the field of disaster risk reduction. Finally, Prof. Goldammer underscored that not only resources but also culture and relationships between people stretch across borders and OSCE could strengthen these cross-border relations.

Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities welcomed the appreciation to OSCE work expressed by the panellists, e.g. for the Aarhus Centres network and the ENVSEC Initiative. She stated that disasters can be drivers of conflict, but DRR can build confidence and trust; this would be the opportunity for OSCE engagement. The OSCE can bring in its cross-dimensional approach to security. In doing so, the OSCE should make use of the expertise accumulated in all three dimensions, for example the self-assessment tool developed in the politico-military dimension, or the role of media in the human dimension. Ms. Schweitzer pointed to the need to focus particularly on the transboundary context, where the OSCE has experience e.g. in Dniester. Transfer and exchange of knowledge – one theme in HFA-2 consultations – can also be facilitated by the OSCE. The discussions throughout the Forum process reminded about the need for active

engagement of local level, which the OSCE can support through the network of Aarhus Centres in 14 countries. Ms. Schweitzer also pointed to the suggestions raised how the OSCE could contribute a security perspective to the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. She concluded that the OSCE could further enhance capacity building and strengthen its position and image in the global context.

Ambassador Bessler asked the panellists about their main triggers and motivations for calling the OSCE for support.

H.E. Dorin Duscic, Deputy Minister of Environment, Republic of Moldova, said that the OSCE involvement in confidence-building measures in Transdniestria has been very helpful. First priority for him would be close co-operation in the environmental dimension of these CBMs, e.g. on bottom sand extraction, which takes place illegally on both sides of Dniester river and could result in disasters like landslides and pollution, which would also have security implications.

H.E. Diana Bejko, Deputy Minister of Environment, Albania stated that Albania's priority was border security and impacts in border regions. She said that most disaster effects occur due to poor management of water resources shared between the countries. Therefore, water management and measures to prevent pollution would be most important. The OSCE could play a role in ensuring reduction of effects on other countries. In this respect, capacity building, adequate assessments and investments, confidence building and public participation in DRR was still needed. She reiterated her appreciation of the role of OSCE and that an upgrading of the role of the OSCE in Albania might be expected.

H.E. Teimuraz Murgulia, First Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia, listed as priority issues for his country risk assessment and early warning systems, as well as the strengthening the capacities of Aarhus Centres/Public Environmental Information Centres.

H.E. Nurbek Sydygaliev, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations, Kyrgyzstan, stated that Kyrgyzstan undertakes many measures in DRR.

Ms. Schweitzer stressed that OSCE engagement also depends on funding. She underlined the close work with the UNECE environmental conventions, which could be further deepened and expanded to other conventions, e.g. on industrial accidents. She also noted that regional activities implemented by the OCEEA are complemented by activities of the Field Operations.

Prof. Goldammer mentioned that the role of the OSCE could manifest itself in looking at the heritage of conflicts (e.g. areas with UXOs and landmines). Fires and other environmental damages often occur as collateral damages of conflict, which could also be an area of OSCE work. Referring to the GPMC's experience in working with the OSCE, he noted that the OSCE managed to maintain a consistent and long-term approach despite different donors with different motivations. It is important to achieve sustainable investments. He also suggested the sharing of project results like early warning systems with other countries instead of investing in new development, which can contribute to more efficient use of donor money.

A representative of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan reminded that while Aarhus Centres are the primary tool for OSCE support to civil society involvement in environmental issues, and are increasingly engaged in regional co-operation, the financial support is under constraint.

A representative of the OSCE Mission to Moldova noted the success of environmental activities as confidence-building measures, which are one core activities of the OSCE mission to Moldova although it has no mandate in the Second Dimension. He reminded that identification of ways of co-operation is often easier than implementing them.

A representative of Belarus noted that the task of the OSCE was to provide a platform through which participating States could get information on effective measures, technologies, and future projects in order to learn from each other. He pointed to the considerable experience of countries like Belarus or Japan in dealing with disasters.

A representative of Azerbaijan stressed, with reference to multi-stakeholder participation, that such formats should include only legitimate representatives of local and other authorities. She expressed hope that OSCE initiatives and structures would strictly follow their mandates approved by consensus and refrain from establishing any form of contacts with illegitimate entities that might claim to represent a segment in a multi-stakeholder co-operation.

A representative of Italy/EU asked for examples of how environmental co-operation has helped to foster confidence building and had a positive impact on overall political processes or regional relations.

H.E. Teimuraz Murgulia, First Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia, stated that the OSCE's work, for example in the transboundary Kura River Basin, enabled more confidence-based communication and a common approach among concerned authorities in the region.

H.E. Diana Bejko, Deputy Minister of Environment, Albania, referred to shared water resources with Montenegro, where Aarhus Centres were involved in awareness-raising and stakeholder involvement. This was a long-term process where also other donors are active and the OSCE role could be even strengthened.

Ms. Schweitzer noted that many ENVSEC projects yielded concrete results, e.g. in the Kura and Dniester Basins, or the assessments conducted in the framework of the EU-funded project on climate change and security.

Amb. Bessler concluded that there is a role for the OSCE in addressing environmental challenges through the activities of the Field Operations as well as with contribution to global processes.

Concluding Plenary Session: Follow-up to the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

Moderator: Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Uros Milanovic, Attaché, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE

Speakers:

Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Permanent Representative of Serbia to the OSCE, incoming 2015 OSCE Serbian Chairmanship

At the beginning of the Concluding Session, *Dr. H. Yigitguden* summarized the intensive discussions which were held during the previous two days. He emphasized that the goal of the meeting was to find links between disasters and security and to search for a way the OSCE can contribute to the global processes regarding DRR. During the Forum, several concrete suggestions were made on how the OSCE should approach this matter. Dr. Yigitguden reminded participants that the keynote speakers, the Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lubomir Zaoralek, and the President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Didier Burkhalter, pointed out the necessity of defining an approach within the OSCE on how to tackle issues regarding DRR and Climate change adaptation. As President Burkhalter also highlighted, DRR should represent the basis upon which Nations and States formulate their co-operation, since disasters have a direct impact on everyone. In the last two days of the Forum, it was demonstrated that joint action between countries is of crucial importance during disasters, while strong support was also expressed for the Aarhus Centers, specifically their disaster awareness-raising role, and also for the OSCE Field Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia who momentarily response helped alleviate the consequences of the Floods. It was stressed that the OSCE can contribute to the security aspects of the ongoing deliberations regarding DRR, particularly in the post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action. With regard to this, the participants of the Forum underlined the significance of co-operation and partnership between International Organizations.

In his concluding speech, *Ambassador Greminger* said that the Forum's agenda for this year has been an ambitious one and has covered an extensive range of issues during the three meetings. With regard to the theme of the Forum, Greminger pointed out that the intentions of the Swiss Chairmanship were twofold - comprehensive management of natural disasters and proposition of viable ways to strengthen the capabilities of the OSCE, thus encouraging co-operation and generating political will for further engagement of participating States. He concluded that there was a high amount of interest and dedication shown by the participants, which led to quality debates and a large number of bilateral meetings on the margins of the Forum. The OSCE can definitely contribute its comparative advantage to the ongoing international efforts regarding DRR and it should incorporate itself into the existing initiatives. Also, at the same time, the OSCE should cooperate with and support major institutions, including the global processes regarding DRR taking place this year and next year. Ambassador Greminger noted several points made from the remarks of the participants:

1. The OSCE Community was called to contribute a security perspective to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2 (global Disaster Risk Reduction Agenda) and to the Development Agenda.
2. DRR has the potential to connect the current main global processes
3. Organizations like the OSCE have to translate the global commitments into concrete actions at the regional level
4. The climate change issue is becoming an ever increasing security concern, acknowledging the increasing frequency of extreme weather
5. Several expert panelists have stressed that “we are the first generation that can feel the effects of climate change and the last that can do anything about it”

It was repeatedly noted that the OSCE has experience in environmental good governance which is a key element in the effective management of natural disasters. The review report by the UNDP has given an overview and recommendations for further action in the field of combating and preventing disasters. The OSCE, as a platform for dialogue regarding DRR coordination, represents an effective confidence building measure. The Chairman of the Permanent Council also emphasized the importance of the Aarhus centers and the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) and reminded of the value of co-operation and sharing of knowledge and experiences, when it comes to combating and preventing natural disasters. This was particularly highlighted during the historic floods in the Western Balkans in May this year. There is an immediate need to work on a wording about the linkages between climate change, disaster risks and security that the OSCE could contribute to the drafting of the new Hyogo Framework of Action. In this context, the Swiss Chairmanship announced that it will task the Secretariat to formulate concrete wording that could be presented and discussed within the Economic and Environmental Committee in the upcoming weeks. Another concrete follow-up emerging from the Forum is a Ministerial decision regarding DRR. The Chairmanship has issued several suggestions for the Draft of the Ministerial Decision in its Food-for-Thought paper. The draft of the Decision is expected to be presented in a few weeks and it will probably focus on disaster prevention and preparedness, the nexus between disasters, climate change and security, comprehensive risk management, cross-border co-operation etc. In conclusion, Ambassador Greminger stated that Serbia can count on the support of Switzerland during its Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2015.

Ambassador Zugic presented the incoming Chair's priorities in the second dimension during next year. He recalled that on various occasions, heads of state and government reconfirmed their will to strengthen the Economic and Environmental Dimension and expressed their desire to pursue and intensify co-operation. He stated that Serbia, as the incoming Chair, will continue to strengthen the effectiveness of the Second Dimension. Ambassador Zugic also underlined the importance of this year's topic, especially in light of the recent catastrophic floods that occurred in the Western Balkans region. He stated that there is a positive side to such unfortunate events, as they remind us that no country can meet these challenges alone and that we need trans-boundary co-operation. Ambassador Zugic noted that the Concluding Meeting certainly generated interesting thoughts and ideas and deepened our knowledge on how to promptly and effectively respond to environmental challenges. It is obvious that water-related natural disasters are even less “natural” than others: floods are often aggravated by previous river management decisions and droughts can be a result of human-driven climate change. He pointed out that management and governance of natural resources is of vital importance when it comes to

Disaster Risk Reduction. Like his Swiss colleague, he suggested that the recommendations for future activities in this area, put forward in the preceding three days, should be followed-up in a result-oriented manner in preparation for the Basel Ministerial meeting.

For next year's Forum, Serbia has chosen the topic "Water Governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability through co-operation". Some of the topics that will be included in the deliberations will be: water governance as a prerequisite for environmental sustainability and for economic and social prosperity and stability, promotion of dialogue in good water governance within the OSCE area through sharing of best practices and lessons learned, raising awareness of the importance of water governance at all levels, water governance within the context of disaster risk reduction etc. During the 2014 Forum, there was a strong call for strengthening the OSCE's input into global processes. Ambassador Zugic stated that Serbia will embrace the task of increasing the visibility of the OSCE and contributing the Organization's expertise and approach to these global deliberations. He also reminded participants that the 7th World Water Forum and the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will take place in 2015, providing the OSCE with another opportunity to contribute its experiences. In concluding, Ambassador Zugic emphasized the fact that even though there has been some positive progress in the second dimension, it has remained underutilized, despite its essential role in the comprehensive approach to security. He believes that the ongoing "Helsinki +40" process is a good opportunity to tackle this issue.

During the discussions, the *representative from the European Union* thanked the participants who put forward concrete proposals in the area of disaster risk management. The representative stated that the EU also considers the Food-for-Thought paper, put forward by the Chairmanship, as a solid base for active discussions regarding the suggestions within it. The delegate highlighted certain issues which the EU believes are worth considering – disaster risks do not only pose a threat to security but a chance for co-operation; the OSCE should use its network in order to promote awareness raising on disaster risk reduction, the access to information on climate change and disaster risks, etc; implementation of specialized conventions dealing with cross-border issues should be fostered; the OSCE should not duplicate efforts at global level but should support them (with regard HFA-2); and the importance of mainstreaming DRM into some OSCE activities within the Second Dimension. The delegate also stated that the EU appreciates Serbia's choice for the next year's Forum theme focusing on the topic of water governance in the OSCE area. The EU reminded the delegations that the importance of this theme was also highlighted during the last Security Days event of 8 July. In the end, the EU expressed hope that the next year's EEF will not only take stock of OSCE's work and achievements in the field of water and security but also identify further areas for its future engagement in responsible trans-boundary water management.

The representative of the US thanked the organizers of the Forum and stated that all participants benefited from the expertise of the panelists. The responsibility now falls on the participating States to distill what was said during the previous days and formulate it into concrete actions within the OSCE. The delegate stressed the importance of trans-boundary co-operation regarding combating and preventing disasters, since natural catastrophes know no borders. The OSCE should use its Field Missions to help countries to strengthen their defenses against natural disasters. The US is looking forward to the potential contribution of the OSCE to the HFA-2. The delegate also expressed US' satisfaction on the progress Albania has made in the fight against

corruption, and praised the comments made by Assistant Minister Predrag Maric (Serbia), especially the part about the significance of speaking the truth to the public in the event of a natural hazard.

A representative of The International Fund of Ecological Safety of Baltic Sea used the opportunity to point out to an alleged problem of contamination of the Baltic Sea, with chemical weapons used during the World War II. This has allegedly led to an increased number of cases of cancer in the Baltic States. He called on the USA to investigate these claims.

The representative of the US reiterated his country support for the civil society, and thanked the previous speaker for his contribution to the Forum, even though he expressed doubts of the Forum being an appropriate place for such discussion.

The Ambassador of Slovakia expressed her support for the conclusions of the Forum and also stated that her government would like to see a formulation of a Basel Ministerial Decision regarding this topic. Slovakia also gave its backing to the incoming Serbian Chairmanship

The representative of Azerbaijan referring to the mission to the fire-affected territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the delegate stressed that the mission was conducted under the United Nations General Assembly resolution “Situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan” in the context of OSCE’s involvement in the activities aimed at prevention and elimination of fires in occupied territories, and that Armenia itself has supported conduct of the mission under this framework. She stated that it is obvious that any initiatives and recommendations deriving from missions’ results must be implemented in strict compliance with respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of OSCE participating States and other relevant norms and principles of international law and Helsinki Final Act. She also noted that Armenian side should raise their complaints and suggestions on confidence-building measures in the area of fire management within appropriate format related to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which is the Minsk Group.

The representative of Armenia welcomed the strong emphasis of the discussions on cross-border co-operation in the context of response to natural disasters. He noted that sometimes conflicts might impede cross-border co-operation. In this regard, the delegate indicated that the OSCE, within its mandate of addressing conflict cycle, can play a crucial role in promoting co-operation in affected areas through its expertise in confidence building measures (CBMs). He pointed out that all participating States have agreed to this in Vilnius Ministerial Council Decision on conflict cycle. According to the representative, efforts in assessing, reducing and mitigating natural disasters risks can create a depoliticized and positive agenda for co-operation in conflict areas among all stakeholders in the status neutral manner. In his view, the assessment of OSCE environmental fact finding missions set a good example of the Organization’s involvement in the conflict areas. The subsequent implementation of the recommendation of these missions can contribute to the generation of CBMs. The OSCE continuous engagement in and with the ENVSEC Initiative and the Aarhus centers seems key in working in DRR issues. The co-ordination among national platforms could also become a new way to foster international and regional co-operation among all stakeholders. Finally the delegate expressed readiness to be constructively engaged in addressing the main findings of this forum into the outcomes of the Basel Ministerial Council.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat**

22ND OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting
co-operation and security in the OSCE area”**

**CONCLUDING MEETING
Prague, 10 – 12 September 2014**

Venue: Czernin Palace, Loretánské nám. 5, 118 00 Prague

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Wednesday, 10 September 2014

09:30 – 11:30 **Opening Plenary Session** (*open to the press*)

Moderator: Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Ms. Riccarda Caprez, Scientific Officer, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

Welcoming remarks:

- **H.E. Lubomír Zaorálek**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic
- **H.E. Didier Burkhalter**, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, President of the Swiss Confederation, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- **H.E. Lamberto Zannier**, Secretary General, OSCE

Selected topics:

- Actual and future trends in disaster risk management
- Influence of climate change on extreme weather & climate hazards, and synergies between disaster risk management and climate change adaptation

Keynote speakers:

- **H.E. Margareta Wahlström**, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- **Prof. Thomas Stocker**, University of Bern, Co-Chair of Working Group I, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Statements by Delegations / Discussion

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee/Tea break

12:00 – 13:00 **Review of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of disaster risk reduction**

Selected topics:

- Presentation of the UNDP review report
- Forward looking discussion on the Review Report's main findings and recommendations

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Ms. Nino Malashkhia, Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

10' video-clip on First and Second Preparatory Meetings in Vienna and Montreux

Main speaker: Ms. Elena Panova, Senior Programme Coordinator, Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

There are a number of OSCE commitments already in place pertaining to different aspects of disaster risk reduction. This year, the review of the implementation of the OSCE commitments has been carried out and will be presented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The presentation of the report will be followed up by a forward-looking discussion on the review report's main findings and recommendations.

Questions that could be addressed:

- To what extent have the OSCE commitments in the area of disaster risk reduction been implemented?
- How could the existing commitments be complemented by additional ones?

- What are the identified gaps in implementing the commitments in disaster risk reduction?
- How can the OSCE further support its participating States in implementing their commitments?

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 16:00 **Session I: Flooding disaster in South Eastern Europe - Lessons learned and the role of the OSCE**

Selected topics:

- Early analysis of the flooding disaster in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia in May 2014 triggered by cyclone Tamara and of associated heavy rainfalls. Lessons learned for prevention, preparedness and response
- Assessment of the regional cross-border response and opportunities for confidence-building measures
- Cascading effects and security challenges associated with flooding
- Role of OSCE Field Operations in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Moderator: Mr. Goran Svilanović, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council
Rapporteur: Ms. Aisling Schorderet, Attaché, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE

Speakers:

- **Mr. Predrag Maric**, Assistant Minister, Head of the Department for Emergency Management, Ministry of Interior, Serbia
- **Mr. Jan Lueneburg**, Head of Democratization Department, OSCE Mission to Serbia
- **Mr. Samir Rizvo**, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation, Ministry of Security, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Mr. Ahdin Orahovac**, Deputy Director of Mine Action Centre, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Dr. Robert Mikac**, Commander of Civil Protection, National Protection and Rescue Directorate, Croatia

This session will reflect on the devastating floods that swept through Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia between 14 and 18 May 2014 and on cross-border co-operation in disaster risk management. The floods were followed by rapid humanitarian aid to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable populations. Many states offered assistance and many relief workers were deployed to the affected countries during the emergency operations. The OSCE field operations in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were also involved in the relief operations. These floods were the worst in the region since records began 120 years ago.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What are the lessons learned so far regarding prevention, preparedness and response after the heavy floods in the Balkans, including from the cross-border cooperation perspective?
- What were the major environmental, technological, industrial and security consequences of the floods?
- What support was provided by the OSCE field operations in the region to the governments concerned?
- How could the OSCE support further flood prevention, preparedness and response (including through the OSCE Self-Assessment Tool)

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee/Tea break

16:30 – 18:00 **Session II – *Panel Debate* – Disaster Risk Reduction on the global agenda: Implications for the OSCE area**

Selected topics:

- Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and post-2015 Framework for disaster risk reduction
- Post-2015 Development Agenda Sustainable Development Goals process and the role of disaster risk reduction
- Links between climate change, disaster risk reduction and security
- The role and contribution of the OSCE

Moderator: Dr. Josef Hess, Vice-Director of Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions, Switzerland

Rapporteur: Mr. Paul Hickey, Environmental Officer, OSCE Office in Tajikistan

Speakers:

- **H.E. Margareta Wahlström**, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) - **H.E. Christian Friis Bach**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- **Mr. Raphael Dang**, Climate Change and Environment Division Negotiator and post-2015 Agenda Task Force Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France
- **Mr. Tom Mitchell**, Head of Programme, Climate and Environment, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- **Dr. Michael Staudinger**, Director General, Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics, Austria

This panel debate will explore the role of and implications of the ongoing global processes on disaster risk reduction, sustainable development goals and climate change for the OSCE. It is commonly agreed that there is a strong connection between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change

adaptation and that they are all linked to security and stability at all levels and require co-operation among States. The OSCE as a regional security organization, under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, and its participating States have an important role to play in bringing a security dimension to these global discussions and in sharing experiences and best practices from the OSCE area.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What voluntary commitments could the OSCE and its participating States make in order to support the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction?
- What could be the specific contribution of the OSCE and its participating States in shaping the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, to be adopted at the Third World Conference on DRR in Sendai, Japan (March 2015)?
- How could the OSCE and its participating States contribute to the ongoing post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals process?
- How could the OSCE and its participating States contribute to the global discussions on climate change?

18:30

Reception hosted by the Swiss 2014 OSCE Chairmanship

Thursday, 11 September 2014

09:30 – 11:00 **Session III – Slow-onset natural disasters as triggers of tensions and opportunities for co-operation**

Selected topics:

- The impact of slow-onset natural disasters (drought, climate change, environmental degradation and desertification) on security
- How to best prepare for and deal with multiple events and compound hazards
- Opportunities for co-operation among the OSCE participating States

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Yaroslav Yurtsaba, National Project Manager, OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine

Speakers:

- **H.E. Monique Barbut**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- **H.E. Aykhon Sharipova**, Deputy Chairperson, Environment Protection Committee, Tajikistan
- **Prof. Boris Porfiryev**, Deputy Director and Head of the Laboratory for Analysis and Forecasting of Natural and Technological Risks for Economic Development,

Institute of Economic Forecasting, Russian Academy of Science, the Russian Federation

- **Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev**, Executive Director, The Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC)

This session will focus on slow-onset disasters and how those may trigger tensions, but – on the other hand – also offer opportunities for co-operation. Slow-onset disasters result from hazards which can take months or years to generate a disaster. Losses and damages that result from slow-onset processes may affect – over a longer period of time – a large portion of the population. Drought, climate change and environmental degradation (soil, water, ecosystems, including forests) are among the major slow-onset events which frequently lead to inadequate and inequitable access to natural resources which in turn have implications on security at local, national and transboundary levels. On the other hand, common problems linked to the use of shared natural resources can also foster co-operation between neighbouring communities and countries, and can improve resource management and disaster risk management across borders, thus preventing conflict through the promotion of mutual understanding and peace. National and regional efforts to improve natural resource management and environmental governance as well as informed decision making are crucial to successfully addressing such issues.

Questions that could be addressed

- What are the security implications of slow-onset natural events leading to disasters in the OSCE area?
- How can disasters resulting from slow-onset events be prevented?
- What could be the role of the OSCE in prevention, preparing for and responding to the slow-onset disasters, including as part of the confidence-building measures?
- How can the co-operation among the OSCE participating States be further enhanced in this field?

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee/Tea break

11:30 – 13:00 **Session IV – A co-operative response to environmental challenges: OSCE experience and lessons learnt for the future**

Selected topics:

- OSCE experiences in enhancing national capacities in fire management and wildfire disaster risk reduction
- Raising public awareness on environmental challenges through Aarhus Centres
- Role of the OSCE in strengthening exchanges between National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction

Moderator: Ambassador Andreas Papadakis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE

Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, Environmental Programme Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **Major-General Nikolay Grigoryan**, National Coordinator of the HFA and Deputy Director of the Rescue Service, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Armenia
- **Colonel Leonid Dedul**, Head of the Department of the State System of Prevention and Liquidation of Emergencies and Civil Protection, Ministry for Emergency Situations, Belarus
- **Prof. Johann G. Goldammer**, Head of the Fire Ecology and Biomass Burning Research Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)
- **Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman**, Environmental Adviser, OSCE Mission to Serbia

This session will focus on the experiences of the OSCE and its participating States in implementing projects and activities in the field of disaster risk management and in responding to environmental challenges. It will also provide an overview of the OSCE's co-operation with other organizations in addressing these challenges. The OSCE's role in enhancing wildfire management capacities in the South Caucasus region and in promoting community-based disaster risk reduction through the Aarhus Centres Network are among the activities that will be discussed in this session. These discussions will also demonstrate the importance of the OSCE's partnership with other international actors, particularly within the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative. This session will also provide an opportunity to hear from participating States on their experiences with the National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction and their co-operation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

Questions that could be addressed:

- What are the major achievements and lessons learnt in the field of fire management capacity building activities and what are the future prospects?
- How can the Aarhus Centres be further empowered to strengthen community-based disaster risk reduction?
- What are the examples of co-operation among national DRR platforms and how could the OSCE support and facilitate such co-operation and exchange of experiences?
- Could the OSCE play a role in promoting the establishment of stronger national laws that protect at-risk communities from the threats posed by disasters?

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 16:00 **Session V – Facilitating disaster preparedness and response through innovation, technology and information, and Public-Private-Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction**

Selected topics:

- Crisis-mapping software and crowd-sourcing technologies for disaster risk management
- ICT solutions for early-warning and response. The role of space based monitoring and warning systems
- Technology and innovation: data and information management
- Examples of public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction

Moderator: Ambassador Ol'ga Algayerová, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE, Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Emre Gençtuğ, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the OSCE

Speakers:

- **Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi**, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the UN Office in Geneva and Co-Chair of the Bureau of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Thailand
- **Mr. Juan Carlos Villagrán de León**, Programme Officer, Head of UN-SPIDER, Bonn Office
- **Mr. Ladislav Szakallos**, Senior Advisor, Department for Civil Protection and Crisis Planning, Ministry of Interior, Slovakia
- **Mr. Douglas Bausch**, Senior Physical Scientist, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VIII, Denver Federal Center, the United States of America

Technology can play a crucial role in the prevention of and preparedness for natural hazard triggered disasters. This session will address the technologies, in particular software solutions and public private partnerships which are becoming a central pillar of disaster risk reduction. Crowd-sourced mapping and SMS broadcasting helped save lives in the devastating earthquake which struck Haiti in 2010. ICT technology systems can compile massive amounts of crowd sourced data which can inform decision makers and disaster response teams resulting in a more effective search and rescue process. The information can also be used after the fact to aid preparedness and prevention efforts against future events. This session will provide examples of such technologies available as well as the public private partnerships established for this purpose.

Questions that could be addressed:

- How can participating States make better use of available ICT technologies for DRR?
- How can national DRR platforms take advantage of crowd sourcing in disaster risk management?
- Can the OSCE have a role in facilitating public-private partnerships in DRR?
- What is the responsibility of the private sector in reducing disaster risks?

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee/Tea break

16:30 - 18:00 **Session VI – Panel Debate – How to achieve resilience in the OSCE area?**

Selected topics:

- Goals of resilience: who and what should become “resilient”: engineering, psychological, economic, ecological and community resiliencies
- Contribution of civil society
- Investment in resilience and disaster risk reduction – incentives and opportunities for risk-sensitive investment

Moderator: Dr. Timothy Prior, Head, Risk and Resilience Research Team, Center for Security Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

Rapporteur: Ms. Nana Baramidze, Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Speakers:

- **Mr. Mario Aymerich**, Director, Environment and Regional Development Department, European Investment Bank
- **Ms. Rachel Scott**, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, Resilience Group, OECD
- **Mr. Daniel Kull**, Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist, The World Bank
- **Ms. Catherine Ebah-Moussa**, Policy Officer, Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, Policy and Implementation Frameworks, European Commission

UNISDR defines resilience as “the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions”. Resilience is a result of factors that deeply rely on culture and society. Therefore, there can only be tailor-made strategies that individuals, communities and states have to develop to influence the factors for resilience. Resilience cannot be seen as a task for a community or a state only: it implies the interaction of all relevant stakeholders, at local, regional, national and international level. Climate change adds another risk that needs to be considered when working on the resilience factors and disaster risk reduction. This panel debate will contribute to a common understanding of resilience, highlight the importance of resilience and better define the role of different stakeholders as well as the role of the OSCE.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What is the role of different stakeholders (governments, local authorities, civil society, private sector) in enhancing resilience?
- How can climate change be factored into resilience enhancing efforts?

- What efforts can be undertaken by the OSCE in order to make participating States more resilient?
- Which kind of incentives could be put in place to increase investment in resilience and disaster risk reduction?

18:30 Reception hosted by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Friday, 12 September 2014

09:00 – 10:30 Session VII – *Panel Debate* – The Role of the OSCE in responding to environmental challenges

Selected topics:

- The role of the OSCE in disaster risk prevention and preparedness, including awareness raising on disaster risk reduction
- The OSCE as a platform for knowledge-sharing and implementation
- Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction within the OSCE agenda
- Cross-border environmental emergency preparedness in the OSCE area

Moderator: Ambassador Manuel Bessler, Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, Switzerland

Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **H.E. Dorin Duscian**, Deputy Minister of Environment, Republic of Moldova
- **H.E. Diana Bejko**, Deputy Minister of Environment, Albania
- **H.E. Teimuraz Murgulia**, First Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia
- **H.E. Nurbek Sydygaliev**, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations, Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Desiree Schweitzer**, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
- **Prof. Johann Goldammer**, Head of the Fire Ecology and Biomass Burning Research Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

This panel discussion will focus on how the role of the OSCE could be strengthened in responding to environmental challenges, taking also into consideration the relevant outcomes of the first and second Economic and Environmental Forum Preparatory Meetings

Questions that could be addressed:

- How can the OSCE's role be further strengthened in addressing environment and security challenges, including those related to DRR and climate change, and in promoting co-operation among stakeholders within and across boundaries?

- How can the OSCE's partnership with other major actors active in the environmental and DRR field be further strengthened including within the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative?
- How can disaster risk reduction and its implications for security be mainstreamed into the work of the OSCE?
- How can the security aspects of environmental and natural disaster challenges be demonstrated and promoted within the framework of the ongoing global processes related to DRR, sustainable development and climate change?

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee/Tea break

11:00 – 12:30 **Concluding Plenary Session – Follow-up to the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**

Moderator: Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Uros Milanovic, Attaché, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE

Speakers:

- **Ambassador Thomas Greminger**, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship
- **Ambassador Vuk Žugić**, Permanent Representative of Serbia to the OSCE, incoming 2015 OSCE Serbian Chairmanship

Representatives of the 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship and the incoming 2015 OSCE Serbian Chairmanship will make their closing statements. They will wrap-up the discussions of the 22nd Environmental and Economic Forum and provide a short preview of the next Economic and Environmental Forum.

- General discussion
- Closing statements

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING

Montreux, 20-21 May 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area” took place in Montreux, Switzerland, on 19-21 May 2014. Four thematic areas were addressed during the two-day meeting:

- Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level
- Cross-dimensional impacts of natural and man-made disasters
- Coping measures to reduce disaster risks at an international, cross-border and national level
- The potential impacts of natural and man-made disasters in the wider scope of the OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security

Around 140 participants, including official representatives of OSCE participating States, Field Operations and Institutions, as well as experts from international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the business community and academia attended the meeting and engaged in the discussions.

Main conclusions and recommendations

Throughout the event, a number of proposals were put forward by speakers and participants.

Parallels were drawn between disaster risk management and the conflict cycle. Indeed, both can benefit from early warning, overall prevention, operational preparedness, and sometimes, if the previously mentioned measures were insufficient, management and mitigation of the effects. While dealing with disaster risks reduction, many participants proposed to shift the focus from response and recovery to **preparedness** and **prevention**.

Many participants acknowledged that addressing disaster risks require a **cross-dimensional perspective**.

Good governance and transparency were considered one of the key factors for ensuring an efficient implementation of disaster risk management.

Several experts recalled that in the upcoming years **climate change** would trigger extreme weather events, increasing the frequency and intensity of disasters. One of the consequences of such scenario would be the aggravation of **poverty, food insecurity, water scarcity** and thus, an increased number of **displacements**.

OSCE participating States were identified as both, countries vulnerable to natural hazards and potential destination for people fleeing from natural disasters and conflicts. Therefore, it

was suggested that the OSCE could facilitate discussions on both the **internal displacement and cross-border movements** caused by disasters. Furthermore, aware that it is frequently difficult to distinguish between “*conflict-refugees*” and “*disaster refugees*” (as often there is a mixture of both) some participants suggested that the OSCE could help to produce common **definitions** of such categories. Moreover it was suggested that the OSCE could engage in the **Nansen Initiative** and other processes aiming at promoting co-operation and developing solutions.

Because natural disasters do not respect borders, the need for **regional co-operation, burden- and responsibility-sharing** in risk reduction and management was often highlighted. The OSCE was seen as a key **platform to promote such co-operation**.

In order to ensure a successful **cross-border co-operation**, leading to disaster preparedness and consequence management, participants acknowledged that there should be an **exchange of information** among the parties and mutual support during emergencies

Examples of natural disasters that developed solidarity among parties originally in conflict were put forward and presented to prove that disaster risk reduction has a strong potential as **confidence building measure (CBMs)**. Likewise, it was pointed out that not only natural disasters could lead to conflicts, but conflicts could also lead to man-made and natural disasters (i.e. forest fires, pollution, draught or flooding after destruction of water dams).

The **exchange of experiences and best practices** on how to prevent disaster risks and manage them was identified as a key factor to build resilience and trust among participating States. It was acknowledged that, such exchange of best practices and **CBMs** would need to be developed at all levels of governance, in close co-operation with national and local authorities, and would require continued facilitation of the dialogue between interested participating States.

The potential of **OSCE structures and Field Operations** in facilitating such regional co-operation was underlined. It was suggested that the OSCE could develop **capacity building trainings**, promote networking, including **cross-border interoperability**, organize **events** on disaster risk reduction for and with practitioners and involve key actors, including **civil society, local and national governments, and private sector** in all actions.

The **OSCE** and its **Field Operations** were regarded as key in **monitoring, collecting data collection and reporting** on issues related to disaster risk reduction and prevention.

It was underlined that **public participation and awareness-raising** can mitigate the effects of disasters. The OSCE, through its **Field Operations** and the **Aarhus Centres network**, could contribute to increasing capacities of communities in disaster risk reduction. Participants highlighted the importance of the **network** as a platform to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination on environmental issues across and within countries and encouraged its further engagement in the field of disaster risk reduction.

On the need to better share lessons learnt across the OSCE and with other affected parties, it was pointed out that **new technologies** and **analytical methods** could offer solutions to

some of the most pressing issues. A better use of technology in preparation and prevention, especially communications technology like the UN-Spider, was encouraged by participants. The **OSCE Self-Assessment Tool for Nations to Increase Preparedness for Cross-Border Implications of Crises** was seen as an instrument that could assist participating States in increasing prevention and preparation for cross-border implications of natural disasters.

It was underlined that there is a need to **promote the development of key technologies** facilitating risk reduction and make them available to respective governments, agencies and communities. It was suggested that within the OSCE framework, border-, disaster relief- and other relevant agencies should be encouraged to exchange best practices on technology aspects.

It was also suggested to integrate disaster risk reduction measures into different economic and social sectors, including the **private sector**, which would ensure that businesses are become more aware of risks arising from disasters and are properly positioned to minimise such risks.

The linkages between **environmental challenges and technological/industrial accidents** were also discussed. Some participants saw a role for the OSCE in addressing this interconnection.

Co-operation and co-ordination of the OSCE with relevant regional and international organizations, such as UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, among others, was encouraged by participating States. OSCE participating States were encouraged to support and contribute to the preparatory process towards the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in 2015 as well as the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. Nevertheless, it was noted that the OSCE should avoid duplicating structures and efforts and rather focus on strengthening the existing international bodies and frameworks and building capacities. The **ENVSEC Initiative** was perceived as an excellent example of co-operation among international organizations.

Finally, it was pointed out that the OSCE could reach out to **Partners for Co-operation** and that environmental risk mapping looking at the specific regions would be very useful.

REPORTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS

Opening Session

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Ms. Riccarda Caprez, Scientific Advisor, Directorate of Political Affairs, Sectoral Foreign Policies Division, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Welcoming remarks:

State Secretary Yves Rossier, Head of the Directorate of Political Affairs, Switzerland

Ambassador Manuel Bessler, Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA)

Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Keynote speakers:

Dr. Frederick S. Tipson, Special Advisor, PeaceTech Initiative, US Institute of Peace

Mr. Axel Rottländer, Chief Executive Officer, German Committee for Disaster Reduction (DKKV); Chair of the Working Group on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction, European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR)

Ambassador Thomas Greminger opened the second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, expressing his condolences and solidarity with the victims of the floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. He welcomed all participants to Montreux, which in the recent past hosted peace mediation efforts. After a brief summary of the first Preparatory Meeting in Vienna, Ambassador Greminger presented an overview of the second Preparatory Meeting in Montreux, including the field visits on the second day of the meeting.

State Secretary Yves Rossier opened his statement by asking why the three dimensions of the OSCE predominantly acted as soloists, though everyone agreed with the organization's holistic approach to security. The speaker noted that Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) should, as a matter of fact, be an integral component of a comprehensive security perspective, because natural and environmental risks often affect emerging or pre-existing tensions and conflicts. As key challenges he identified the following: securing political will, developing a comprehensive understanding of multiple hazards and their interactions and relevance across policy sectors, promoting a multi-stakeholder approach and involvement of all levels of authorities. Mr. Rossier further stated that crises are often wake-up calls for development and change but stressed that, nonetheless, prevention is always a better investment than response and rehabilitation. Resilience of nations will be of paramount importance, and in an interconnected world this requires cross-border co-operation between governmental and non-governmental actors. In this regard, the State Secretary reminded the audience that the OSCE, when fully exploiting its potential, is best placed to pave the way towards greater resilience. Finally, he expressed, on behalf of Switzerland, his condolences and deepest sympathy to the people and governments of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, who are currently suffering from devastating floods and their secondary effects.

Ambassador Manuel Bessler began his speech by expressing his condolences and sympathy to the people of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. In-depth disaster analyses for the flood-affected areas are vital in order to obtain a clear picture of the risk landscape and prevent new risks. Ambassador Bessler further referred to the dynamic of hazards, vulnerability and risk exposure, particularly in the context of climate change, and the need for adapting to its consequences. As main components of successful risk management also relevant for the OSCE, he identified: a comprehensive risk management approach, including disaster risks; preventive measures for crises, conflicts and disasters; and political leadership and commitment to the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction including the 3rd United Nations World Conference on DRR in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan. In this context, the speaker also referred to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and called for strengthening of ties between the new global frameworks. Last but not least, Ambassador Bessler emphasized the responsibility of the OSCE participating States, as they are among the key donors for humanitarian aid and development co-operation and the largest providers of military and civil defense assets for disaster relief.

Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden expressed his deep sympathy for victims of floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia as well as for people affected by the wildfires in Southern California. The Co-ordinator introduced the themes of the Second Preparatory Meeting and encouraged participants to benefit from a dynamic exchange of ideas among the different stakeholders. He described the role of the OSCE in DRR as a platform for dialogue and exchange of best practices and information on issues that have implications for security and stability. Dr. Yigitgüden emphasized that the Organization is well placed to contribute to international co-operation and global discussions, including within the framework of the 2014 Climate Change Summit, as well as on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. With its field operations and the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), the OSCE offers an effective framework to support the participating States in their efforts to strengthen disaster risk reduction at different levels and promote transboundary co-operation through the development and implementation of concrete projects.

In his keynote speech (delivered in the form of a poem) on “Natural Assaults and European Security in the Ecozoic Era”, *Dr. Frederick S. Tipson* described a disconcerting future and put forward a number of interesting and potentially controversial ideas. He characterized the imminent few decades as an era in which our habitat would become increasingly more hostile to our security and health. The greatest threats would come from repeated “assaults” of our natural environments, such as floods, storms, droughts, wildfires, seismic eruptions or disease, rather than from aggressive governments or terrorism. The speaker called this “the ecozoic era”. As Dr. Tipson noted, such trends as increasing population pressures and climate volatility will - or already do - burden political institutions and civil society, increasing the risk of repression and violence. Their impacts are no longer avoidable. The time has come to adjust our political and security priorities to the scale of these impacts. Dr. Tipson assessed these environmental scenarios as being even more dire and intractable than the superpower confrontation and risk of nuclear war during the Cold War era. According to the speaker, the key factor is how soon citizens and governments will recognize the increasing hostility of the habitat and the need to undertake essential adaptations in terms of location and set-up of communities, homes and businesses. Specifically, he suggested drawing on the example of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 by framing common priorities and principles of solidarity that would prevent natural disasters from

undermining human security. The 40th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act should inspire a new commitment in the face of these new threats: basket I as a common agenda for resilience, basket II – a renewed commitment to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and basket III, - a set of commitments addressing the need to relocate, reconfigure and even abandon the most exposed locations. Dr. Tipson emphasized much stronger co-operation between nations and stakeholders as an indispensable necessity for adjusting to the new ecozoic era.

Mr. Axel Rottländer opened his speech by referring to the variety of definitions of ‘resilience’, and noting that resilience, in any case, was a product of different economic, political and social factors, describing a status rather than a process. Several factors, such as livelihood, wellbeing, social protection and good governance, are important to take into consideration for communities or States trying to become more resilient. Concerted action would be required at different levels and between multiple actors to deliver resilience. Efforts need to come from society as a whole, since resilience will deeply rely on cultural and social factors. While economic stability, social services, social protection and good governance provide better resilience, communities benefitting from these assets will also be able to apply methods for better prevention, preparedness, response and reconstruction, thereby making them even more resilient. With hazardous events very likely to appear more often and with increased intensity, Mr. Rottländer suggested expanding our capacity beyond learning from the past by anticipating future disasters and their impacts. In his opinion, co-ordination and co-operation of the international community based on the existing and future framework for disaster risk reduction will be the key factor to increase resilience.

The floor was opened for *statements by Delegations/discussion*.

A representative of Greece took the floor to inform the participants about his country’s approach to DRR implementation at the national, regional and local levels through cross-cutting prevention, preparedness and response plans and programs. Additionally, he highlighted a comprehensive ‘Hellenic National Platform for DRR’ as Greece’s contribution to the ISDR, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to promote a culture of prevention.

A representative of the European Union expressed sympathy and solidarity with the participating States in South-Eastern Europe that suffered from the recent flooding. She particularly valued the meeting’s focus on the nexus between natural disasters and security and the importance of making states resilient to environmental risks. She also anticipated discussions on a possible role for the OSCE in this regard in the context of the upcoming Concluding Economic and Environmental Forum Meeting in Prague and the Ministerial Council in Basel. The representative further outlined various measures to support implementation of the EU disaster risk management framework, including its engagement in addressing cross-border impacts; mainstreaming of disaster risk management in EU policies and financial instruments; and efforts to enhance synergies with adaptation to climate change; as well as its intention to actively contribute to the negotiations on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (i.e. post-Hyogo Framework for Action).

In light of the recent floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, *a representative of the USA* informed about the assistance his country is providing to the affected participating States. In this regard, he encouraged discussions during the meeting on the role of the OSCE field

operations as well as on how the OSCE as a whole could address DRR issues. He particularly appreciated the timely discussion on the linkage between climate change and disaster risk management, as well as on security aspects of disaster response. He also commended the Swiss Chairmanship and the OCEEA for the organization of the meeting, including the field visits.

A representative of Armenia took note that the agenda of the current meeting builds on the outcomes of the First Preparatory Meeting and provides opportunities to further elaborate on the OSCE's role and added value in responding to environmental challenges. He further outlined his country's efforts with respect to DRR, especially at the local level, including through the Aarhus Centres. The representative also welcomed the strong emphasis on cross-border co-operation and stressed the crucial role the OSCE could play in promoting such co-operation within its expertise on confidence building measures.

A representative of Serbia described the scale of the natural catastrophe unprecedented in her country's history, which had hit the region just a few days before the meeting. She acknowledged the support of numerous volunteers joining forces with the police and military, as well as of many countries and international organizations, and encouraged the participating States to engage further with the Government of Serbia at the bilateral or multilateral levels in efforts to restore basic living conditions for the large number of affected people.

A representative of Turkey expressed sympathy with and condolences to all who suffered in the recent floods in South-Eastern Europe. He emphasized the need for regional, inter-regional and international co-operation to address the threats that natural disasters pose to human safety and wellbeing, and identified multilateral dialogue and the network of field presences as important elements of the role the OSCE could play in this field. Finally, he stated that the ongoing discussions in the Helsinki+40 process should also contribute to the goal of enhancing the role of the OSCE in environmentally focused cooperation on security issues. He also assured that his country remained ready to actively engage in the Forum's deliberations with a view to possible adoption of a thematic document at the Ministerial Council in Basel.

A representative of the Russian Federation joined the words of sympathy for the countries affected by the recent flooding and informed about the assistance provided by his country. He commended the CiO and the OCEEA for the organization of the meeting and reported on how his country prioritized DRR issues, particularly through the work of the Ministry of Russian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters and its participation in joint international operations. He also drew participants' attention to persistent problems in co-ordination of international humanitarian aid in case of disasters, such as insufficient communication between different organizations, discrepancies between national legislations and procedures in the field of civil defense, lack of resources and inconsistencies between the needs of the affected countries and the type of help offered by the international community. The representative stated that he expected fruitful discussions on improving international co-ordination and exchange of best practices relevant to the topic.

A representative of the European Investment Bank (EIB) started his statement by expressing condolences to everyone affected by the floods in the Balkans. Further, he stressed that the fight against the consequences of climate change, including improvement of resilience of natural systems such as river basins or forests, is currently a priority for the EIB, with more than 6.2

billion euros in loans related to some 50 natural disasters worldwide in the last decade. He named some recent examples of projects benefiting from the EIB support and stressed the advantages for beneficiaries resulting from EIB's collaboration with the European Commission, as well as with other financial institutions. In conclusion, the representative assured that the EIB would continue to provide financial assistance in order to prevent natural disasters or mitigate their impacts in the future.

A representative of Azerbaijan also extended deepest sympathies to the victims of the floods in the Balkans and assured that her nation would provide aid to the affected countries. Further, she commended the Swiss Chairmanship and the OCEEA for the organization of the meeting and stated that natural disasters had become a global challenge requiring concerted actions to prevent the causes, mitigate their effects and to address post-disaster recovery. She appreciated that the issue of natural hazard triggered disasters and technological accidents was put on the agenda of the EEF as such phenomena were becoming increasingly more important, especially those with cross-border impacts, and welcomed the focus on prevention rather than response. The representative also looked forward to discussions on reliable management of natural disasters and accidents, risk reduction and prevention of mismanagement of industrial infrastructure with potentially destructive and fatal effects for the OSCE region, and stressed that transparency, access to information and comprehensive, impartial environmental impact assessment procedures were an integral part of this process.

A representative of the Holy See expressed his deepest condolences to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia for the loss of lives. He suggested that one of the outcomes of the meeting should be an appeal (forwarded to and reaffirmed at one of the upcoming Permanent Council meetings) to make more aid available to the affected countries, to be followed by prompt and concrete steps under the auspices of the OSCE to provide the three nations with the appropriate assistance. In light of the current situation in the Balkans and the recent tragedy in a coal mine in Soma, Turkey, the representative called upon the participating States to prioritize preparedness for disasters and show solidarity with all those who might be in need of help.

Session I: Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level

Moderator: Prof. Martin Beniston, Director, Institute for Environmental Sciences (ISE), Chair for Climate Research, University of Geneva

Rapporteur: Mr. Paul Hickey, Environmental Officer, Economic and Environmental Department, OSCE Office in Tajikistan

Speakers:

Dr. Roza Aknazarova, Chairperson of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment

Mr. Neil McFarlane, Chief Regional Programmes and DRR Coordination, Disaster Risk Reduction Focal Point, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Mr. Dmitriy Prudtskikh, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Khujand, Tajikistan

Ms. Yulia Minaeva, Senior Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

The moderator, Prof. Beniston, opened the session by outlining the context of increased visibility and impact of natural disasters today, with particular reference to the recent flooding in the Balkans. He quoted insurance statistics, which record that, over the last 50 years, 16,000 natural hazards events have taken place, of which over 250 caused at least 1 billion dollars each in damages. Moreover, 85% of these events have been linked to climate and weather with the remainder classified as geological events. Prof. Beniston elaborated on the human cost of natural disasters, citing data that over the past 50 years there have been approximately 1.2 million deaths, with 60% related to climate and the balance related to geological hazards. In this period, the associated damage is reported to have cost 2,000 billion dollars. Additionally, he said that according to the forecast of the IPCC, there would likely there would likely to be an increase in extreme weather events and consequent disasters, both in terms of frequency and intensity. An aggravating factor has been the increase in the global population, which has magnified the effect of such events in recent times. He finished by referring to the recent IPCC report, which identified two types of extreme weather events: coastal flooding; and the flooding in river basins. In the case of a densely populated area such as Europe, the cost of risk reduction is projected to amount to several billions of euros per year over the rest of the century.

After the introductory remarks, *Dr. Roza Aknazarova* commenced her presentation by highlighting the increased importance attached to climate change by national governments and international institutions around the world. She also briefly summarised the primary international environmental conventions governing the global response to climate change and identified the strategy documents adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in response to, and support of, these conventions. She elaborated upon the activities of the Assembly in related areas such as water resources management. Along with preventative measures, she stressed the importance of mitigating the effects of climate change and identified some key instruments for implementing this approach, which includes adapted legal and policy frameworks, promotion of the green economy, improved monitoring and forecasting systems, increasing public awareness and participation and enhancing the robustness of infrastructure.

Dr. Roza Aknazarova also identified the impact of climate change on water resources, biodiversity agriculture and human health. She highlighted such issues as requiring control and management measures, public awareness-raising, international co-operation, incentives for restorative measures, and called for co-operation on transboundary water resources and to make more use of the capacities of the Aarhus Centres. Finally, Dr. Roza Aknazarova described the initiatives regarding glaciers, water resources and mountains, and emphasised the importance of the Parliamentary Assembly in advancing relevant resolutions.

Mr. Neil McFarlane informed about the tasking by UN member nations to the Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to focus on 5 main objectives for next year's UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction: to review the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) over the last 10 years; to review experiences at the national and regional levels; to adopt a new framework; to focus on commitments concerning cooperation; and to review the Office's work at the local, national and regional levels. Mr. McFarlane outlined the current status of consultations in the run to the Conference, which include regional conferences and preparatory committee meetings. He reported on the issues raised during the consultations thus far such as the need to ensure coherence between various international agreements, the requirement to agree on common monitoring indicators and the importance of developing public-private partnerships (i.e. with the

private sector or local communities) to curb disaster losses. He stated that there was also a growing recognition of the importance of the private sector, which was where much of the investment in disaster risk reduction was occurring, and of course where a significant amount of risk was borne. Working with the private sector involves ensuring that businesses are aware of risks and are properly positioned to minimise such risks. Other issues that were raised included populations at risk, the cumulative effect of natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes leading to tsunamis) and the need to engage with the scientific community in solving these problems.

Mr. McFarlane reported on the progress made in Europe toward the implementation of the HFA commitments, however, he said there is still room for improvement in the area of integration of DRR into different economic and social sectors, risk identification and awareness (especially communication of risks to the population), application of science and technology, local community action and private sector partnerships. He mentioned the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction as a means for promoting the priorities for this region and spoke about efforts to mainstream DRR at the local level through this forum. Currently, the UNISDR is engaged in a pilot project with the OSCE and the Swiss government on DRR governance and standards in several countries.

Mr. McFarlane finished by focusing on the following 3 key messages. Firstly, the frequency and severity of natural disasters has been increasing (the trend of many small but severe events taking a greater toll). Secondly, DRR must cross the nexus of environment, development and security, i.e. DRR must move beyond response and recovery to preparedness in different government ministries and at both the local and national level. Finally, the new framework must place an emphasis on prevention.

Mr. Dmitriy Prudtskikh presented his experience of working on DRR at the local level through the Aarhus Centre platform. He briefly introduced the number and geographic distribution of Aarhus Centres in the OSCE region and then focused on Tajikistan, where 7 Aarhus Centres cover all of the regions within the country. He highlighted the importance of the Aarhus Centre network as a platform to facilitate cooperation and coordination on environmental issues across the country and between countries, as exemplified by cooperation between the Khujand Aarhus Centre and the Aarhus Centre in Osh, Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Prudtskikh outlined the activities conducted by the Khujand Aarhus Centre on the issues of DRR and climate change, which have included trainings for farmers on disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation tools, open consultations on DRR issues, promotion of energy efficient technologies, and dissemination of information through mass media and cross border cooperation on DRR. The Khujand Aarhus Centre initiated a local trust fund mechanism for effective response to natural disasters and climate change and promoted greater public participation as a means of attracting government attention and finance for action in this area. He believes that public awareness-raising about DRR is of critical importance. The mass media offers an ideal way to disseminate such information, and initiatives in this regard could include training journalists and conducting outreach and awareness-raising events such as journalist competitions. With OSCE support, Aarhus Centres could strengthen their activities in disseminating information, increasing awareness, engaging the public and sharing best practices on community-based DRR.

In terms of response and coordination of actors on the DRR in Tajikistan, Mr. Prudtskikh pointed out the Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT), which brings together the government and all of the organisations involved in disaster response to coordinate response and recovery operations. The Khujand Aarhus Centre is the focal point for REACT in the region of Sughd in northern Tajikistan.

Mr. Prudtskikh concluded by pointing out that there were still some gaps to be covered in capacity building of Aarhus Centres in the area of DRR including in the areas of cross-border cooperation and stimulating mass media interest.

Ms. Yulia Minaeva began her presentation by describing the exacerbating effect of natural disasters on existing inequalities throughout the world, with underprivileged and vulnerable communities and populations being disproportionately affected by such events. She emphasized the economic effects of natural disasters and elaborated on potential security impacts, such as civil unrest and political instability. In the context of the Kyrgyz Republic, she reported that the incidence of natural disasters has been increasing. A complicating factor in the country is the fact that there are approximately 92 radioactive and toxic waste sites and the prospect of natural disaster raises the risk of significant pollution and harm to human health, both in Kyrgyzstan and its neighbouring countries. Furthermore, she reported that the government has been covering only 20% of the cost of damages from natural disasters.

Further on, Ms. Minaeva provided some examples of projects conducted by the OSCE in the area of DRR. In 2007 and 2008, the OSCE engaged in a project aimed at enhancing preparedness and response to natural disasters through the Aarhus Centre platform. This improved the capacities of both the local communities and the government. In 2009, a training centre was created, where simulations and exercises are now conducted. Another project dealt with disaster risk reduction and infrastructure improvement in the Batken province of Kyrgyzstan, where ethnic tensions in a mix of neighbouring ethnicities aggravated by competition for scarce natural resources is a prominent feature. The OSCE contributed to this project by facilitating public participation through the Aarhus Centre. The results of the project included the construction of new preventative infrastructure such as gabion nets, enhanced protection of public infrastructure and improved resilience of local communities in the face of disaster risks.

Ms. Minaeva concluded by suggesting that there was a genuine role for the OSCE to play in DRR and that the Aarhus Centres should be even more engaged in this regard due to their capacity to work with the local communities and facilitate stakeholder dialogue.

The floor was opened for discussion.

A representative of Kyrgyzstan confirmed his country's commitment to implementation of DRR and stated that his government was making progress on priorities established in the national strategy for the 2013-2020 period. He referred to a climate change conference held in Almaty a week earlier, which among other issues addressed impacts of natural disasters. He highlighted that Kyrgyzstan is committed to working together with its Central Asian neighbours and with its international partners such as the World Bank.

A representative of Slovakia outlined the approach of Slovakia to emergency situations, which is enshrined in several laws in accordance with EU legislation and is based on protection of life and property. Overall preparedness, early warning and the right to immediate assistance are among the measures utilised in emergency situations. Integrated rescue units are a central element of response, co-ordinating efforts by the emergency services, police and military. She stressed the importance of cross-border cooperation, which is based on exchange of information and mutual support during emergencies. The delegate acknowledged the many documents and strategies agreed and adopted by the OSCE but stressed the importance of focusing on implementation and expressed hope that further relevant MC Decisions would be adopted this year.

A representative of Italy took the opportunity to inform the forum about the relevant initiatives that are being developed among others in Italy, namely the establishment of the Platform on Natural Hazards of the Alpine Convention PLANALP and its Alpine strategy for adaptation to climate change in the field of natural hazards.

Ms. Camille Buyck, a representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), stressed the role of healthy ecosystems in reducing vulnerability of communities to disaster risks and the importance of investing in nature-based solutions, which not only reduce risks and increase preparedness but have also proven to be cost-effective and functional means to address restoration and recovery. She reaffirmed IUCN's commitment to mobilize the expertise of its large network and promote exchange of best practices with local and regional authorities.

Mr. Ysmail Dairov, a representative of the Regional Mountain Centre of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, raised the issue of mountain ecosystems and the prospect of glacial melting and related issues of trans-boundary water resources management. He stressed the importance of collecting precise data on water resources and mountainous ecosystems. He endorsed the OSCE's role in addressing the security aspect of natural disasters, especially in prevention of tensions between countries, and called for greater attention to the work that his organisation was conducting in this area.

Session II (Panel Debate): Cross-dimensional Impacts of Natural and Man-Made Disasters

Moderator: Dr. Khalid Koser, Deputy Director and Academic Dean, Crisis and Conflict Management Programme, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration

Rapporteur: Mr. Edward Safaryan, Environment and Security National Project Officer, OSCE Office in Yerevan

Speakers:

Mr. Claus Gerhard Neukirch, Deputy Director for Operations Service, Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE Secretariat

Ms. Marine Franck, Climate Change and Nansen Initiative Officer, Division of International Protection, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Ms. Nina Birkeland, Head of Monitoring and Advocacy Department, Norwegian Refugee Council

Dr. Khalid Koser opened the session, reminding that the discussions should focus on cross-dimensional impacts of the natural and man-made disasters as well as on the OSCE's role in local and cross-border DRR activities.

Mr. Claus Gerhard Neukirch commenced his presentation by hypothesizing that the conflict cycle the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) deals with is somewhat similar to the disaster and risk management cycle, and underscored that there is an obvious and complex relationship between disasters and conflicts. If displacement pressures already exist in an affected population, the actual flows of people leaving their communities may be multiplied by disasters. He added that conflicts can lead to man-made and natural disasters (i.e. forest fires, pollution, draught or flooding after destruction of water dams) and dealing with disasters requires a cross-dimensional approach.

Mr. Neukirch outlined general principles that apply both to disaster risk management and to the conflict cycle, with a focus on population movements: early warning, overall prevention, operational preparedness, and finally, if the previously mentioned measures were insufficient, (conflict/disaster) management and mitigation of the effects. He emphasized that the OSCE prioritizes cooperation and coordination of its activities related to population displacements (mostly in post-conflict rehabilitation) together with other international organizations (primarily UNHCR). Mr. Neukirch added that there is a need to improve data collection and reporting, as well as exchange of information between organizations acting in the field on displacement issues and impacts on affected populations, the situation in Ukraine being the most recent example. The speaker informed about a protection checklist which has been developed together by UNHCR and OSCE, providing operational guidance to people in the field dealing with forced displacements.

In conclusion, Mr. Neukirch stated that past experiences must be leveraged in order to overcome challenges arising from natural and man-made disasters. He added that disasters could also become an opportunity to mitigate conflicts: the tsunami in East Asia opened a possibility for dialogue with the rebels. He also added that it was important to see this two-way relationship between conflicts and disasters and referred to ENVSEC as the example of an excellent initiative that helps to solve issues at the nexus between environmental protection and security.

Ms. Marine Franck started her presentation by referring to the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report (released 2 months ago) which, among other issues, emphasized vulnerability and anticipated that impacts of climate change would cause increasing displacement of people over the 21st century. According to the report, climate change challenges would aggravate poverty and displacements, the very factors that lead to conflict, multiplying the impacts of food insecurity and water scarcity, resulting in increased vulnerability of millions of people.

Ms. Franck added that adaptation would help to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience, but it would also force some people to migrate from zones with high risk of natural disaster. UNHCR is becoming increasingly involved in responding to large-scale disasters. The institution is concerned with the respect of human rights of relocated and displaced people due to disasters and climate change. She pointed out that the OSCE participating States are both countries that are vulnerable to natural hazards including climate change impacts (recent floods in the Balkans)

and at the same time they are the potential countries of destination for people who flee from disasters and climate change impacts (especially from least developed countries).

Finally, Ms. Franck briefly referred to the role of the Nansen Initiative on Disaster-Induced Cross-Border Displacement and concluded by emphasizing the need for regional cooperation, burden- and responsibility-sharing and a collaborative approach, and highlighting the role the OSCE could play as a platform for such collaboration. However, adaptation is only one of the solutions to climate change and soon new types of vulnerabilities will need to be addressed in a collaborative approach.

In her introduction, Ms. *Nina M. Birkeland* informed the participants that the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) works in more than 25 countries with people displaced both by natural disasters and conflicts. She underscored the need for a wide range of stakeholders to be more actively involved in solving DRR-related issues. The speaker stated that a disaster could be of limited scale, but it might cause displacement of a large number of people. Currently, most of the efforts are focused on prevention and response to disasters, but displaced people (especially those crossing international borders) are often forgotten once disasters are over – jobs, education, health services, etc. of the displaced persons are endangered. Ms. Birkeland emphasized that currently no legal protection of rights of the displaced people who fled across borders is in place, if the displacement took place as a result of a disaster or climate change impact. These are the “non-convention” refugees (for whom UNHCR has no clear responsibility), and therefore there is a worldwide protection gap. In December 2011, at the UNHCR Ministerial Conference, Switzerland and Norway made a pledge to cooperate on this issue and close this gap. Afterwards, the Nansen Initiative was established, which has produced a report on displacement due to disasters.

Ms. Birkeland informed that the overall goal of the Nansen Initiative is to build consensus on key principles and elements of protection for the people displaced across borders as result of disasters and climate change. The planned outcome is referred to as “the protection agenda”. In different regions, neighbouring states should help each other to overcome problems resulting from disasters. In conclusion, the speaker posed a question to the participants whether the OSCE should play a role and if so in what way in implementing the Nansen Initiative.

In response to the Moderator’s question about other possibilities to fill the above mentioned protection gap, Ms. Birkeland mentioned the precedent of the Dominican Republic that showed solidarity and accepted more than 200,000 people crossing its border after the earthquake in Haiti. She also suggested that the OSCE could play a role in promoting discussions on both the internal displacement and cross-border movements caused by disasters, with a view to a comprehensive application of the disaster cycle approach. Additionally, she recalled that it was frequently difficult to properly distinguish between conflict refugees and disaster refugees as often there is a mixture of both.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of the United States of America asked about the difference between the work of UNHCR and the Nansen Initiative, including whether the UNHCR was required to respond to

displacements related to natural disasters, and why the Nansen Initiative was needed. She also asked the speakers to provide examples of the Initiative's activities.

Ms. Franck answered that protection of people displaced as a result of disasters was not part of the UNHCR core legal mandate. Rather, the institution pursues a "cluster approach" to protect IDPs displaced due to conflicts. It shares the lead with OCHA and UNICEF in protecting IDPs displaced by natural disasters and climate change. She added that regarding the cross-border displacements related to disasters, UNHCR participates in and actively supports the Nansen Initiative as a member of the Chairing Group but it is a States-led initiative.

Ms. Birkeland explained that the Nansen Initiative assesses the concrete causes of displacement and opportunities for prevention, compares those between regions and discusses how traditional donor countries could support specific initiatives in different regions. The issues are global but there is also a need for guidelines for each region. The speaker referred to an example from the OSCE region, pointing out that when there was a forced migration, many people followed the same migration routes and joined their diaspora in other countries. Additionally, she mentioned that the guiding principles on internal displacement had been in place since 1998, covering both disasters and conflicts, and that many countries have their own national policies in this regard.

Ms. Sena, Vice-Chair of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, OSCE PA inquired about the types of technological developments that would help to protect people before and after disasters. While discussing how technologies help to track high profile disasters and monitor internal and cross-border movements, she referred to the example of the 2012 earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, where unique IP addresses and mobile phone connection data were used to track displacement and movement of people. The representative asked whether States should offer economic incentives so that new technologies and applications could be deployed to protect their citizens, and highlighted the role of online social media platforms and mobile tools and hubs in drawing the attention of the international community to the evidence of disasters as well as human rights violations. Within the OSCE framework, border agencies, disaster relief agencies and other relevant agencies of the participating States should be encouraged to exchange best practices on technology aspects of disaster relief. The representative invited the speakers to elaborate on the nexus between technology and cross-dimensional impacts.

Mr. Neukirch stated that there were numerous opportunities for social media, mobile phones and other technologies to be used for tracking, information exchange, alerts and assessment of impacts as well as crowd-funding after disasters. However, feasibility of such applications depends on how technologically advanced specific countries are. Another concern and limitation in this respect is the availability of IT tools in affected communities and overall IT proficiency. Indeed, there is a genuine need to close these gaps by promoting such technologies and making them available to respective governments, agencies and communities. He was convinced that this was a very promising aspect of both prevention and conflict/disaster management activities.

Ms. Birkeland agreed that new technologies should be widely deployed in the context of disasters. In particular, she underscored that it was necessary to identify how various new technologies could be used to accomplish tangible returns, namely, in order to identify in very clear terms what climate change means to specific communities, and to choose what

interventions and measures could be taken to ensure adaptation or reduce negative effects and displacement. In fact, multifactor models are available that can integrate climate, economics, development, and conflict data to analyse current levels of resilience and offer relatively simple practicable interventions to overcome vulnerabilities. Governments should use such predictive models to address current shortcomings and minimize potential disaster effects.

Ms. Franck assured that UNHCR had been aware of the potential and utility of the new technologies since 1990s and cited an example of how such technologies were used in refugee camps.

A representative of Azerbaijan shared the experience and views of her country on natural hazard-triggered disasters and their potential impact on public security. The representative expressed gratitude to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the World Bank for the review report entitled “Risk assessment for Central Asia and Caucasus” conducted in line the Hyogo Framework for Action. The representative emphasized that in order to fully appreciate the need for DRR and implement the concept it was necessary to properly understand various factors, including the nature and severity of impacts of disasters, learn about previous incidents, identify trends and understand vulnerabilities of populations. Vulnerability of the South Caucasus region to destructive natural disasters is further aggravated by the presence of high-risk infrastructure facilities, including the aging Metsamor nuclear power plant. She stated that the South Caucasus has experienced a natural hazard-triggered industrial disaster with catastrophic consequences - the 1988 Spitak earthquake. The representative highlighted that Azerbaijan remains concerned over the functioning of the Metsamor NPP and the intention of Armenia to build a new NPP unit in Metsamor, as Metsamor NPP is only 85km from an Azerbaijani exclave Nakhchivan and 16 km away from the Turkish border in the midst of a seismically active zone. She cited findings from studies on hazardous fallout from a likely NPP accident that suggest that in case of an accident at the plant, Azerbaijan would be affected by radioactive fallout within the first 12 – 24 hours. She expressed hope that her message would be duly taken by the OSCE participating States and relevant international organizations. The representative added that her country was taking note of the experience of the OCEEA and IAEA-led frameworks in the field of addressing hazardous waste management and believes that this positive experience of interagency cooperation might be extended to address other threats and challenges emanating from the nuclear energy production.

A representative of Armenia recalled his country was a member state of a relevant UN body with appropriate expertise, namely the IAEA, which inter alia conducts peer reviews of NPPs. He added that the Armenian NPP was under continuous monitoring by the IAEA and that any concerns with regard to safety and security and all technical details of the Metsamor operations should be discussed in the relevant UN agency. He also stated that it was not warranted to draw a parallel between Metsamor and Fukushima because the Fukushima NPP was damaged by a tsunami, which is not likely to happen in South Caucasus. On the topic of the session and the question about the role of the OSCE in the context of disaster-related population displacements, the representative opined that there was a lack of needs assessments, because to date there was no strong factual evidence of cross-border movements within the OSCE area caused by natural disasters. His view was that needs should be assessed first before any action could be advised or taken. He also recalled a Nansen Initiative publication, pointing to terminology definitions therein. In his opinion, in the context of climate change, it was hard to distinguish between

migration and displacement. Specifically, he gave an example of population movements resulting from deforestation as being defined as migration and not displacement, in contrast to tsunamis. He inquired about concrete examples from the OSCE area, in particular, of cross-border movements. In conclusion, the representative urged for better recognition of the differences between creeping disasters and sudden catastrophic events, leading respectively to migration and displacement. He also called for better coordination and cooperation between UNHCR and other international organizations, such as IOM and OCHA as, in his opinion, a qualitatively new level of international co-operation and a new understanding of this issue were needed before any activities could be initiated within the OSCE framework.

Ms. Franck confirmed that the terminology in this area was very complex and still not fully defined. In fact, one of the objectives of the Nansen Initiative is to introduce a clear distinction between migration and displacement.

In response to the Moderator's question on the linkages between migration and displacement on the one hand, and the conflict cycle on the other hand, *Mr. Neukirch* referred to the example of IOM's involvement in repatriating migrants who had worked in Libya and were returning to their home countries because of the conflict. They could not be really considered to be refugees but rather repatriates forced by circumstances. In this regard, the speaker stressed that each case should be analysed individually and both threats and opportunities in such situations should be identified. With respect to situations associated with environmental challenges, he referred to the ENVSEC Initiative that attempts to promote preventive measures, including confidence building, in cross-dimensional environmental/economic situations that could affect populations. Finally, *Mr. Neukirch* stressed the importance of differentiating between forced displacement and migration, and recognizing the possibility that various types of movements of people might lead into conflict situations.

In response to the question about what the OSCE could do to assist with the Nansen Initiative, *Ms. Birkeland* referred to two levels: the Secretariat and individual participating States. Each country participating in the Hyogo Framework process should assure that displacement is mentioned in the commitments undertaken. The issue of displacements is often forgotten or neglected as usually the number of people affected by disasters is much larger than the number of people displaced. However, the specific needs of displaced people should not be forgotten. The OSCE Secretariat could help to produce common definitions, and manage information flows, as well as engage OSCE's field presences with their monitoring and reporting capabilities. The speaker emphasized the importance of all elements related to population movements (both forced and not forced): prevention, crisis management, and post-crisis rehabilitation. The OSCE can help to monitor the situation of people who left their homes in order to make sure they are not forgotten. In conclusion, she summarized the role of the OSCE as being a monitoring and guidance-setting institution (on a regional level), as well as peer review mechanism for compliance with commitments made by individual participating States.

Ms. Franck also presented her concluding remarks and recommendations. Firstly, preventive action to avoid displacements should be seen as mitigation, just as mitigation of greenhouse gases would diminish the impact of climate change and disasters. Secondly, there should be climate change adaptation and DRR actions supported at the national level in order to enable people to remain in their original settlements, and, as the last resort, relocation should be

offered and planned in advance. Ms. Franck's another recommendation was to engage in the Nansen Initiative and other processes that aim to promote cooperation and develop solutions for these issues. Another important aspect is to document the impact of environmental changes on habitats and communities at the local level, including potential causes of population movements. Other potential measures involve supporting the inclusion of human mobility language into the UNFCCC negotiations, Hyogo Framework and other related frameworks.

The representative of Azerbaijan emphasized that the point of all Forum discussions should be to exchange views and offer and receive updated and accurate information. She reiterated that nobody could guarantee that there would be no other devastating earthquake in the region and no cross-border effect. She also pointed to valuable lessons from how the government of Japan managed the Fukushima disaster, including in terms of information disclosure and invited relevant countries to learn from this experience.

A representative of Spain reaffirmed that Spain fully aligned itself with the statement made by the EU during the opening session and he offered a divergent view on large-scale human movements as exemplified by the joint Spanish-Moroccan annual summer holidays experience when some 2.5 million cross the straits between Europe and North Africa daily. The representative inquired whether this experience in large-scale border crossing management could be useful for the OSCE, including its disaster risk prevention and cross-border co-operation, specifically because the Spanish agency in charge of this process, i.e. the Civil Protection Department, is also responsible for risk reduction in case of natural or man-made disasters. He also asked whether any lessons, best practices or parallels could be drawn between this situation and issues discussed during the session.

Afterwards, *the Moderator* invited the panellists to share their final reflections on the discussions.

Mr. Neukirch suggested that there was one key lesson to be learned, namely that although the discussions in general focused on threats associated with natural and man-made disasters and conflicts, this focus should not eclipse the opportunities to be found in joint efforts in confidence building, mitigation and prevention.

Ms. Birkeland recognized that there was indeed limited reliable information on people forced to leave their homes because of disasters in the OSCE region. However, such information will be vital to focus future discussions and understand where, why and of what magnitude disasters occur and what should be done to prevent them and mitigate consequences. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of cross-border cooperation because disasters, including environmental ones, do not recognize borders.

In his final comments, *the Moderator* commended the participants for constructive and critical engagement in vital and sometimes politically controversial discussions, and offered a brief summary of major outcomes and recommendations. He highlighted the immediate relevance and cross-dimensional nature of the issues raised during the session both for the international community in general and specifically for the OSCE region. Further on, he urged for better clarity on the most critical concepts, such as man-made vs. natural disasters, migration vs. refugees, etc. The Moderator also emphasized that both the Secretariat and OSCE participating States could

contribute a lot to the Nansen Initiative. He suggested that there should be better sharing of lessons learnt across the OSCE and with other affected parties, and reminded that the new technologies and analytical methods offered solutions to some of the most pressing issues. He emphasized the need for improved data collection, reporting and evidence-based needs assessments in the OSCE region. Finally, he recalled that the common challenge was to look beyond threats and problems and focus on available opportunities.

Session III: Coping measures to reduce disaster risk at an international, cross-border and national level

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office' of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Christoph Opfermann, Senior Project Officer, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Speakers:

Ambassador Toni Frisch, Chair of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG); Chair of the Military and Civil Defence Assets Consultative Group; Special Advisor HFA2

Mr. Dennis Thomas Cosgrove, Head of the OSCE Borders and Security Management Unit under the Transnational Threats Department

Ms. Wendy Cue, Chief of Environmental Emergencies Section, Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit

In his presentation, *Ambassador Toni Frisch*, representing the *International Search and Rescue Advisory Group* (INSARAG), stressed the need for preparedness and prevention rather than focusing on response to emergencies. According to the speaker, one of the lessons learned from the disaster in Haiti is that co-ordination should not be donor driven. Ambassador Frisch introduced the work of INSARAG, a global network of more than 80 countries and organizations under the United Nations umbrella with the task to strengthen the effectiveness and co-ordination of International Urban Search and Rescue Assistance (USAR). The INSARAG collects best practices in co-ordination and sets minimum standards for USAR teams, i.e. a methodology for international co-ordination of earthquake response, based on the INSARAG Guidelines established in 2002. Additionally, in 2005 INSARAG External Classification (IEC) was established. It serves as a certification system for participating rescue organizations. Further, Ambassador Frisch informed about the *Consultative Group on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets* (MCDA group) and the international *Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies* (AGEE), established by UNEP and OCHA as their most important co-operation and support mechanism for response to environmental disasters. The AGEE works at the political level, promoting an approach centered rather on “prevention and preparedness than cure” and engaging with relevant stakeholders.

Talking about ways how to ensure synergy and interoperability between regional and global networks, Ambassador Frisch mentioned a possible establishment of an Emergency Response and Preparedness Consultative Group under the lead of OCHA and encouraged the OSCE participating States to support and contribute to the preparatory process towards the World

Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in 2015. According to the speaker, the OSCE should avoid duplication of efforts, and focus, instead, on strengthening the existing international bodies, as well as national structures and initiatives, and building capacities.

Mr. Dennis T. Cosgrove underlined the need to communicate across borders. He described the work of the OSCE's TNT Department as pre-crisis activities. He referred to OSCE's experience, in particular its publications, including an instrument called "Self-Assessment Tool for Nations to Increase Preparedness for Cross-Border Implications of Crises". This tool produces inputs for various institutions, all border-related agencies, actors and international organizations in this field. The advantages of the TNT Department are its intergovernmental approach, inter-agency and trans-border co-operation, as well as engagement with the civil society. According to Mr. Cosgrove, the OSCE has expertise, experience and tools both at its headquarters and in field presences, and liaisons with all relevant stakeholders. The OSCE should leverage these key assets and continue its various valuable programmes in such fields as water management and regional interconnectedness. The OSCE should also connect people, including in the cultural field.

In conclusion, Mr. Cosgrove commended the CiO and OCEEA for the opportunity to participate in current discussions and emphasized the need to focus on the youth as a target group.

Ms. Wendy Cue informed the participants about the work of the joint UNEP/OCHA Environmental Unit. The unit focuses on making positive impacts in line with its vision for countries to become more resilient, better prepared and able to effectively respond to environmental emergencies. Ms. Cue also described the work of her unit, giving concrete examples of potential actions and gave a brief overview of the current response mission related to the recent floods in the Balkans.

In its work the joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit prioritizes preparedness, response and the environment in humanitarian actions. Preparedness includes risk and hazard assessments, promotion of international norms and standards through the Environmental Emergencies Centre (EEC) and preparedness trainings. Ms. Cue introduced the Environmental Emergency Risk Index (EERI), a strategic tool for prioritizing work on preparedness and environment in humanitarian actions. It builds upon existing humanitarian, development and environmental performance indices and focuses on technological hazards and environmental vulnerability to identify countries most at risk. She also described the recent Arsenic Waste Management Assessment Mission in Georgia conducted jointly with the OSCE with an objective to provide recommendations for safe management, transport, storage and onsite disposal and containment of arsenic waste, as well as to assess the amount of waste and extent of contamination. The team included national authorities, OSCE, UNDP and UNEP/OCHA. Its recommendations highlighted among other the need for more technical guidance and budget allocations by the state.

Further on, Ms. Cue described the Environmental Emergencies Centre, which is an online platform providing information, tools, trainings and guidance to inform a more prepared and effective response to environmental emergencies. The speaker informed about available introductory and advanced trainings on a variety of environmental emergency preparedness and response topics, such as for example how to better connect factories and rescuers. Finally, Ms. Cue stressed the necessity to bring together disaster managers and environmental experts and underscored the need for regional co-operation in Central Asia, focusing on a project sponsored by the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE. The project consists of four phases: training needs assessment, regional workshops, identification of possible initiatives and implementation of

these complementary initiatives. Within this project a recent workshop in Tajikistan identified the need for a regional seminar on mining tailings. Another regional workshop is planned to be held in Georgia in June 2014. According to Ms. Cue, the specific role of the OSCE could be to increase partnerships and co-ordination.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of Turkey expressed condolences and solidarity with all victims of the floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. He reported on his country's response to the floods in the Balkans as well as the humanitarian aid provided by Turkey to Syria and Syrian refugees since the outset of the conflict in March 2011, including construction of modern accommodation centers, access to education, and assistance to prepare the refugees for the post-crisis period. The same temporary accommodation standards are foreseen to be used in case of disasters in Turkey.

Mr. Walter Kemp, representing the International Peace Institute, asked Ambassador Frisch, what entity should co-ordinate response and support operations in case of a disaster like the floods in the Balkans in order to ensure best co-ordination of assistance and prevent chaos.

In his reply, *Ambassador Frisch* once again referred to lessons learned from the crisis in Haiti and stressed that co-ordination should not be donor driven. He underlined that Haiti was a special case because it had no army. In any case, the existing structures should be respected, and national authorities must have the lead. However, in specific cases OCHA can take the lead for the UN family co-ordinating humanitarian aid in the first response phase. The speaker mentioned that there were also other networks heavily involved such as the Red Cross movement but stressed that all entities operating in the field should co-operate closely with national authorities and/or co-ordinating international organizations.

Ms. Cue added that the national authorities could request specific international assistance in order to avoid receiving inappropriate aid, for example by communicating through the ministry of health what type of medical support is needed in the country. She also mentioned the environmental cause that lead to the crisis in Syria, namely a major drought between 2006-2011 that exacerbated urbanization, unemployment and other pressures in the country, stressing that the nexus between environment and conflict must be taken into account in the field of humanitarian aid.

A representative of Serbia informed about the mechanism her country used to call for help during the recent flooding via its embassies and missions in other countries. But this mechanism is unfortunately not applicable for smaller countries that have fewer representations, making it much more difficult for these countries to request and receive appropriate assistance. The representative also stressed that assistance needs could vary from day to day, be it water supplies or financial assistance to mitigate effects.

A representative of the OSCE FSC Support Unit asked the speakers about the national action plans.

Finally, *a representative of UNISDR* stressed the importance of better preparedness and the need to have commitments for coordination, and invited the participating States to take part in the

preparatory process for the Sendai Conference, including the upcoming meeting in July in Geneva. He drew attention to a special website being launched by UNISDR in order to inform on possible commitments to support the implementation of the HFA. He also encouraged the OSCE participating States to proactively discuss major inputs for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

Concluding Discussion

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Mr. Conan Doyle, Political Adviser, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE

Speakers:

Dr. Walter Kemp, Director for Europe and Central Asia, International Peace Institute

Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Ambassador Thomas Greminger opened the session by thanking organisers and participants for their contributions to the discussions. He went on to give an outline of the Concluding Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum which will be held in Prague on 10-12 September. He informed that the Chairmanship intends to circulate a Perception Paper on the outcome of the two Preparatory Meetings shortly that should build the background for the final leg of the Forum. Cross-dimensional issues, addressed in Session II will be further explored in Prague. Slow onset disasters will also be addressed. ICT applications in disaster risk management will be explored further and this will be facilitated by presenting concrete ICT and public-private partnership tools. The ongoing post-2015 negotiation processes in the UN will be integrated into the discussions in Prague and Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, will be present as a keynote speaker. Finally, focus will fall on the possible role the OSCE could play in addressing environmental challenges without duplication of work.

Dr. Walter Kemp began by emphasising that disasters are an issue affecting the entire OSCE area. He added that their frequency and severity is increasing whether they are sudden, slow on-set or small scale disasters, and that they are a serious threat to security and therefore the OSCE, as a security organisation, cannot ignore them. He emphasised that the threats are trans boundary in nature and require cooperation between states to tackle them. He also elaborated on the cross-dimensional nature of the issue, as it relates to governance and development, and emphasized that it should not be a political issue and likened disaster prevention to conflict prevention. He noted that a role for the OSCE is divided along two “vectors”. The first being the “hardness” of approach and the second being the timescale. The OSCE’s role would be “soft” and would take place early on the timescale meaning that the OSCE has a role to play in prevention and preparedness.

He emphasised that the OSCE was already doing a lot in the field with mechanisms like the self-assessment tool outlined in Session III. He added that implementation of currently available tools at all levels is key and that the OSCE has a niche at the regional level. He also pointed out that the

OSCE could reach out to Partners for Co-operation and that environmental risk mapping looking at the specific regions would be very useful.

In terms of areas for solid actions which could be taken by the OSCE, Dr. Kemp listed the following: better use of technology in preparedness and prevention, especially communications technology like the UN-Spider; urban planning and water management in particular in relation to floods and land erosion; training and networking including cross-border interoperability; a revision of the “Oslo Guidelines”, with potential for FSC/PC cooperation; quality assurance of DDR practice through meetings similar to this year’s EEF but attended by practitioners; involvement of a wide range of actors including civil society, local and national governments, and private sector in all actions; the potential of agreements on mountainous areas could be explored; issues of displacement and ENVSEC could be areas of focus for cooperation. He also stressed the strength of the OSCE politically as a Chapter VIII organisation and advised collaboration with OCHA and other UN offices. Engaging with the post-2015 agenda was also stressed by Dr. Kemp. Finally, he stated that the subject of the EEF was an issue with links to all parts of the OSCE and that disaster risk reduction could be the legacy of the Swiss Chairmanship in the second dimension.

Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden began by thanking participants and gave a brief overview of each of the day’s sessions. He went on to highlight two areas of work which were emphasised as being highly relevant. These were further promotion of capacity building on disaster risk reduction at all levels in close collaboration with national and local authorities, and continued facilitation of the dialogue between participating States in this area. He stated that his office will closely review the recommendations generated during the meeting and assess possible follow-up activities. His office will also support implementation of last year’s MC decision on protecting energy networks from disasters.

On the Concluding Meeting in Prague, the Co-ordinator stated that a review of OSCE commitments related to the topic of the Forum would be carried out by UNDP. Finally, he expressed confidence that the Concluding Meeting will crystalize outcomes of the Forum Process this year which will help to bring about a possible MC decision on the second dimension in December.

All of the *Delegations* who took the floor expressed their sympathies to those affected by the flooding in the Western Balkans.

A representative of the European Union took the floor stating that the EEF Preparatory Meeting fulfilled the purpose of serving as a forum for political dialogue providing participating States with an opportunity to exchange experience and good practices in the area of disaster risk management. She recognised the cross-dimensional impact of disasters on security and the intrinsic link between natural disasters and climate change. She also stated that the member states are committed to playing a constructive role in the negotiation process for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

The representative emphasised that the OSCE should focus on risks and vulnerabilities relevant to the Organisation. She highlighted that public participation and awareness-raising in disaster risk reduction can mitigate the effects of disasters and stated that the OSCE, through its field

missions and the Aarhus Centres, could contribute to increased capacities of communities in disaster risk reduction. She added that cross-border co-operation is essential for disaster preparedness and consequence management. The representative highlighted that several conventions already address this co-operation and stated that the OSCE could further play a role in supporting participating States by building on this legal framework. Targeted exchange of experience and best practices, enhancing dialogue and co-operation can furthermore contribute to building trust and confidence in the OSCE area. The representative further elaborated on EU's internal process of mainstreaming DRR.

A representative of Tajikistan took the floor and described the situation in the mountainous regions of his country where flooding has caused massive damage and costs in recent times. He stressed that disaster prevention in mountainous regions required special attention. The government is coordinating with international organisations but this coordination needs improvement. The representative went on to elaborate on funds received from the Climate Fund, the World Bank and others which was used to set up a special secretariat dealing with climate adaptation, which is doing so very successfully.

A representative of Belarus stated that disasters are best dealt with when national bodies coordinate international assistance. He elaborated on his country's comprehensive approach to disaster risk reduction and response and suggested establishing cross-border assessments of disaster preparedness. He stated that such a program could be developed by the OSCE.

A representative of Kyrgyzstan took to floor to inform about her country's efforts in the field of DRR at the national level, including making adaptation to climate change a priority and working with the OSCE through the Aarhus Centre in the country.

Mr. Olivier Overney, Head of the Flood Protection Section at the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), provided the participants with organizational remarks concerning field visits on the second day of the Forum Meeting.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat**

Vienna, 20 May 2014

The 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”

SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING

Montreux, 19 - 21 May 2014

Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Avenue Claude Nobs 2, 1820 Montreux, Switzerland
Le Petit Palais/Conference Centre

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Monday, 19 May 2014

19.00 – 20.30

Welcome cocktail hosted by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Avenue Claude Nobs 2, 1820 Montreux

Tuesday, 20 May 2014

09.00 – 10.30

Opening Session (*open to Press*)

Selected topics:

- Nexus between Natural Disasters and Security
- Making States Resilient to Disaster and Climate Risks

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Ms. Riccarda Caprez, Scientific Advisor, Directorate of Political Affairs, Sectoral Foreign Policies Division, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Welcoming remarks:

- **State Secretary Yves Rossier**, Head of the Directorate of Political Affairs, Switzerland
- **Ambassador Manuel Bessler**, Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA)

- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Keynote speakers:

- **Dr. Frederick S. Tipson**, Special Advisor, PeaceTech Initiative, US Institute of Peace
- **Mr. Axel Rottländer**, Chief Executive Officer, German Committee for Disaster Reduction (DKKV); Chair of the Working Group on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction, European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR)

Statements by Delegations / Discussion

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee Break

11.00 – 12.30 **Session I – Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level**

Selected topics:

- Instruments to reduce disaster and climate change risks at local level: assessing risks, prevention, early warning
- Nexus between climate change and disaster risk management and the implementation of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)
- Past examples of integrated flood risk management: case studies, lessons learned and best practices

Moderator: Prof. Martin Beniston, Director, Institute for Environmental Sciences (ISE), Chair for Climate Research, University of Geneva

Rapporteur: Mr. Paul Hickey, Environmental Officer, Economic and Environmental Department, OSCE Office in Tajikistan

Speakers:

- **Dr. Roza Aknazarova**, Chairperson of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment
- **Mr. Neil McFarlane**, Chief Regional Programmes and DRR Coordination, Disaster Risk Reduction Focal Point, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- **Mr. Dmitriy Prudtskikh**, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Khujand, Tajikistan
- **Ms. Yulia Minaeva**, Senior Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Discussion

12.30 – 14.00 **Lunch Break. Light Lunch offered by the 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship.**

14.00 – 15.30 **Session II – Panel Debate: Cross-dimensional Impacts of Natural and Man-Made Disasters**

Selected topics:

- Possible impacts of natural and man-made disasters on public security
- Population movements in the context of natural disasters
- Approaches to mitigating these effects

Moderator: **Dr. Khalid Koser**, Deputy Director and Academic Dean, Crisis and Conflict Management Programme, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration

Rapporteur: Mr. Edward Safaryan, ENVSEC National Project Officer, OSCE Office in Yerevan

Speakers:

- **Mr. Claus Gerhard Neukirch**, Deputy Director for Operations Service, Conflict Prevention Center, OSCE Secretariat
- **Ms. Marine Franck**, Climate Change and Nansen Initiative Officer, Division of International Protection, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- **Ms. Nina M. Birkeland**, Head of the Monitoring and Advocacy Department, Norwegian Refugee Council

Discussion

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee Break

16.00 – 17.30 **Session III – Coping measures to reduce disaster risks at an international, cross-border and national level**

Selected topics:

- Improving international coordination for environmental emergencies, search and rescue and the use of military and civil defense assets
- Increasing preparedness for cross-border implications (OSCE self-assessment tool)
- Strengthening the capacity of national coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction in the OSCE region

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Christoph Opfermann, Senior Project Officer, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Speakers:

- **Ambassador Toni Frisch**, Chair of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG); Chair of the Military and Civil Defense Assets Consultative Group; Special Advisor HFA2
- **Mr. Dennis Thomas Cosgrove**, Head of the OSCE Borders and Security Management Unit, Transnational Threats Department
- **Ms. Wendy Cue**, Chief of Environmental Emergencies Section, UNEP/OCHA

Discussion

17.30 – 18.30

Concluding Discussion / Closing Statements

- Wrap-up
- Outlook to the Concluding Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum, Prague, 10-12 September 2014
- Organizational remarks concerning field visits on 21 May 2014

Moderator: Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Rapporteur: Mr. Conan Doyle, Political Adviser, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE

Speakers:

- **Dr. Walter Kemp**, Director for Europe and Central Asia, International Peace Institute
- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Statements by Delegations

- **Dr. Olivier Overney**, Head Section Flood Protection, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland (FOEN)

19.30

Reception hosted by the 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

Wednesday, 21 May 2014

Disaster Risk Management in a mountain area: Field visits in the Canton of Valais.

8:00 – 16:30

Excursion 1: Cross-border cooperation in applied disaster risk management along the transnational route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard (Italy-Switzerland)

A) Aim of the Visit

- Participants are familiar with integrated disaster risk management applied in a mountain area and its practical implementation along a transit route
- Participants gained an insight into transnational cooperation dealing with natural hazards
- Participants are aware that dealing with natural hazards includes a multi-stakeholder approach (different administrative levels, different actors from state entities to civil society)

B) Topics to be addressed

- Integrated disaster risk management approach including a mix of measures (e.g. preventive and preparedness measures)
- Multi-hazard approach (natural and technical hazards)
- Italian-Swiss cooperation

C) Places to be visited

- Several locations along the transit road. The route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard is a significant transit route linking Italy and Switzerland in a rough mountain area. The route is often affected by a variety of natural hazards. Risk management relates therefore not only to transport safety, but also to a number of Alpine installations (e.g. settlements).

Excursion 1 will provide insights into the applied integrated DRM approach, including protection measures, early warning systems, traffic control, tunnel safety and the Italian-Swiss cooperation.

Excursion 2: Management of natural and technical risks in the municipality of Monthey

A) Aim of the visit

- Participants are familiar with integrated disaster risk management applied in the plain of River Rhone and its practical implementation in a municipality with a multi-hazard situation
- Participants are aware that dealing with natural hazards includes a multi-stakeholder approach (different administrative levels, different actors from state entities to civil society)

B) Topics to be addressed

- Integrated disaster risk management approach including a mix of measures (e.g. preventive and preparedness measures)
- Land-use planning as important protection measure
- Importance of sound fundamentals for disaster risk management (hazard and risk assessments, monitoring, participation)
- Multi-hazard approach (natural and technical hazards, especially industrial accidents)

Places to be visited

- Different locations in the municipality of Monthey .The municipality of Monthey, situated in the “plain of River Rhone”, is not only endangered by natural hazards such as

floods from the River Rhone/its tributaries and earthquakes, but also by possible accidents stemming from nearby chemical industry.

Excursion 2 will provide insights into the applied integrated DRM approach, including the "3rd Rhone River correctional training works" (in terms of flood protection, water and terrestrial habitats, land use planning), monitoring and warning systems as well as earthquake retrofitting measures. The excursion will also show the emergency plans and precautionary measures taken in case of a major chemical accident.

Departure for both field visits: at 08:00 a.m. (sharp)

- ⇒ **Meeting point:** entrance of the **Hotel Fairmont Montreux Palace** in Montreux.
Please note that late arrivals will unfortunately not be considered due to the tight schedule.
- ⇒ **The return transfer** will be provided either to ***Geneva Airport* or to *Montreux*** after the Field Visit on 21st May (only). The time of arrivals is foreseen around 16:30 in Montreux (Hotel Fairmont Montreux Palace) or approx. **at 18:00 at Geneva Airport.**

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27-28 January 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area” took place in Vienna on 27-28 January 2014. Five thematic areas were addressed during the two-day meeting:

- Impact of natural disasters: Losses and damages
- Behind natural disasters – The human-environment interaction
- Panel debate – Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?
- Co-operation in natural disaster management and prevention
- Panel debate – Role of civil society in disaster-risk management

Around 250 participants, including official representatives of OSCE participating States, Field Operations and Institutions, as well as experts from international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the business community and academia attended the Economic and Environmental Forum and engaged in the discussions. Participants proposed concrete recommendations concerning responses to environmental challenges stemming from disasters in the OSCE area.

Main conclusions and recommendations

The First Preparatory Meeting focused primarily on the integrated disaster risk management (DRM) approach. This approach was proposed with a view to advance sharing of best practices, promote partnerships and initiatives, raise awareness of and build capacities for DRM, and to encourage political leadership to pursue disaster resilience. During the discussion, it was pointed out that natural disasters are never natural and result from the human-nature interaction and human vulnerabilities.

Throughout the two-day meeting, many participants acknowledged the link between natural disasters and security. Hence, they underscored that this topic should be part of OSCE’s work.

A number of proposals were put forward to reinforce the role of the Organization in the field of responding to environmental challenges in the OSCE area.

One of the key ideas suggested was to **mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR)** in relevant project activities, as an essential component to ensure sustainable development, and to strengthen **co-operation** across all phases of DRM, covering prevention, preparedness and response to disasters; at different governance levels, such as local, regional, national; and among all relevant stakeholders, including NGO’s, civil society, research institutions, the private sector.

It was stated that **regional co-operation** within the OSCE is crucial to bringing added value to the Organization's work and building trust among participating States. In this regard, taking into account that neighbouring countries usually face similar problems related to environmental challenges, some participants suggested strengthening **cross-boundary co-operation** on disaster risk reduction, and developing cross-boundary integrated disaster risk management. With this aim in view, certain key mechanisms would need to be improved, namely harmonization of visa regimes, customs clearance for rescue teams, and authorization of overflights over national territories.

Disaster management was also identified as a potential area for the development of **confidence-building** measures among and within OSCE participating States.

Participants also suggested that the OSCE should complement the role and functions of other **international organizations** dealing with disaster management without duplicating their activities. In this regard, it was noted that the OSCE already has some experience in dealing with issues related to disaster preparedness with a risk mitigation component, particularly in the field of water management, climate change, and wildfire management. OSCE's partnership with several UN and non-UN agencies within the framework of the **Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC)** was highlighted by several participants. The **Hyogo Framework for Action** and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction were also pointed out as well-placed platforms for co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies in the area of disaster risk reduction. The OSCE was also encouraged to contribute to the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 in Japan. Moreover, it was suggested that participating States could enhance their response capabilities by closely collaborating with other regional and sub-regional mechanisms, including NATO, EU and CSTO.

It was outlined by a number of speakers that risk prevention and risk reduction are investments that ultimately limit the potential human, social and economic costs of disasters. Participants suggested that the OSCE could endeavour to find **a role in the context of disaster prevention, risk mitigation** and in making our societies more resilient in particular through **awareness-raising**.

With regard to efforts made at **local level**, it was noted that every community had skills, knowledge, resources and capacities that were often overlooked and that should be capitalized on. In this context, it was highlighted that active engagement of communities in the whole process of DRM, better use of local knowledge and expertise, design of measures adapted to local problems and needs could be translated into reduced vulnerabilities, improved sustainability and strengthened capacities. Therefore it was encouraged to identify how existing resources could be optimized, local knowledge promoted and indigenous potential unlocked.

The role of the **civil society** in issues related to environmental challenges was generally recognized as being crucial at different levels. Participants pointed out that in order to make it more effective, capacity-building and decision-making processes should be further developed. It was acknowledged that initially **public participation** might be a difficult process, but would eventually produce tangible results because it can significantly contribute to improved local-disaster preparedness and design and implementation of more appropriate policies. In addition, the need to ensure the inclusion of local and regional municipalities in **decision-making**

processes as the basis for policy development was highlighted. Further engagement of the **private sector** in discussions on disaster risk prevention and management was also suggested. The OSCE itself was recognized as a relevant actor in support of multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes, in particular because of its strong network.

It was also pointed out that societies must receive timely and relevant **information** on environmental risks and their consequences. This would make them more resilient, enhance their **trust** in governments and ensure successful co-ordination of both human and material resources in responding to natural disasters.

During the discussion it was noted that **Aarhus Centres** play an important role in ensuring access to information, **raising awareness** of environmental problems, including natural hazards, enabling public participation in decision-making processes, and facilitating access to justice. Thus, they were considered to be a well-placed tool for the OSCE to intensify its work on disaster risk reduction.

Good governance was also identified as a factor to be strengthened in order to make societies more resistant: proper enforcement of necessary policies, such as compliance with building codes and fight against corruption could contribute substantially to such reinforcement.

During the two-day discussions some participants mentioned the need for a positive, constructive and creative approach to disaster risk reduction and management. This perspective should focus on sustainable development and be mainstreamed across the whole OSCE area in order to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies. In this regard, it was noted that the role of small scale disasters is often neglected and that there is a gap between insured and total loss of natural disasters and importance of risk transfer mechanisms. Participants suggested that the OSCE could facilitate dialogue among key stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, and provide a **platform for exchanging information on best practices** and existing gaps.

Participants also emphasized that a society-wide culture of risk prevention and mitigation should be promoted in order to prioritize risk management in disaster management systems. Additionally, it was suggested that capacity building would benefit from **training activities** with modern technologies and communication facilities. The sharing of these tools/ know-how among participating States was also encouraged. Such activities could be carried out by OSCE field operations in co-operation with key partners.

REPORTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS

Session I: Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages

Moderator: Mr. Jan Kellett, Senior Research Advisor, Climate and Environment Programme Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Rapporteur: Mr. Srdjan Cetkovic, Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Mission to Montenegro

Speakers:

Mr. Michael Thurman, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS

Mr. Joaquin Toro, Regional Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management–Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank

Mr. Andreas Prystav, Senior Client Manager Global Partnerships, Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd., Switzerland **Mr. Michael Thurman**, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS

Mr. Thomas de Lannoy, Policy Officer, DG Humanitarian Aid and civil protection, European Commission

In his introduction *the moderator, Mr. Jan Kellett*, noted that the impact of a natural disaster in a country can be translated in direct or indirect losses and damages beyond its borders. Therefore he emphasized the importance of having a cross-border approach in dealing with disaster risk management. He then analyzed the impact of natural disasters in high-income or upper-middle-income countries. He estimated that 70% of the global losses related to natural disasters happen in high-income or upper-middle-income countries, whereas the global mortal casualties is estimated to be 10%. In this regard, he suggested that because of the *low mortality rate*, often the causes provoking disasters are not properly tackled. The moderator also draw the attention of participating States, as development aid donor countries, to the fact that over the past 20 years, out of the 3 trillion USD that have been devoted to development aid, only 13 billion were invested in disaster risk reduction. Thus, only 13 billion USD were spent on protecting development aid from the impact of disasters. Finally, he stressed the participating States should bear in mind a *big global picture* in terms of the post-2015 development agenda and the successors to the Millennium Development Goals. The moderator closed his statement by bringing participating States' attention to their responsibility ensuring that disaster risks are central in the future development agenda.

Mr. Joaquin Toro highlighted the importance of establishing adequate DRMs to minimize economic losses. To illustrate this point, Mr. Toro presented some data showing the economic impact of natural disasters in the period 1975 – 2011. It was noted that whereas the number of people affected by natural risks disasters and the overall costs had constantly increased, the number of fatalities had decreased.

Mr. Toro indicated that in case of natural disasters, national governments tend to prioritise citizens' safety over protection of property. However, it is difficult to calculate the economic consequences that natural disasters will have on the quality of life of the survivors. Mr. Toro pointed out that factors related to natural disaster risks, such as natural hazards, exposure and

vulnerability, can be limited by devoting more resources to their study. He continued by presenting a number of examples of natural disasters where increased investment in disaster risk reduction and management proved to be instrumental, not only in mitigating the direct impact of the disaster, but also in obtaining long-term economic benefits.

In conclusion, Mr. Toro emphasized the importance of disaster risk management being an integral part of sustainable economic development, and suggested that the OSCE could, in co-operation with other international organizations, mainstream DRM in development plans and agendas.

Mr. Andreas Prystav presented the role that the insurance industry could play in supporting the various institutions dealing with natural disasters and their aftermath. According to Mr. Prystav, financial resilience is a critical component of disaster risk management. However, the insurance industry is still insufficiently engaged in disaster risk management activities.

Mr. Prystav also shared some statistical data to illustrate the enormous gap between the total losses caused by natural disasters in the period 1975 – 2013 and the percentage of the losses covered by insurance companies. In his opinion, this gap explains the lack of financial resilience in countries hit by disasters. He illustrated this idea by using the example of a 2010 earthquake in Chile, when total economic losses amounted to 29.7 billion USD and only 16% were covered by insurance companies.

According to Mr. Prystav, the insurance industry can provide an alternative to borrowing and tax increases usually used to finance the reconstruction of areas affected by natural disasters: the insurance companies could transfer the risk away from the taxpayers who normally end up “paying the bill”.

Mr. Prystav concluded his presentation by reiterating that it was the responsibility of the insurance industry to increase financial resilience to disasters by performing its primary duty as that of a risk transfer mechanism. The insurance industry could offer a very pragmatic approach to disaster risk management, in particular through public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements. A variety of PPP schemes could be designed and used to provide a broader insurance coverage, thus transferring the risk from citizens to the insurance industry. The OSCE and the participating States could initiate and promote such initiatives.

Mr. Michael Thurman talked about the challenges associated with disaster risk assessments and how to address them. He also focused on regional co-operation related to disaster risk management and reduction.

According to Mr. Thurman, in order to properly evaluate disaster risks and decide how to better mitigate them, it is necessary to have proper and accurate information. He added that it was very important to have a clear understanding that the *risks* could be evaluated and reduced by analysing the *hazards* and *vulnerabilities*. In this regard, Mr. Thurman pointed out that whereas national institutions dealing with risk assessment and reduction generally had the capacity to perform adequate hazard analysis, they experienced difficulties in determining measurable indicators for vulnerability factors. Indeed, disaster impacts such as economic losses, fatalities, etc. are difficult to describe in socioeconomic or environmental terms. Another problem is that

the agencies responsible for risk assessments and risk reduction often lack financial resources necessary to keep up with technological advancements in information collection and processing.

Regarding the challenges associated with effective risk assessments, Mr. Thurman identified a number of factors influencing the quality of data used in such analyses. Concerning the *vulnerability factor*, the main problem is the low quality of information used as inputs, due to the unreliability of data collected in emergency-events databases. Unfortunately, these databases collect only data on major disasters and often inaccurately, primarily because the information is fragmented among various institutions; collected, stored and assessed using outdated methods; and because some countries consider it politically sensitive.

According to the speaker, additional challenges to risk assessment are posed by the lack of bottom-line data to be used by national finance ministries and the lack of capacities and tools to deal with cost-benefit analyses. Additionally, there are some challenges largely related to climate unpredictability and migration, as well as weak regional co-operation in addressing trans-boundary hazards.

Closing his presentation, Mr. Thurman briefly described a case of regional co-operation on risk assessment. In Central Asia, under the umbrella of the Centre for Disaster Response and Risk Reduction (CDRRR), a regional information platform was developed with the support of UNDP/OCHA/ISDR. Within the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) some work is being carried out to harmonize co-ordination modalities, inter-agency perspectives and mandates in order to secure holistic and forward-looking approaches; and to strengthen the management of regional and trans-boundary risks.

Mr. Thomas de Lannoy presented the current EU disaster risk management framework and outlined forthcoming developments and activities. In December 2013, a new legislation on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was adopted paving the way for stronger co-operation in responding to disasters as well as promoting better preparedness and prevention. The speaker called this new legislation “cross-sectoral” as it integrates all aspects required for a comprehensive disaster management policy.

Talking about disaster prevention aspects, Mr. de Lannoy informed that EU Member States would share a summary of their national risk assessments and best practices, as well as support each other by assessing their risk management systems in “peer reviews”. He also underscored the EU’s focus on mainstreaming DRM, which means integrating disaster risk management issues in all EU policies, both in terms of financing and policy-making, including climate change adaptation, transport, research and innovation, environmental impact assessments, or food and nutrition security policies.

Regarding disaster preparedness activities, Mr. de Lannoy highlighted the need to increase the civil protection response capacity, including through various trainings, and enhance co-operation between neighbouring countries in this field. The speaker also mentioned in his presentation the development of a single European Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the establishment of a European Emergency Response Capacity consisting of a voluntary pool of Member States’ assets in order to enable immediate deployment and effective co-ordination of joint interventions.

Mr. de Lannoy emphasized the international perspective of the new EU legislation, supporting all international efforts to increase disaster risk resilience worldwide, including those co-ordinated by the UN. The new legislation also foresees actions related to previously developed policies and programmes, such as the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance and Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Man-made and Natural Disasters (PPDR) in the East and South regions. Equally importantly, the EU is also contributing to the post-2015 Development Agenda, integrating DRM in the sustainable development goals and establishing a common international approach to these goals with a view to ensure an ambitious and robust successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

In conclusion, Mr. de Lannoy reiterated that the objective of the new EU legislation was to mainstream DRM in all humanitarian and development funding pursuant to the existing EU policies. He also underscored the need to link disaster management to economic growth and to sustainable economic management by promoting an integrated approach across different ministries, private sector, insurance industry, etc.; as well as the need to establish a common international post-2015 framework.

Then the floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of Serbia presented the country's efforts to build institutional and regional capacities and to implement the DRM legal framework, including an integrated system of protection and rescue. He emphasized that implementing HFA, especially by promoting disaster risk reduction, was among Serbia's national priorities. He added that currently a national risk assessment and emergency-management plan and a database on disasters were being developed in the country.

A representative of Uzbekistan described Uzbekistan's emergency response management system with a focal point of authority in the Ministry for Emergency Situations.

In response to *the Moderator's* question about possible further actions and recommendations for the OSCE, *Mr. Toro* stated that the only way to ensure further development and economic growth was to draw conclusions from economic impact assessments of particular disasters and to incorporate DRM in all fields of activity of the participating States. In this regard, he pointed out that international organizations had the potential to promote this approach.

In his concluding remarks, *Mr. Thurman* noted that there were many basic recommendations that should have been implemented years ago, such as national climate change adaptation strategies. He emphasized that a lot could be done using moderate financial resources and that the easiest and best approach would be to start the mainstreaming work at the local level instead of focusing on expensive and politically complicated national plans.

Following-up on the role of insurance industry, *Mr. Prystav* focused on the idea of setting up public-private partnerships as the most pragmatic approach to managing disaster risks. Such partnerships could help to overcome the financial gap that resulted in lack of financial resilience to natural disasters. In his opinion, it would be easier to start with concrete examples rather than to create a huge basket of solutions that would cover all possible risks for all regions.

In his final remarks, *Mr. de Lannoy* emphasized the need to mainstream DRM in OSCE's activities, building upon the co-operation framework already in place in the EU and focusing on developing a common international framework for disaster risk reduction.

Session II: Behind Natural Disasters – The human-environment interaction: Case Studies 1

Moderator: Mr. Jan Dusik, Acting Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme

Rapporteur: Ms. Heike Jantsch, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Germany to the OSCE

Speakers:

Prof. Ben Wisner, Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London (UCL)

Mr. Leonid Dedul, Head of the Department of the State system of prevention and liquidation of emergencies and civil protection, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Belarus

Ms. Paola Albrito, Head of Europe Office, United Nations Office for Disasters Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Ms. Andrea James, Regional Chief of Emergency, UNICEF CEECIS Regional Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Mr. Jan Dusik, moderator of the session, emphasized that disaster risks would likely increase in the future in the context of the ongoing global warming and therefore the effects of climate change in particular would continue to be harmful to societies. He stressed that disasters resulted from combined effects of hazards and vulnerable conditions, producing very severe damages and losses.

Prof. Wisner emphasized that it should be possible to reduce risks of natural disasters through efforts to reduce vulnerability and build capacity. Entrenched traditional, short-term and primarily technical approaches focusing on immediate responses to disasters should be changed because hazards are not per se disastrous – and disasters are not natural, but determined by human vulnerability. This vulnerability is complex because it is driven by social and economic structures, political ideology, history and culture, and increasing. In addition, analysis of dynamic pressures over time (e.g. development of institutions, rapid urbanization, poor governance, decline in biodiversity), including potentially fragile livelihoods (natural, human, economic etc. resources) and unsafe locations, should help to identify options for building capacities that are key to specific and sustainable risk management.

Mr. Dedul elaborated further on this capacity oriented approach. He gave an overview of the National Risk Reduction Platform in Belarus comprising a wide range of institutions at the national as well as local level, including NGOs, civil society and academia. The approach includes exchange and analyses of information about disastrous events (floods, wildfires, and electricity or transport disruptions due to strong snowfalls), research on root causes thereof and feedback on measures undertaken to cope with such events in both the short- and medium-term, as well as on measures not undertaken because some actors considered them not to be necessary.

Ms. Albrito also commented on capacity building as a crucial part of risk resilience and disaster management. Approximate annual losses of 13,4 billion USD throughout the last ten years, mainly caused by climate change and hydrological phenomena, put Europe in third place globally in terms of losses. She referred to the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action as a mechanism to substantially reduce disaster losses in lives, social, economic and environmental assets and to build resilience to disasters by nations and communities. As an overarching goal, she emphasized efforts to reduce further generation of risks, e.g. improper urban planning and expansion, unmanaged land use, poorly maintained infrastructures etc. Looking back on efforts since 2005, there were some lessons learnt: firstly, that investments in disaster reduction turned out to be cost-effective, particularly in good planning of land use and infrastructure development; secondly, vulnerabilities to disasters in Europe are mostly of an environmental nature (degradation of hydro-geologic conditions); thirdly, disaster risk reduction needs cross-sectoral co-ordination between multiple stakeholders and disciplines. In conclusion, *Ms. Albrito* expressed hope that the 2015 World Conference would agree on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction with enhanced monitoring and periodic review processes. She urged to promote a positive, constructive and creative approach to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies, thereby containing risk growth in the future.

Ms. James dealt specifically with disaster impacts on children who represent approximately 50 to 60% of affected populations. She called for mainstreaming a child-centered approach, including education, health and access to water, in efforts to build more disaster resilient communities with a focus on sub-national levels as the most promising venues. She underscored the importance of engagement with children as agents of change including their participation in the 2015 Sendai Conference and following up on their feedback and cited such examples as Children in a Changing Climate Coalition whose work resulted in creating a Children's Charter on Disaster Risk Reduction which highlights such issues as the need for safe schools and communities. *Ms. James* also affirmed that increasing resilience and reducing disaster risks were an integral part of UNICEF's new strategic plan. She recommended to the OSCE to become involved in the discussions around the upcoming development of the new Hyogo Framework for Action, to support capacity building and to encourage co-operation between participating States on lessons learnt and global sharing of information and experiences in terms of integrating disaster risk reduction as a core element into the development work.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of Bulgaria presented the process of building a national platform for disaster risk reduction in his country, which brings together the government, academia, industry and civil society. He informed that a national strategy for disaster risk reduction based on the Hyogo Framework for Action had been developed and that adopting a sustainable national policy in this regard was among the country's national priorities.

A representative of Azerbaijan referred to an example of a past disaster and described present risks related to the Metsamor nuclear power plant operating in Armenia. She highlighted the risks and threats associated with the location in a mountainous seismically active area, scarce water resources for disaster response, as well as potential radioactive contamination of large territories. She also expressed concern about the construction of a new reactor and lack of co-operation with the neighboring states in terms of environmental impact assessment.

Ms. Louise Charlotte Baker, representing of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), brought to the participants' attention slow moving disasters such as droughts and asked whether these phenomena were taken into account in disaster risk reduction and preparedness planning.

Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction, urged to focus on what makes societies resilient to disasters and suggested that core principles and values that make societies stronger should be taken into account in the resilience development process.

In response to Mr. Oxley, *Ms. James* emphasized that the primary focus should be on working at the local level with the systems already existing in specific regions and building upon them. She also stressed the need to integrate all currently available research and data in order to further develop effective resilience systems. With respect to slow moving disasters, *Ms. James* recalled UNICEF's work in the Sahel which helped to develop appropriate robust systems such as early warning and monitoring at the community and national levels and engage all relevant stakeholders in preparations for potentially lean seasons.

Ms. Albrito addressed three issues that came up in the discussion. In terms of creeping disasters she noted the necessity to improve systematic data gathering in order to inform future choices of appropriate actions. In regard to building resilient societies, she underscored the need to focus on advantages of working at the local level. Finally, *Ms. Albrito* noted that many participating States had developed national platforms for disaster risk reduction, stressing the value and importance of such work at national levels.

In his closing remarks, *Mr. Dedul* emphasized the need to improve data gathering methodologies, conduct detailed analyses and draw lessons from past disasters, both the ones that had occurred and the ones that had been prevented, because they would be essential for better disaster preparedness and prevention.

In his final comments, *Prof. Wisner* focused on direct overseas or foreign investments, which should require decisions on various local issues. However, the local and even national stakeholders are very often excluded from the decision-making process due to corruption which makes talking about national disaster risk reduction systems with a positive spin extremely difficult. He pointed out that what Mr. Oxley was referring to was focusing on actual resilience building processes at the local level, such as listening to people, empowering them, promoting effective local practices and engaging local residents in decision-making. He also emphasized the need to institutionalize the role of civil society in disaster preparedness by citing the case of Project Impact implemented by FEMA in the USA under President Clinton.

Ms. Albrito added that disaster risk management should be regarded as investment rather than as a cost in terms of mainstreaming sustainable development by shifting the focus to positive outcomes and returns from disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- Disaster risk is not only a function of hazard and vulnerability but also of capacity. Capacity building should be the focus of risk reduction and management.

- Disaster risk reduction platforms should bring together different stakeholders, such as government, businesses, industries, academia and civil society, both at national and local levels.
- Empowering the civil society, institutionalizing its participation, and tapping the potential of indigenous best practices are essential to developing disaster resilience systems.
- The needs of children in the context of disasters should be given special attention.
- Investing in disaster risk reduction, especially in planning of land use and infrastructure, is cost-effective.
- Disaster risk management should be regarded as investment in sustainability rather than a cost and benefits of disaster risk reduction and preparedness should be prioritized.
- The OSCE should become involved in the upcoming development of the new Hyogo Framework for Action and the 2015 World Conference in Sendai.
- The OSCE could provide a platform for knowledge sharing, including improvement of data collection methodologies and sharing of experiences and best practices.
- A positive, constructive and creative approach to disaster risk reduction and management with a view to sustainable development should be mainstreamed within the whole OSCE region in order to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies.

Session III (Panel Debate): Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?

Moderator: Ms. Emily Hough, Editor, Crisis Response Journal, United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, Environmental Programme Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

Mr. Taalaybek Temiraliyev, State Secretary, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Radhika Murti, Programme Coordinator, Ecosystem Management Programme, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Prof. Johann Goldammer, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Centre, University of Freiburg, Germany

Mr. Marco Keiner, Director Environment Division, UNECE

The moderator, Ms. Hough, welcomed the panelists and posed the main question of the debate: how natural disaster risks can be reduced.

Mr. Temiraliyev highlighted the growing pressure on ecosystems and provided an overview of challenges Kyrgyzstan is facing in terms of disasters. In Central Asia alone some 2,500 people died as a result of disasters in the past decade while another 5,5 million people suffered serious economic losses. Landslides and floods are a constant threat to people and economy of the region. In Kyrgyzstan, risks of man-made disasters mainly arising from toxic and radioactive waste

storage facilities are also acute. An average economic loss caused by natural disasters in Kyrgyzstan is estimated to be 35 million US dollars while the annual budget for disasters does not exceed 7 million US dollars.

Mr. Temiraliev outlined Kyrgyzstan's new legal framework for disaster risk reduction and strategic priorities for the future. Kyrgyzstan's policy on disaster risk reduction is currently guided by two documents: National Strategy for Sustainable Development for 2013-2017 and Strategy for Comprehensive Security of Population and Territory of Kyrgyz Republic in Emergency and Crisis Situations until 2020. He also noted that economic activities within the boundaries of ecosystem resilience require effective planning and transition to sustainable development through green growth. Mr. Temiraliev underlined the need for consolidated efforts of different actors to reduce the risks of disasters in Kyrgyzstan and in Central Asia.

Ms. Murti provided a brief background on the IUCN and its engagement in disaster risk reduction. While the role of nature is increasingly recognized as critical to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts, challenges of harmonizing policies across sectors, establishing good practices and collating a scientifically credible knowledge base need to be addressed in order to mobilize commitment and resources for nature-based solutions. In the past decade hurricanes, tsunamis, coastal storms and landslides have demonstrated the role mangroves, coral reefs, coastal vegetation, wetlands and forests can play in protecting people, their properties and livelihoods from effects of natural hazards. With increasing frequencies and magnitudes of such hazards, there is an urgent need to consider nature as complementary or alternative solutions to engineered infrastructure.

Ms. Murti noted that at the same time the role of nature as a protective infrastructure is not always recognized. Conservation policies often do not encompass disaster reduction elements. There seems to be a lack of people working with early warning and relief in the conservation community while it is also difficult to resource such efforts. Some positive examples, however, exist: Japan announced the expansion of the coastal forests along the tsunami-affected areas while a similar decision was made by the Philippines with regard to mangrove forests.

Ms. Murti went on to highlight Europe's role as a technology hub which can effectively demonstrate the key role of sustainable management and conservation in disaster risk reduction. She also noted that the next Hyogo Framework for Action should include nature-based approaches.

When it comes to the role of the OSCE in disaster risk reduction, *Mr. Murti* noted that the OSCE can be instrumental in building co-operation partnerships between risks reduction and aid relief sectors of disaster risk management and the OSCE can also be engaged in capacity development for national policy-makers.

Prof. Goldammer started with explaining the concept of wildland fires as referring to all types of vegetation fires, not only forest fires. Unlike tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes, wildland fires are preventable while parameters determining their severity can also be predicted (e.g. weather patterns).

Prof. Goldammer identified a number of lessons learnt in the context of the South Caucasus region where the OSCE had been engaged in fire management capacity building in the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative since 2009.

Addressing a disaster risk such as wildfire requires a holistic approach, i.e. across natural and cultural landscapes and institutional responsibilities. Accordingly, a cross-sectoral mechanism must be created to initiate a dialogue in society and to identify the underlying reasons of wildfire risks (socio-economic, environmental, climate change, institutional), with emphasis on involvement of civil society. Any solution requiring legal and institutional reforms and investments for capacity building (technical, human resources) requires the formulation of a national policy based on consensus and co-operation with the involvement of all relevant national stakeholders. Donor-supported projects and programmes must have a long-term scope and timeline since efficient, effective and sustainable capacities cannot be realized in short-term projects. Establishment and embedding national measures in an international nexus (e.g. through networks, bilateral and multilateral agreements) will benefit from experiences of other countries and regions and thus are not only economically feasible but also allow the development of interoperable systems for cross-boundary exchange and assistance in wildfire emergency situations, and to jointly achieve the goals of related legally binding international agreements.

He also noted the role of significant socio-economic changes going on in the countries of the South Caucasus for fire management. With the exodus of people from rural areas, including migration of young people to the cities, less and less people are left in the countryside having good knowledge and capacity to deal with fires. Climate change is likely to aggravate the situation in the future.

Mr. Keiner focused his intervention on the so called unnatural disasters, pointing to the interaction and interdependency between natural disasters and man-made disasters. One type of disaster can cause another, and then both can come together at the same time and overlap. Examples include heat wave–fire, the Aral Sea – originally the water was directed away to irrigation, now the situation is aggravated by climate change. There are also potential risks of interaction between floods and hazardous substances like for instance pesticides that can be washed away in the case of flood.

He underlined the importance of recognizing such linkages between natural and man-made disasters particularly in the context of climate change and understanding vulnerabilities of human systems like body, infrastructure, water and other services that can be affected.

Mr. Keiner noted the need to improve the awareness of the government, stakeholders and population. Monitoring systems are a very important tool along with risk registers and early warning arrangements. There is a need for solidarity in addressing disasters. In this regard, cross-boundary level of co-operation and cross-boundary integrated risk management are a must. Mr. Keiner identified one area for co-operation in the OSCE region: exchange of experience between countries in its Eastern part (that largely rely on engineered solutions) and countries in its Western part (that have more comprehensive approaches). Areas and forms of co-operation could include: joint management for transboundary river basins, cross-border emergency response units and cross-border training of fire brigades.

Mr. Keiner went on to amplify on the role of the UN system and international organizations in disaster risk reduction. UN can improve ecosystem management, including also training of trainers. The UNECE has some legal instruments to reduce disaster risks (Industrial Accidents Convention, the Aarhus Convention, the Water Convention, and the Espoo Convention). The ENVSEC Initiative also offers a platform for co-operation between different partner organizations. He underlined the importance of good governance and public participation in the context of disaster risk reduction.

Speaking of the role of the OSCE, Mr. Keiner noted the network of the existing Aarhus Centres as a vehicle for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction to the national level. He also noted the Hyogo Framework for Action and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as natural avenues of co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies.

In the *discussion*, a *representative of the United States of America* asked if the panelists could elaborate more on the role of good governance as a positive factor in disaster risk reduction and corruption as an exacerbating factor. It was noted in response that good governance was a key to success. Representatives of civil society and academia have an important role to play in promoting positive changes as they are independent of government changes and election results. It was also mentioned that empowering people and de-politicizing issues had an important role to play in the area of disaster risk reduction. Consistency of legal frameworks and disaster management measures was also emphasized along with the need for a clear understanding of responsibilities across all levels of government and de-centralization of responsibilities. Multilevel approach was mentioned as an important pre-requisite for good governance prompting interaction between local, regional and national levels. Inclusiveness, in particular involvement of women, in the development of disaster risk reduction measures was also identified as an important element for good governance and identification of vulnerabilities and potential disaster threats.

A *representative of Armenia* touched upon the topic raised in the preceding session commenting on the International Atomic Energy Agency's well-placed position to address technical aspects of Armenia's nuclear power plant. The representative of Armenia also commended the activities of the Global Fire Monitoring Center inquiring which challenges are central to capacity-building in the South Caucasus and how environmental issues could be de-politicized.

In response, Prof. Goldammer noted that issues of technical equipment were not a major challenge. What is important is to have appropriate methodologies and approaches. In the area of fire management, the key issue was felt to be about defining approaches to fire management at the landscape level. Another panelist noted that UNECE has the experience of providing frameworks where issues can be de-politicized (e.g. UNECE Water Convention, UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution). Respective task forces and working groups of experts under these conventions are well placed to provide assistance to convention parties in meeting their obligations. Bringing policy-makers together and presenting them with reliable statistics and hard facts could also be one of the solutions to de-politicize the issues.

A *representative of Uzbekistan* noted that the Hyogo Framework for Action includes goals and objectives and asked for comments on in which ways those goals could be reached.

In response, Ms Murti noted that intensified co-operation at the regional level could be one of the elements in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. It was also suggested that under the aegis of the OSCE a regional platform for dealing with regional questions on disaster risk reduction could be established. The role of IT-based solutions was also emphasized as a way to inform public and reach out to different branches of authorities in the case of disaster.

A representative of Azerbaijan noted that in some cases multilateral regional cooperation is not possible due to existing problems. In such cases political and security environment of the region should be considered and impediments to establish regional cooperation shall be addressed.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- There is a need to support cross-boundary co-operation on disaster risk reduction and development of cross-boundary integrated disaster risk management;
- Donor-supported projects and programmes should have a long-term scope and timeline since efficient, effective and sustainable capacities cannot be realized in short-term projects;
- The existing Aarhus Centres are well placed as a tool to intensify OSCE work on disaster risk reduction;
- Hyogo Framework for Action, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Environment and Security Initiative are well placed as platforms for co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies in the area of disaster risk reduction;
- The OSCE participating States could exchange expertise on their approaches to disaster risk management by using the OSCE as a platform for this exchange;
- The OSCE could build partnerships between risk reduction and aid relief and could provide capacity-building for national policy makers;
- A regional platform to deal with regional disaster-related issues could be established under the aegis of the OSCE.

Session IV: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention:

Case studies 2

Moderator: Ms. Wendy Cue, Chief, Environmental Emergencies Section, Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Rapporteur: Ms. Alja Brinovec Jureša, Assistant Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to OSCE

Speakers:

Mr. Guenter Bretschneider, Head, Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC), NATO

Ms. Milena Dobnik Jeraj, Head of International Relations and EU Affairs Department, Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Republic of Slovenia

Ms. Ivana Ljubojević, Head, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe

Mr. Bretschneider presented an example of NATO's involvement in Pakistan Earthquake Relief in 2005. He focused on the political framework of possible NATO's role in humanitarian operations. He stressed that the use of military assets in response to humanitarian situations should be in line with the relevant UN guidelines and unless the magnitude of a disaster exceeds the national response capability, the country itself is responsible for a disaster response. In such cases, there may be a need for international assistance, including, if requested, assistance by or through NATO. Finally, he added that NATO's role and added value is likely to be in respect of short term disaster relief, i.e. improving the conditions for recovery. According to Mr. Bretschneider there are two options of NATO's involvement in humanitarian operations: through the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) when the request comes from a stricken nation or from the United Nations, and/or through the use of military assets and capabilities available in the Alliance's Command and Force Structures which can be provided upon a request of a stricken nation or an appropriate international organization and upon the decision of the North Atlantic Council.

In case of NATO's relief Operation in Kashmir (2005), the North Atlantic Council approved a two-stage Alliance response with offering an air-bridge and other relief activities. In the operation, which finished by February 2006, NATO forces closely co-operated with both the government of Pakistan and the United Nations on a daily basis and were plugged into the UN cluster system. Although the involvement of NATO raised some questions related to the relevance and appropriation of such NATO's activities, he believed that its contribution to the Pakistan relief effort was substantial. When the scale of the disaster is so great that national authorities and first responders become overwhelmed, the military can and should become involved, added the speaker.

Mr. Bretschneider also explained that NATO's primary contribution in speeding up recovery is co-ordinating, liaising and facilitating functions that the EADRCC and the Alliance's military structures provide, with an aim to enable smaller Allies to contribute capabilities that they would not be able to deliver on their own. In conclusion, Mr. Bretschneider expressed the importance of effective co-ordination in humanitarian operations. Especially when different actors with different mandates are involved, sharing of information in a timely and accurate way is essential.

Ms. Dobnik Jeraj presented some of the good practices of Slovenia in bilateral and regional co-operation in disaster management. She introduced some facts about Slovenia from which it was evident that the country is prone to many natural disasters, therefore good preparedness, relief and recovery capabilities are of utmost importance. Concerning bilateral co-operation, the speaker informed about existing bilateral agreement with all four neighbouring countries in areas such as notification and mutual exchange of information on threats, emergency situations and disasters, exchange of knowledge and experiences, organization of joint education and training, as well as bilateral assistance in case of disasters.

The speaker presented some concrete cross-border projects implemented in co-operation of Slovenia and its neighbouring countries. Projects focused on alpine search and rescue, interventions in the case of cross-border disasters, cave rescue, preparedness for evacuation in case of nuclear accident, cross-border co-operation in case of floods and fires were among others resulting in development of communication tools, joint risk assessments, etc. and were aiming to strengthen cross-border co-operation in sense of improving procedures of notification and

readiness for self-protection, improving early warning, joint response, ability to respond, and so on.

Furthermore, Ms. Dobnik Jeraj outlined Slovenia's active role in capacity sharing through the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE) and a contribution to regional co-operation in Western Balkans through the EU programme on co-operation with candidate and potential candidate countries. She stressed the importance of building and strengthening regional networks, sharing knowledge and experiences, exchanging information and organizing joint activities with these countries. Finally, she concluded that bilateral and regional co-operation in disaster management is crucial and should take place in all phases, as well as include all relevant partners. She stressed the importance of building trust through joint activities of relevant countries.

Ms. Ljubojević presented the structure and work of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE). She explained the very practical oriented nature of the initiative, where theory becomes practice. By project planning, facilitation and implementation the initiative fosters regional co-operation in preparedness and prevention, as well as serves as a platform for exchange of information, lessons learnt and best practices in the field of disaster management. The speaker outlined the importance of co-operation with other relevant organizations, e.g. EC/EU, UN ISDR, UNDP, UN OCHA, etc. in planning phase of the activities with an aim to avoid possible duplications.

The speaker informed about some of the projects, such as the Disaster Management Training Programme focusing mainly on the institutional capacity building of disaster management services of the SEE countries and the Project for Support of Establishing the Joint Emergency Response Units in case of floods in SEE aiming to develop operational capabilities. In conclusion, Ms. Ljubojević stressed the unique value of the Initiative in ensuring the safety of citizens as well as the environment. She expressed the importance of the fact that the Initiative is being driven by the countries of the region in which successful partnerships between governments and the international community have been established.

During the *discussion*, a *representative of Serbia* informed about the establishment of the Russian – Serbian Humanitarian Centre focusing on preparedness and relief activities. It employs experts from Serbia and the Russian Federation and is open for access of other countries.

A *representative of the Council of the Baltic Sea States* thanked the OSCE and the Swiss Chairmanship for facilitating the dialogue in this important topic and expressed the Council's high interest into regional co-operation.

A *representative of Uzbekistan* underlined the importance of information technology in disaster management.

Mr. Christian Blondin, representing the World Meteorological Organization, stressed a great need for having better climate information because of the meteorological origin of most natural hazards.

The Ambassador of Slovakia invited the speakers to focus on possible use of presented practices within the OSCE.

A representative of Romania informed about the improvement of the functioning of the National Emergency Situations Management System and its co-operation and interaction with relevant structures from other countries and international organizations. The representative also supported the potential of OSCE to be used as an integrated platform for debates on relevant topics related to its concept of comprehensive security, such as disaster prevention, developing specific mechanisms for co-ordination in disaster assistance, raising public awareness and disaster risk management.

Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction underlined the way of dealing with existing risks and addressing the causes, as two main challenges, and added that special focus should be given to prevention of risks.

The Moderator, Ms. Cue, concluded that presented cases clearly demonstrated the possible benefit from the relevant co-operation, whereby experiences and outcomes from the OSCE can also make a valuable contribution to other relevant processes focusing on natural disaster management.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- The need for strengthening bilateral, regional and international co-operation in disaster management was recognized, especially since neighbouring countries usually face similar problems.
- Co-operation, also within the OSCE, is crucial in bringing added value and building trust among participating States.
- Co-operation is needed in all phases: prevention, preparedness, response.
- Co-operation should be developed at different levels, such as local, regional, national and among all relevant actors, including NGO's, civil society, research institutions, etc.
- The OSCE can facilitate the dialogue and offer a platform for exchanging information on good practices, but also on existing gaps.
- The OSCE can complement the role of other international organizations working in the field without duplicating their activities.

Session IV (continuation): Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 3

Moderator: Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and Chair of the Management Board of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative

Rapporteur: Ms. Dana Bogdan, Programme Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

Ms. Irma Gurguliani, Head of the Natural and Technological Hazards Management Service, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia

Mr. Gökhan Özkan, Expert, Disaster and Emergency Management Department, Turkey

Mr. Munkhuu Medraa, Lieutenant Colonel, Head of the Emergency Management and Coordination Division, National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolia

The second part of Session IV provided an overview on co-operation in natural disaster management and prevention, focusing on the co-ordination between governmental and civil society actors in three particular case studies that are related to Georgia, Turkey and Mongolia.

The Moderator, Ms. Bonifert, opened the session by mentioning that the focus of the second part of Session IV, the integrated disaster risk management, is analysed in the background of the post 2015 sustainable development goals. She referred also to the efforts of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative in this field, to which the OSCE is a partner, which contribute to building trust among countries and to security and stability.

Ms. Gurguliani presented two specific case studies of natural disasters which occurred in Georgia – the Tbilisi earthquake in 2002 and the flooding in 2013, involving arsenic-contaminated waste.

In presenting the case of the earthquake from April 2002, the speaker briefly mentioned general information about the concerned area and about the damages and losses associated with this event. Discussing achievements and next steps, the speaker emphasized the need for enhancing prevention efforts. With regard to the work done so far, the speaker mentioned several high quality seismic maps developed, including on “built environment” inventory, seismic site conditions and amplifications, seismic sources constructed for the Tbilisi area, etc. With regards to next steps, the speaker underlined the importance of external sources of co-funding, using as an example the funding received from the Swiss Development Co-operation Agency for the implementation of further measures and covering different needs, such as the specification of seismic sources, seismic risk mapping, etc.

Concerning the flooding involving arsenic-contaminated waste, the speaker presented the situation on the ground, describing the dangerous ecological situation in the Ambrolauri and Lentekhi regions of Georgia and stressing the associated health-related impact on the population living in the vicinity of the sites. As follow-up actions, public discussions have been initiated and the issue has been included in the National Environmental Action Plan for 2012-2016. Furthermore, a study of arsenic-containing ashes and sludge has been conducted and an action plan has been developed. Referring to next steps, the speaker mentioned the construction of a sarcophagus, a safe disposal of arsenic containing-waste materials; the development of an on-site detailed study; and the action plan for safe transportation and disposal of arsenic-containing waste materials.

In her concluding remarks, Ms. Gurguliani referred to disaster risk reduction (DRR), adaptation to climate change and agricultural development as priorities identified by the Government. Furthermore, she indicated that the State Strategy for Regional Development for 2010 – 2017 includes provisions on the improvement of disaster risk management in the area of policy formulation. As indicated by the speaker, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2011-2015 identifies DRR as one of the main key areas of assistance. With regard to the activities under the Hyogo Framework for Action, a national platform for DRR is in the course of being established, with support from UNDP.

Mr. Özkan presented the disaster management system in Turkey (AFAD) and the transformation it has gone through. Mr. Özkan focused on several projects, as well as on recent response activities.

Introducing the system, the speaker highlighted its values and principles and how it provides necessary measures to counter identified dangers and risks in all areas of life. Discussing the necessary steps to prioritize risk management in disaster management systems, the speaker mentioned the promotion of a culture of risk prevention and mitigation in society, training activities with modern technologies and communication facilities as well as co-operation at local and regional level as main priorities of the institution.

Describing the transformation of the system, Mr. Özkan presented the situation before and after the establishment of AFAD: while in the past a multi-authorities approach lacked an effective and efficient co-ordination and focused on crisis management rather than on risk reduction, the current situation presents a unified and effective co-ordination authority that makes efficient use of its capacity in disaster management.

With regard to the projects implemented with the aim to achieve the main tasks of the organization, namely co-ordination in all phases of disaster management and mitigation, response and recovery, implementation of legislation and new policies, etc., the speaker presented four projects, including their main objectives, as follows:

- *Turkey Disaster Response Plan* – This ensures the preparedness and capacity building of related institutions by dividing responsibilities and duties;
- *Establishment of Humanitarian Logistics Warehouse Project* – the designated warehouses are being constructed for urgent and effective response;
- *Technological Disasters Hazard and Risk Map* – data is collected to feed into base maps, analyses, etc.; furthermore, a road map is established with regards to next steps;
- *Capacity Building for Effective Risk Management* – disaster risk management through risk assessments is conducted in all provinces. The project foresees the establishment of the Local Risk Reduction Plans and enhancing the capability of AFAD for Disaster Risk Management.

In his final remarks, the speaker mentioned the rapid response provided by AFAD during the 2011 Van earthquakes, including life rescuing operations and technical support to the area affected. Concluding his intervention, Mr. Özkan mentioned other national projects in the area of DRR and referred to the international response activities of AFAD.

Mr. Medraa focused on the Disaster Management in Mongolia. After a brief introduction on the country profile, the speaker focused on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), highlighting the vision of the agency: to support the Government in providing national safety as well as to enhance the national disaster management and the disaster protection measures focusing mainly on community involvement. Discussing the main duties of the institution, Mr. Medraa underlined the development and monitoring of the legislative environment, strengthening the capacity of national disaster protection and co-operating with foreign countries and international organizations in improving the national framework for DRR.

Presenting the organisational structure of the Agency, the speaker mentioned that under the direct supervision of the Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, the Agency incorporates district, local and national rescue teams. As a legislative framework for action, the speaker mentioned that while recognizing the Hyogo Framework for Action, NEMA is based on four national basic laws: the Law on Disaster Protection, Law on Fire Safety, Law on Forest and Steppe Fire Protection, Law on State Reserve.

In his concluding remarks, the speaker presented the “Earthquake preparedness and response” project which establishes a unified disaster management system and provides rapid responses. He also discussed the challenges associated with the management of a complex disaster, including the lack of co-ordination between NEMA and other stakeholders, the lack of a legal environment on co-ordination of international humanitarian assistance, etc.

Following the presentations, the floor was opened for *discussion*.

Ms. Bettina Menne, representing the World Health Organization, mentioned that health issues related to emergencies affected more than 15 million people over the last 22 years; particular reference was made to the heat wave in 2003 and the combined heat and fire event in the Russian Federation in 2010. In this context, the representative presented the obligations of the WHO with regards to the International Health Regulations, and the work of the Organization.

Prof. Dr. Ben Wisner, representing Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London, asked how organisations reached down into subnational levels and how citizens were involved in the action planning in the field of disaster risk reduction.

In response to the question, *Ms. Gurguliani* mentioned that in the area of direct action, the emergency response teams established at local and regional level included volunteers as well; she then referred to the Aarhus Convention which provides the legal framework for the citizens to take active part in the decision-making process.

Mr. Özkan mentioned that within the Disaster Response Plan of Turkey, roles and responsibilities were distributed among Ministries, institutions, public and private sector, local authorities, NGOs and to the individuals. The division of roles among stakeholders is also valid at the preparation stage of disaster response plans.

A representative of Switzerland provided the example of the Swiss Government that has taken the initiative to train local advisors (3 or 4 people per village) on how to implement forecast and warning information, response and recovery after disaster, etc.

In response to the *question of the Moderator* regarding the responsiveness of the authorities in the area of policy formulation, *Ms. Gurguliani* mentioned co-ordination and the participation of local and regional municipalities in the decision-making process as the basis for policy development. *Mr. Özkan* underlined the role of capacity building in this process, while *Mr. Medraa* mentioned a step-by-step approach in the activities of the national authorities.

As a last question of the session, *Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction* raised the issue of governments’ response to small scale disasters and the way communities build resilience against these disasters.

Ms. Gurguliani responded by mentioning that the Government addresses all disasters the same, regardless their scale; however, she emphasized that the capacity building component needs to be further strengthened.

Mr. Özkan explained that small scale disasters are addressed locally, and in case additional support is required, assistance is provided from central authorities.

Mr. Medraa mentioned that the Government adopted a national plan which aims at ensuring the participation of local population in DRR related issues.

Raising the issue of civil society involvement in disaster risk management, a *representative of Turkmenistan* mentioned the focus of the Turkmen Government on supporting local communities and the civil society.

Session V (Panel Debate): Role of civil society in disaster-risk management

Moderator: Mr. Marcus C. Oxley, Executive Director of Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

Mr. Andre Krummacher, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), South/South-East Asia Regional Director, France

Dr. Vladimir Sakharov, Director, Environmental Emergency Preparedness, Green Cross International

Ms. Lianna Asoyan, Project Manager, Gavar Aarhus Centre, Armenia

Ms. Natasa Manojlovic, Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH), Germany

In his introduction, *the Moderator, Mr. Oxley*, stressed that the vast majority of disaster losses are from small scale disasters. These are often uninsured losses, and they are usually not considered in national databases and the EM-DAT database; therefore also national and international attention is limited. This is one reason why the local level should receive more attention in DRR. However, the local level faces in particular a lack of capacity. Therefore, the question arises how we can optimize existing resources and unlock local potential. While local authorities have the main responsibility for DRR, also civil society, which in the understanding of this session includes the private sector, is an important actor. It should be involved as local people know best local needs, capacities, and conditions. Their inclusion will result in policy appropriateness, resource mobilization and sustainability. Mr. Oxley pointed out that this needs a cultural change, since national emergency institutions often have a rigid management structure that is culturally different from approaches to include people and create ownership and commitment.

Mr. Krummacher presented Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) as a grass root approach for DRR. While there was good progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) priorities 1 and 5 in the OSCE region, these are usually dealt with at national level and in a top-down manner. Nevertheless, CBDRM is now a generally recognised

approach. Mr Krummacher highlighted the following reasons for CBDRM: (1) Local communities are in the first line of defence: If a disaster occurs, family and neighbours are the first to help before official rescue teams arrive. This is in particular relevant in small scale disasters that do not receive national attention. (2) Top-down DRR approaches often fail to address specific local vulnerabilities, needs and demands. (3) Every community has skills, knowledge, resources and capacities. These assets are often overlooked or even undermined. The benefits of engaging communities actively in the whole process of DRM are reduced vulnerabilities; better use of local knowledge and expertise; measures tailored at local problems and needs; improved sustainability; and strengthened capacities. However, Mr. Krummacher also admitted that there are some challenges for CBDRM: (1) The bottom-up CBDRM approach needs to be linked with top-down governmental DRR approach to make them complementary, and often it is not easy to identify the appropriate interface. (2) Capacity as well as resources need to be available for ensuring a large scale roll-out/replication of micro-projects or pilot initiatives. (3) The institutionalization of CBDRM with national line ministries and DRR agencies is often limited, also due to a lack of DRR legislation at sub-national and community level.

Dr. Sakharov started his intervention by admitting that working with local NGOs is not easy. But although the dialogue might be difficult, it ultimately brings a huge benefit in increased local disaster preparedness. He pointed to the different challenges regarding man-made disasters: while natural disasters are 'neutral' in the sense that nobody is directly responsible and can be blamed, for man-made disasters someone is (also legally) responsible and liable. This makes local disaster preparedness a sensitive process, where co-operation between civil society and the private sector usually does not work. In this field, stronger advocacy is needed.

Ms. Asoyan presented a general overview of the activities of the 15 Aarhus Centres in Armenia in order to support the authorities in implementation of the Aarhus Convention, to raise the level of public awareness, and to promote public participation in the decision making processes. Disaster risk management is one priority on the agenda of the Centres. Among the respective activities are public awareness-raising activities, e.g. at the annual International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. Since 2011, the Armenian Aarhus Centres actively participate in the initiative of the National Rescue Service and the Regional Environmental Centre, which serves the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and also provides support and assists local communities in physical risk protection. With support of the OSCE's CASE (Civic Action for Security and Environment) NGO Small Grants Programme, the Aarhus Centres have established task groups working on strategic documents at the regional and municipal levels in close collaboration with international donors such as UNDP. The Centres interact with local governments, NGOs, independent experts, academia, the media, as well as the relevant government institutions and Parliament. Aarhus Centres are ready to move forward to more preventive action.

Ms. Manojlovic focussed her presentation on methods and tools to involve multiple stakeholders in flood risk management. During the last decades, flood defence as an engineering activity developed to flood risk management as a multi-stakeholder process. Working with the public is no longer considered a 'necessary evil' but an essential activity. The EU flood directive explicitly demands inclusion of key stakeholders, but it says not how. She stressed that we need to find ways to realise stakeholders' participation cost-effectively and timely. While there is no blueprint concept for this, there are some tools that can be adapted to local specifics, e.g. Learning and

Action Alliances (LAAs). LAAs serve as a framework for institutionalizing stakeholder participation and have been already applied in several OSCE participating States. Ms. Manojlovic pointed to the following main lessons learned regarding community based flood risk management: Branding can help people to identify with a concept. Trust is required. Involvement of civil society requires capacity building and decision support methods. Motivation to get people on board needs incentives, e.g. daring to try something new. Local knowledge has to be capitalized. Academic and civil society should join forces to co-ordinate multi-level processes. People have to be addressed both rationally and emotionally. She proposed that OSCE's strong horizontal and vertical network could be used to link levels bottom-up and top-down to support multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

A representative of Switzerland referred to the good experience Switzerland has made with local hazard advisers. Another Swiss project on local risk and hazard maps included revision of the maps by non-professional local citizens. This ensured the integration of local knowledge and helped the acceptance of result. The representative also reminded yesterday's message that risk management is not a cost, but an investment. Lacking awareness and a certain kind of market restoration might prevent such a view; therefore accountability and reliability are important. He also enquired which part of the population is reached by Aarhus Centres, and if it is growing.

Ms. Asoyan explained that the Aarhus Centres reach out by various ways and also evaluate if people receive information. About 9000 people were involved in various events in 2013. The information on the website is accessed by approximately 300,000 users per year and also spread by other NGOs.

Ms. Manojlovic said that understanding and assessing risks was crucial for people to also define their acceptable risk. She also pointed to approaches to perceive disasters as an opportunity to revise and change existing habits.

Dr. Sakharov pointed to the need to not only invite 'friends' to joint discussions, but also get those with opposing views on board. However, he as well as *Ms Manojlovic* made the experience that the private sector did not follow invitations from civil society and academia.

A representative of the United States of America delegation mentioned that civil society participation was not only a burden, but also could open up an additional channel of communication. She referred to the example of the hurricane Katrina: civil society institutions like churches helped to communicate with refugees that could not be reached otherwise. She inquired also about ways to share such good practice.

A representative of Serbia was interested in what role the Aarhus Centres' network in Serbia could play in risk reduction.

Mr. Krummacher confirmed that church networks or imams played an important role in passing early warning messages and in awareness-raising and that it could be easily replicated on other regions.

Ms. Asoyan stressed that Aarhus Centres made governmental statistics understandable for villagers and therewith empowered them to get active.

Mr. Andreas Prystav, representing Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd., stated that the insurance industry was ready to engage, but it was not always clear who were the relevant stakeholders with whom it should engage.

Ms. Manojlovic mentioned that it always depended on the society, who was the best facilitator and that Aarhus Centres could champion the process at the local level.

The Moderator stressed that DRR was about shared responsibilities. Trust and an enabling environment have to be harnessed in order to unlock the obviously existing willingness and potential for co-operation among different actors.

The representative of Germany asked where the OSCE should engage.

Dr. Sakharov saw potential for the OSCE to provide inputs without duplicating others. This could be by offering strong political commitment to the HFA2-process and reinforcing the link between DRR, environment and security. Also advocacy and awareness-raising at all levels are still needed. Lastly, the OSCE could support co-operation at different levels by bringing closer together private business, NGOs, and people. Also promotion and knowledge sharing of technical and methodological issues remains a task.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- The vast majority of disaster losses are from small scale disasters that get limited national and international attention and assistance. However, even the most vulnerable communities have local knowledge and capacities; we have to identify how we can optimize existing resources, capitalize local knowledge and unlock local potential.
- Public participation might be a difficult process, but it ultimately pays off in increased local disaster preparedness and more appropriate policies.
- There is no blueprint approach for participation but many lessons to be shared. The OSCE can provide a platform for knowledge sharing of technical and methodological issues and support co-operation by bringing closer together private business and civil society.
- The OSCE could provide political commitment to the HFA2-process, in particular by reinforcing the link between DRR, environment and security.
- The OSCE could further engage advocacy and awareness-raising at all levels.
- Aarhus Centres play an important role in ensuring access to information and raising awareness of environmental problems, including natural hazards, and therewith empower people to become active.
- The OSCE's strong horizontal and vertical network can link levels bottom-up and top-down to support multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes.

Concluding Session: The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Matthias Matuschek, Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

Ambassador Andrey Kelin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE

Ambassador Daniel Baer, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OSCE

Ambassador Thierry B  chet, Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OSCE

In her introduction the *Moderator, Ms. Schweitzer*, summarized the discussions undertaken during the two-day Preparatory Meeting. She stressed that it was confirmed that the OSCE, as a platform for enhancing dialogue and co-operation among governments, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector can contribute to raising awareness on the inherent link between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and security and stability. She underlined that suggestions were also made regarding an enhanced role for the OSCE in ensuring a high-level political engagement in this area. Such an engagement could facilitate the creation of multi-stakeholder coalitions to address the reduction of disaster risks.

Ambassador Kelin stressed the great potential of the topic of the Forum to overcome remaining dividing lines within the OSCE area. He drew the attention to the fact that disasters such as extreme temperature peaks, storms, floods and fires, but also tsunamis and earthquakes have become more complex and have occurred more frequently in the recent past. He emphasized the importance of national and international rapid action capabilities, as well as for regional and sub-regional mechanisms to assist neighbouring countries, in particular using civil defense resources.

Ambassador Kelin elaborated on the Russian Federation's system for disaster management and response by explaining the role of the Ministry of Civil Defense and Natural Disaster Management and agencies such as EMERCOM. He also stressed that UN institutions were Russia's key-partners in this area. He emphasized the importance of real time information exchange and informed about successful co-operation in this field between the Russian Federation and partners such as EU and NATO. In addition, he stated that UN institutions should hold the upper hand since the UN has unique facilities to combine efforts of different countries to combat disasters and crises. In his view, the OSCE has gained experience in emergency response capacity building through the OCEEA, field missions and the ENVSEC Initiative, including such successful examples as the fire management project in the South Caucasus, which among other achievements had brought together relevant authorities from South Caucasus as well as South-Eastern Europe in a joint workshop in 2010.

With a view to further action, the Ambassador stressed that participating States need to enhance their response capabilities by closer co-operation with other regional and sub-regional mechanisms, including specialized agencies of the UN, NATO, EU, CSTO and within ENVSEC. He mentioned some areas of improvement with a view to mechanisms of trans-boundary co-operation, especially the insufficient level of harmonization of internal procedures when it comes to visa issues, customs clearance for rescue teams and the authorization of overflights over national territories.

Ambassador Baer emphasized that environmental disasters were a large-scale management challenge. In his view, information and co-ordination of both human and material resources, as well as trust are three fundamental ingredients for a successful strong response to disasters. He very much stressed that disaster management often failed in the past because people did not trust the provided assistance due to misinformation or negative experiences.

Furthermore, he stressed that governments must play a leading role in co-ordinating the planning process; not only within the participating States but also in international co-operation with neighbours. In terms of management, he highlighted that a purely top-down management style would also fail due to its incapacity to guarantee a proper information flow, as well as in terms of trust. Moreover, he was convinced that society resources matter. Governance issues and enforcement of policies, such as compliance with building codes and corruption could make a society more disaster resilient.

With a view to future work, he mentioned some ideas and recommended some OSCE stock taking in order to assess what kind of resources OSCE already has, and what still would be needed. Moreover, he recommended harvesting the potential of innovation, such as technical innovation with a view to communications technologies, which could facilitate co-ordination in disaster management. Finally, he recommended using this topic, which clearly has no political nature, to build trust and confidence within the OSCE participating States, between those who still have political challenges.

Ambassador Bechet emphasized that the topic of disaster management could help to use the OSCE, which is normally seen as a platform of political dialogue, also as a platform for policy dialogue. He highlighted that disaster management involves many different stakeholders. Consequently, exchanging experiences and sharing best practices is essential. Furthermore, he stressed that this particular issue was very close to what citizens normally perceived as security, although it had not been in the OSCE's initial sense of security. Hence, this topic cannot be left aside. He joined Ambassador Baer in stressing that disaster management probably was a very good area for further confidence building measures among OSCE participating States, where enhanced governance is most important.

With a view to the OSCE's future engagement in this thematic field, he stressed that there was no need to invent a new mission for the OSCE. The OSCE should start with assessing what is needed and where it can make a difference without duplicating existing structures. Thus, OSCE's added value could be identifying existing gaps, probably by field missions, and bringing responsible actors together. Furthermore, he stressed that the OSCE, especially in the Second Dimension, was dealing with a lot of issues which already had a disaster preparedness or risk mitigation aspect, especially with regard to water management and climate change. Finally, he highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and best practices, and recommended to mainstream several elements of existing Second Dimension's activities in that regard.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat**

Vienna, 23 January 2014

22ND OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in
the OSCE area”**

FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014

OSCE Congress Centre, Hofburg, Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Monday, 27 January 2014

09.30 – 11.00 **Opening Session** (*open to Press*)

Welcoming remarks

- **Ambassador Thomas Greminger**, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship
- **Ambassador Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Keynote speeches

- **Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir**, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) and Professor at the University of Louvain, School of Public Health, Belgium
- **Mr. Josef Hess**, Vice-Director of Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions, Switzerland

Statements by Delegations / Discussion

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00 **Session I: Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages**

Selected topics:

- Human and social losses from natural and cascading disasters
- Economic losses, gap between economic and insured losses
- Effects of Disaster Risk Management on economic damage: Costs of poorly managed disasters vs. savings by prevention and preparedness

Moderator: Mr. Jan Kellett, Senior Research Advisor, Climate and Environment Programme, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Rapporteur: Mr. Srdjan Cetkovic, Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Mission to Montenegro

Speakers:

- **Mr. Michael Thurman**, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS
- **Mr. Joaquin Toro**, Regional Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management– Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank
- **Mr. Thomas de Lannoy**, Policy Officer, DG Humanitarian Aid and civil protection, European Commission
- **Mr. Andreas Prystav**, Senior Client Manager Global Partnerships, Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd., Switzerland

Discussion

13.00 – 14.30

Buffet lunch hosted by the 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

14.30 – 16.00

Session II: Behind Natural Disasters – The human-environment interaction: Case studies 1

Selected topics:

- Concrete examples of past disasters in the OSCE region
- Disasters as symptoms of human interaction with the physical environment
- Role of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation

Moderator: Mr. Jan Dusik, Acting Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme

Rapporteur: Ms. Heike Jantsch, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Germany to the OSCE

Speakers:

- **Prof. Dr. Ben Wisner**, Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London (UCL)

- **Mr. Leonid Dedul**, Head of the Department of the State system of prevention and liquidation of emergencies and civil protection, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Belarus
- **Ms. Paola Albrito**, Head of Europe Office, United Nations Office for Disasters Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- **Ms. Andrea James**, Regional Chief of Emergency, UNICEF CEECIS Regional Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Discussion

16.00 – 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 – 18.00 **Session III: Panel Debate – Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?**

Selected topics:

- Lessons learned from the past
- Role of Good Governance
- Managing vulnerabilities, sustainable management of natural resources

Moderator: Ms. Emily Hough, Editor, Crisis Response Journal, United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, Environmental Programme Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **Mr. Taalaybek Temiraliyev**, State Secretary, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Radhika Murti**, Programme Coordinator, Ecosystem Management Programme, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- **Prof. Johann Goldammer**, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Centre, University of Freiburg, Germany
- **Mr. Marco Keiner**, Director Environment Division, UNECE

Discussion

18.15 **Cocktail hosted by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

Tuesday, 28 January 2014

09.30 – 11.00 **Session IV: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention:**

Case studies 2

Selected topics:

- Cases of national and transboundary disasters
- Co-ordination between States and between military and civilian actors
- Promoting partnerships at local, regional and international level

Moderator: Ms. Wendy Cue, Chief, Environmental Emergencies Section, Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Rapporteur: Ms. Alja Brinovec Jureša, Assistant Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to OSCE

Speakers:

- **Mr. Guenter Bretschneider**, Head, Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC), NATO
- **Ms. Milena Dobnik Jeraj**, Head of International Relations and EU Affairs Department, Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Republic of Slovenia
- **Ms. Ivana Ljubojević**, Head, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe

Discussion

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00 **Session IV cont.: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 3**

Selected topics:

- Cases of small-scale and cascading (NaTech) disasters. Impact on non-nuclear critical infrastructure
- Co-ordination between national and local response units
- Co-ordination between governmental and civil society actors

Moderator: Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and Chair of the Management Board of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative

Rapporteur: Ms. Dana Bogdan, Project Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **Ms. Irma Gurguliani**, Head of the Natural and Technological Hazards Management Service, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia
- **Mr. Gökhan Özkan**, Expert, Disaster and Emergency Management Department, Turkey
- **Mr. Munkhuu Medraa**, Lieutenant Colonel, Head of the Emergency Management and Coordination Division, National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolia

Discussion

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch Break

14.30 – 16.00 **Session V: Panel Debate – Role of civil society in disaster-risk management**

Selected topics:

- Community-based disaster risk management
- Role of civil society, including business community, and social networks in crisis mapping
- Role of Aarhus Centres in increasing awareness on multi-hazard risks in the OSCE region

Moderator: Mr. Marcus C. Oxley, Executive Director of Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **Dr. Vladimir Sakharov**, Director, Environmental Emergency Preparedness, Green Cross International
- **Ms. Lianna Asoyan**, Project Manager, Gavar Aarhus Centre, Armenia
- **Ms. Natasa Manojlovic**, Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH), Germany
- **Mr. Andre Krummacher**, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), South/South-East Asia Regional Director, France

Discussion

16.00 – 16.30 Coffee/Tea break

16.30 – 18.00 **Concluding Session: The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum**

Concluding debate

- Wrap-up of the discussions, lessons learned and identifying priority areas for future discussion and increased co-operation.
- Outlook to the 2nd Preparatory Meeting in Switzerland

Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Rapporteur: Mr. Matthias Matuschek, Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

- **Ambassador Andrey Kelin**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Daniel Baer**, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Thierry B chet**, Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OSCE

Closing Statements

- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitg den**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
- **Ambassador Thomas Greminger**, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship

ANNEXES



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

Original: ENGLISH

962nd Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 962, Agenda item 2

**DECISION NO. 1088:
THEME, AGENDA AND MODALITIES FOR THE
TWENTY-SECOND ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

The Permanent Council,

Pursuant to Chapter VII, paragraphs 21 to 32, of the Helsinki Document 1992; Chapter IX, paragraph 20, of the Budapest Document 1994; Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/04 of 7 December 2004; Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/06 of 26 July 2006; Permanent Council Decision No. 743 of 19 October 2006; Permanent Council Decision No. 958 of 11 November 2010; and Permanent Council Decision No. 1011 of 7 December 2011,

Relying on the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension (MC(11).JOUR/2) and Ministerial Council decisions related to the environment, energy and water management,

Building on the outcomes of past Economic and Environmental Forums, as well as on the results of relevant OSCE activities, including follow-up activities,

Decides that:

1. The theme of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will be: "Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area";
2. The Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will consist of three meetings, including two preparatory meetings, one of which will take place outside of Vienna. The concluding meeting will be held from 10 to 12 September 2014 in Prague. These arrangements shall not set a precedent for future meetings of the Economic and Environmental Forums. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, under the guidance of the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, will organize the above-mentioned meetings;
3. The agenda of the Forum will focus on the impact of the following topics on the comprehensive security of the OSCE area
 - Addressing preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to environmental challenges;

- Promoting partnerships and initiatives covering environment and security issues for greater preparedness for, resilience and adaptation to environmental challenges;
- Exchanging best practices relating to preparedness, emergency response and recovery regarding environmental challenges;

– Promoting environmental good governance;

4. The agendas of the Forum meetings, including timetables and themes of the working sessions, will be proposed and determined by the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, after being agreed upon by the participating States in the Economic and Environmental Committee;

5. Moreover, having a view to its tasks, the Economic and Environmental Forum will review the implementation of OSCE commitments in the economic and environmental dimension. The review, to be integrated into the agenda of the Forum, will address OSCE commitments relevant to the theme of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

6. The discussions at the Forum should benefit from cross-dimensional input provided by other OSCE bodies and relevant meetings organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, under the guidance of the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, and from deliberations in various international organizations;

7. Moreover, having a view to its tasks, the Economic and Environmental Forum will discuss current and future activities for the economic and environmental dimension, in particular the work in implementation of the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension;

8. The participating States are encouraged to be represented at a high level by senior officials responsible for shaping international economic and environmental policy in the OSCE area. Participation in their delegations of representatives from the business and scientific communities and of other relevant actors of civil society would be welcome;

9. As in previous years, the format of the Economic and Environmental Forum should provide for the active involvement of relevant international organizations and encourage open discussions;

10. The following international organizations, international organs, regional groupings and conferences of States are invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum: Asian Development Bank; Barents Euro-Arctic Council; Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation; Central European Initiative; Collective Security Treaty Organization; Commonwealth of Independent States; Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia; Council of Europe; Council of the Baltic Sea States; Economic Cooperation Organization; Energy Community; Eurasian Economic Commission; Eurasian Economic Community; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; European Environment Agency; European Investment Bank; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Green Cross International; Global Fire Monitoring Center; European Investment Bank; International Atomic Energy Agency; International Energy Agency; International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA); International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea; International Maritime Organisation; International Monetary Fund; International Red Cross and Red Crescent

Movement; International Committee of the Red Cross; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM; Organisation of Islamic Cooperation; Regional Cooperation Council; Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; Southeast European Cooperative Initiative; Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Human Settlements Programme; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees; UN Women; United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia; World Bank Group; World Health Organization; World Meteorological Organization; World Trade Organization; Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies; Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit; International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; United Nations Children’s Fund; Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI); United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination; International Civil Defense Organization; World Food Programme; Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery; Inter-Parliamentary Union, and other relevant organizations;

11. The OSCE Partners for Co-operation are invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

12. Upon request by a delegation of an OSCE participating State, regional groupings or expert academics and business representatives may also be invited, as appropriate, to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

13. Subject to the provisions contained in Chapter IV, paragraphs 15 and 16, of the Helsinki Document 1992, the representatives of non-governmental organizations with relevant experience in the area under discussion are also invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

14. In line with the practices established over past years with regard to meetings of the Economic and Environmental Forum and their preparatory process, the Chairperson of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will present summary conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from the preparatory discussions. The Economic and Environmental Committee will further include the conclusions of the Chairperson and the reports of the rapporteurs in its discussions so that the Permanent Council can take the decisions required for appropriate policy translation and follow-up activities.



Background Paper of the incoming Swiss OSCE Chairmanship on the

First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

***“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to
promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”***

Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

This Background Paper is intended to provide participants with useful information for the first Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF), to be held in Vienna on 27-28 January 2014.

For the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum in 2014 (see Annex 1), the Permanent Council (PC) adopted the theme “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area” in its *Decision No. 1088 of 25 July 2013*.

The number of intense **natural hazard triggered disasters** (henceforth referred to as “natural disasters”) has increased since 1950 in every region of the world, sometimes devastating the lives and livelihoods of entire communities. Reduction of disaster risks will contribute to increased security and stability.

In 2013 a series of small- and large-scale disasters occurred which took **significant human, social and economic tolls**. Most prominent was the natural disaster linked to **Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda** with thousands of casualties in the Philippines and where OSCE participating States have heavily contributed to relief efforts.

OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation have themselves been hit in 2013 *inter alia* by **geophysical** (e.g. earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, mudslides), **meteorological** (e.g. cyclones, tornadoes, winter storms, dust storms), **hydrological** (e.g. floods), and **climatological** disasters (e.g. wildfires).

Natural disasters severely affect the security of nations and communities. There is a clear need to foster local, national and international capacities for mitigation and prevention, preparedness, forecasting and early warning, and response and recovery to natural disasters. Investing in disaster prevention, developing mechanisms for better assistance coordination, raising awareness of the population and increasing the resilience of nations and communities are topics best dealt with in an integrated, holistic approach to disaster risk management. Hence, the OSCE

- with its comprehensive, cross-dimensional security concept - is a good platform to discuss this theme.

The agenda of the 22nd EEF will focus on the impact of the following topics on the comprehensive security of the OSCE area:

- Addressing preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to environmental challenges;
- Promoting partnerships and initiatives covering environment and security issues for greater preparedness for, resilience and adaptation to environmental challenges
- Exchanging good practices relating to preparedness, emergency response and recovery regarding environmental challenges;
- Promoting environmental good governance.

The discussions at the Forum will contribute to developing a common view on the role of the OSCE, as a security organization, in the whole disaster risk and crisis management cycle and on how to create synergies with other actors in this field.

The 1st Preparatory Meeting will focus primarily on the integrated disaster risk management approach (DRM; see Annex 2). This approach will be presented with a view to promote good practice sharing, partnerships and initiatives; to enhancing awareness; to build capacities in the field of DRM; and to encourage political leadership for disaster resilience.

The agenda of the Meeting takes into account **two types of sessions**:

1. Sessions with **input presentations** (max. 15 minutes/speaker, sessions I, II, and IV) to be followed by discussions among the speakers, OSCE participating States, Partners for Cooperation, OSCE institutions and field missions as well as civil society participants (see opening session, sessions I, II and IV).
2. Sessions with **panel debates** (see sessions III, V and concluding session). The panel debate formal interventions are limited to max. 5 minutes/ panellist. The main objective of the panel debate is to enable a moderated interactive discussion among the panellists on outstanding questions. The active intervention of OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, OSCE institutions and field missions as well as civil society participants (NGOs, private sector, academia) is strongly encouraged.

II. SELECTED ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED

MONDAY, 27 JANUARY 2014

OPENING SESSION

Welcoming Remarks, Keynote Speeches and Opening Statements

The representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, the OSCE Secretary General and the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities will open this Preparatory Meeting and introduce the topic of responding to environmental challenges – focusing on natural disasters - with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area.

Two Keynote Speeches will be delivered that focus on:

- Global long-term trends in natural disaster frequency, magnitude, spatial/temporal extent. Mapping of exposure, vulnerabilities and hazards in the OSCE region.
- Strengthening resilience to prevent the occurrence of natural disasters.
- Promoting integrated disaster risk management through capacity building in the OSCE region.

Delegations of OSCE participating States, OSCE Partners for Co-Operation as well as representatives of the civil society (private sector, NGOs, Think tanks, academia) are encouraged to take the floor after the keynote speeches in order to deliver their statements, thereby highlighting where they see the main challenges and what the role of the OSCE should be in this regard.

SESSION I

Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages

Selected topics:

- Human and social losses from natural and cascading disasters.
- Economic losses, gap between economic and insured losses.
- Effects of Disaster Risk Management on economic damage: Costs of poorly managed disasters vs. savings by prevention and preparedness.

Natural Disasters can have devastating short and long-term impacts on the society and the economy of a country. The economic costs of natural disasters are on the rise: both worldwide and in the OSCE area. Disasters have negative impacts on several levels: they negatively affect communities and individual households and seriously setback the economy and the social development of nations. Natural disasters can also heavily impact the environment and put communities further at risk. Economic losses from natural disasters increased roughly 10-fold in recent decades.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What are the trends concerning the impact of natural disasters on human life and the fabric of society itself: human casualties, missing persons, displacement, social disruption, poverty increase, decline or drawback of development?
- What are the trends in the economic costs and losses from natural disasters (decline in Productivity; damage to infrastructure; loss of fertile agricultural land; resource degradation and contamination; risks of high-level economic losses from disasters in big metropolitan centres, risks of major energy blackouts)?
- Gap between economic and insured losses. What financial risk sharing and risk transfer mechanisms exist to close this gap?
- What is the impact of disaster risk management on social and economic damage (costs of poorly managed disasters; savings by effective prevention and preparedness; role of early-warning systems; return-on-investment of DRR measures)?
- What are the financial benefits of investing in disasters mitigation/prevention/preparedness and what is the role of different stakeholders (politicians, international organizations, civil society, media) in that regard?

SESSION II

Behind Natural Disasters – The human-environment interaction. Case studies 1

Selected topics:

- Concrete examples of past disasters in the OSCE region
- Disasters as symptoms of human interaction with the physical environment
- Role of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation

This session will focus on the causes of natural disasters and on the importance of prevention and preparedness. Population growth and density, settlement, migration to urban and coastal areas, environmental degradation caused by over-exploitation of natural resources or increased dependence on critical infrastructure and technology increase the human exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters. The number of natural disasters will likely continue to increase in the future as global warming is expected to generate more severe meteorological events.

Questions that could be addressed:

- When does a natural event become a disaster?
- What psychological, behavioural, social, political, economic, land-use and technological features, practices and trends make us exposed, and hence vulnerable, to natural hazards/events?
- How does our ecological footprint affect the frequency and magnitude of natural disasters? How does our ecological footprint affect security and stability in transboundary regions?
- What links exist between disaster exposure/vulnerability and poverty?
- How can prevention and preparedness mitigate the effects of natural disasters?
-

SESSION III

PANEL DEBATE

Improving Environmental Security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?

Selected topics:

- Lessons learned from the past
- Role of Good Governance
- Managing vulnerabilities. Sustainable management of natural resources

This panel debate will focus on concrete measures of how to better prevent, prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

Questions that could be addressed:

- How can response and recovery lay the groundwork for avoiding new/existing vulnerabilities to future disasters? How to integrate sustainable approaches and disaster-risk-sensitive measures into early recovery phases?
- What is the role of Good Governance in disaster risk reduction (tasks and responsibilities of governments on national, sub-national and on local level; role of co-ordination between different governmental levels)?
- Mitigating risks and reducing exposure and vulnerabilities (sustainable management of natural resources, demographics, migration and housing policy). How could the OSCE increase participatory environmental decision making and environmental awareness in this regard?
- Ways of encouraging governments to allocate more resources for livelihood protection, poverty alleviation, and wealth creation while reducing disaster risks. A role for the OSCE?
- What adaptation mechanisms exist which can be utilized to improve the resilience of nations and communities?

TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2014

SESSION IV

Cooperation in the Integrated Management of Natural Disasters: Case studies 2.

Selected topics:

- Cases of national and transboundary disasters.
- Coordination between States and between military and civilian actors.
- Promoting partnerships at local, regional and international level.

Natural disasters know no boundaries, spreading across borders and political jurisdictions. This part of session IV will focus on cooperation with regard to national and transboundary disasters on an international, regional and national scale to manage disaster risks in an integrated manner. At the same time, transboundary cooperation in environmental issues, including DRR, can contribute to conflict prevention and confidence building.

Based on concrete cases of large-scale national level disasters as well as disasters with transboundary effects, the following questions could be addressed:

- What are the best ways and means of coordination between military and civilian actors (CMCoord) in disaster response?
- What are the best practices in coordination between national, sub-national and local response units as well as between governmental and civil society actors?
- How are stakeholder partnerships promoted at a local, regional and international level?
- How can authorities ensure coordination among affected countries for effective cross-border disaster response and recovery mechanisms?
- How can DRR act as an important confidence and security building measure: concrete examples and suggestions for the future?

SESSION IV cont.

Cooperation in the Integrated Management of Natural Disasters: Case studies 3.

Selected topics:

- Cases of small-scale and cascading (NaTech) disasters. Impact on non-nuclear critical infrastructure.
- Coordination between national and local response units.
- Coordination between governmental and civil society actors.

This part of session IV will focus on cooperation in the case of small-scale as well as cascading (NaTech) disasters to manage disaster risks in an integrated manner.

Tens of thousands of small-scale natural disasters occur each year throughout the world, affecting communities and the livelihoods of poor people in rural areas and municipalities, perpetuating or even deteriorating their levels of exposure, vulnerability and human security. Small-scale disasters, contrary to the extreme and large scale extraordinary events, are very often not visible at national or subnational level.

It is well known that natural disasters can trigger secondary disasters such as the spill of hazardous chemical materials or the shut-down of electrical power lines leading to blackouts. These secondary technological accidents triggered by a natural disaster event are known as “NaTechs”. NaTech events can occur anywhere where natural and technological hazards co-exist. The management of NaTechs is particularly challenging, since the response to the technological disaster complicates the mitigation and prevention, the preparedness, and the response. Critical infrastructure damage is a central feature of NaTechs. The threat posed by cascading disasters to nations, communities and the environment is a serious challenge.

Based on concrete cases of small-scale national disasters as well as cascading events, this second part of session IV could answer the following questions:

- How do small-scale disasters impact poor communities?
- How is community resilience against small-scale disasters best increased? Role of the OSCE in improving community resilience?

- What is the role of coordination between national and local response units and between governmental and civil-society actors in small-scale disasters?
- How cascading events are best managed? Particularly challenges linked to NaTechs. Interaction between natural and technological disasters; NaTech mapping, NaTech awareness and NaTech Risk Management.

SESSION V

PANEL DEBATE

Role of civil society in disaster risk management.

Selected topics:

- Community-based disaster risk management
- Role of civil society, including business community, and social networks in crisis mapping
- Role of Aarhus Centers to increase awareness of multi-hazard risks in the OSCE region

Effective prevention, preparedness and response to disasters require awareness of and partnerships among local government and the local communities on the risks, causes and the coping mechanisms for natural disasters.

The civil society – NGOs, private sector and academia – is an important stakeholder in integrated disaster risk management. Re-insurance companies play a crucial role in managing the costs of disasters. Civil society organizations can contribute to increasing resilience of communities and nations at large by putting the concerns, needs and priorities of vulnerable people at the heart of DRR policies and practices. Furthermore, civil society organizations can be an integral part of the implementation of local DRR measures.

The potential for DRR understanding from a global, regional, national, sub-national to a local level is heightened by the distribution of information. Crowdsourcing can be an additional disaster risk management tool, particularly for early warning and current risk identification.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What is community-based disaster risk management? What are the ways and means to empower communities to become more resilient to natural hazards?
- What are the responsibilities of national, sub-national and local governments and what are the responsibilities of each individual within disaster risk management?
- What is the role of civil society, including the business community and social networks, in disaster risk management?
- Is there a role for Aarhus Centers in increasing awareness on multi-hazard risks among the population in the OSCE region?
- What is the role women could play as first-line managers of community-based disaster risk management?

CONCLUDING SESSION
PANEL DEBATE

The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum / Outlook / Closing Statements

Selected topics:

- Wrap-up of the discussions. Lessons learned and identifying priority areas for future discussion and increased co-operation.
- Outlook to the Second Preparatory Meeting in Switzerland.

This final panel debate should wrap-up the discussions and to identify the role the OSCE could play with regard to the integrated disaster risk management. The Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the Chairman of the Permanent Council will make their closing statements, give a short preview of the agenda of the 2nd Preparatory Meeting that will take place from 20-21 May 2014 in Switzerland/Montreux and formally close the meeting.

Annex 1 BACKGROUND ON THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

The Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) is the main annual meeting within the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE.

It was established by the 1992 OSCE/CSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Prague, and further defined by the 1992 Helsinki Document, Chapter VII, paragraphs 21 to 32.

The EEF objective is to give political stimulus to the dialogue on economic and environmental issues linked to security and to contribute to the elaboration of specific recommendations and follow-up activities to address these challenges. It also reviews the implementation of the participating States' commitments in the economic and environmental dimension.

Based on Permanent Council Decision 958 of 11 November 2010, the Forum comprises two preparatory meetings and a concluding event.

The annual Forum process brings together representatives from governments of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, OSCE institutions, OSCE field operations, international organizations.

Moreover, subject to provisions contained in Chapter IV, paragraphs 15 and 16, of the 1992 Helsinki Document, civil society representatives - including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and academia – with relevant experience in the area under discussion are also invited to participate at the Forum.

The EEF focuses every year on a theme proposed by the Chairmanship and agreed upon by the 57 participating States.

On 25 of July 2013, the PC decided to dedicate the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum to the theme “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area” (*Decision No. 1088 of 25 July 2013*).

Further readings:

- Consolidated summaries of Economic and Environmental Forum preparatory meetings are available at <http://www.osce.org/eea/66005> and of previous Economic and Environmental Fora at <http://www.osce.org/eea/66004>.
- The OSCE EED factsheet can be accessed at <http://www.osce.org/eea/30348>.
- The OSCE Strategy Document for the EED (2003 Maastricht Document) can be found at <http://www.osce.org/eea/20705>

Annex 2 INTEGRATED DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Mitigation and prevention is a long term commitment that means *inter alia* strengthening institutions, human resources, and infrastructure in order to anticipate the potential risks. Disaster losses can be mitigated – and in some instances even prevented – through integrated disaster risk management.

Preparedness is key to ensuring an effective response to disasters and entails forecasting, early warning and alert systems as well as emergency management procedures (e.g. temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations).

The response delivered in the wake of a disaster concerns the short term management of the after effects (basic needs such as food, shelter, and water sanitation). Coordination of response units (e.g. between civilian and military actors, between different government levels, between international and national emergency relief organizations) is of crucial importance for a rapid and effective response to natural disasters. In the longer term, response to disasters also encompasses the recovery and rehabilitation phases which can provide the opportunity to launch sustainable changes.

Recovery and rehabilitation entails the reconstruction or replacement of severely damaged physical structures incl. the natural environment, the restoration of the (local) economy and the restoration of institutional and social structures. It makes sense to introduce disaster-risk-reduction measures during the recovery phase so as to limit possible losses in the future. These measures take into account the lessons learned from past events. Both recovery and reconstruction efforts should avoid creating new risks and take into account lessons learned from past disasters. Special protection from future damage should be given e.g. when reconstructing critical infrastructures. Recovery and reconstruction measures are thus again preventative measures, completing the circle of integrated risk management.

The concept of resilience addresses the ability of a system (individual, household, and community, state) to resist, absorb, accommodate to, and recover from the effects of shocks and stresses in a timely and efficient manner while undergoing necessary changes. DRR in the frame of resilience building explicitly tackles the root causes of disasters and disaster losses. These include the management of natural resources, land use and land management considerations, maintaining and protection of critical infrastructures or financial assets. The reduction of environmental, social and economic vulnerabilities contributes to the overall resilience of societies. The concept of ‘resilience’ has achieved significant attention on international agendas over the last few years because of a growing recognition that different types of risks and their

negative impacts (e.g. climate change, natural disasters; health, violence and conflict) are interconnected.

Fundamental to the whole integrated risk management cycle are comprehensive risk assessments and evaluations.



Background Paper of the 2014 Swiss OSCE Chairmanship on the

Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

*“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to
promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”*

Montreux, 19 - 21 May 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

This Background Paper is intended to provide participants with information for the second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF), to be held in Montreux on 19-21 May 2014.

For the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum in 2014, the Permanent Council (PC) adopted the theme “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area” in its *Decision No. 1088 of 25 July 2013* (see Annex 1).

The number of intense **natural hazard triggered disasters** (henceforth referred to as “natural disasters”) has increased since the 1950s in every region of the world, sometimes devastating the lives and livelihoods of entire communities. Reduction of disaster risks will contribute to increased security, safety and stability.

Natural disasters severely affect the security and safety of nations and communities. There is a clear need to foster local, national and international capacities for mitigation and prevention, preparedness, forecasting and early warning for, response to, and recovery from natural disasters. Investing in disaster prevention, developing mechanisms for better assistance coordination, raising awareness of the population and increasing the resilience of nations and communities are topics best dealt with in an integrated, holistic approach to disaster risk management. Hence, the OSCE - with its comprehensive, cross-dimensional security concept - is a good platform to discuss this theme.

The agenda of the 22nd EEF will focus on the impact of the following topics on the comprehensive security of the OSCE area:

- Addressing prevention, preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to
- environmental challenges

- Promoting partnerships and initiatives covering environment and safety issues for greater
- preparedness for environmental challenges, in particular by increasing resilience and adaptation to these challenges
- Exchanging good practices relating to preparedness, emergency response and recovery regarding environmental challenges
- Promoting environmental good governance.

The discussions at the Forum will contribute to developing a common view on the role of the OSCE, as a security organization, in the whole disaster risk and crisis management cycle and on how to create synergies with other actors in this field.

The second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd EEF will be divided into two segments: a conference segment, on 20th of May, and field-visits, on 21st of May.

The **conference-segment of the 2nd Preparatory Meeting** will focus primarily on **coping instruments** to better adapt to climate change and to reduce disaster risks at a **local, national, cross-border and international level**. Furthermore, the possible impacts of natural and man-made disasters in the wider scope of the **OSCE's comprehensive approach to security** will be assessed.

The agenda of the conference-segment of the Meeting takes into account two types of sessions:

1. Sessions with **input presentations** (sessions I and III, max. 15 minutes/speaker) to be followed by discussions among the speakers, OSCE participating States, Partners for Cooperation, OSCE institutions and field missions as well as civil society participants.
2. One **panel debate** session (session II; max. 5 minutes/panellist). The main objective of the panel debate is to enable a moderated interactive discussion among the panellists on outstanding questions. The active intervention of OSCE participating States, Partners for Cooperation, OSCE institutions and field missions as well as civil society participants (NGOs, private sector, academia) is strongly encouraged.

For the first time in the history of the Economic and Environmental Forum, a Preparatory Meeting will feature a full day of **field visits**, specifically in the Canton of Valais, a region well-suited to provide onsite insights. This field-segment of the Meeting will focus on integrated disaster risk management (DRM, see Annex 3) with particular emphasis on cross-border cooperation, multi-stakeholder approaches (different administrative levels, different actors from state entities to civil society) and multi-hazard approaches (natural and technical hazards, incl. industrial accidents). Background information on these field visits will be provided in May 2014.

II. SELECTED ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED.

Conference Segment. Tuesday, 20 May 2014

OPENING SESSION

Welcoming Remarks, Keynote Speeches and Opening Statements

The representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office and the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities will open the second Preparatory Meeting and introduce the topic of “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area”. Furthermore, the Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council will shortly review the main results of the first Preparatory Meeting in Vienna.

Two keynote speeches will be delivered that focus on:

- Making cities resilient to disaster and climate risks.
- Nexus between natural disasters and security.

Delegations of OSCE participating States, OSCE Partners for Co-Operation as well as civil society representatives (private sector, NGOs, think tanks, academia) are encouraged to take the floor after the keynote speeches and highlight where they see the main challenges and what the role of the OSCE should be in this regard.

SESSION I

Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level

Selected topics:

- Instruments to reduce disaster and climate change risks at local level: assessing risks, prevention, early warning.
- Nexus between climate change & disaster risk management and the implementation of the UNECE Aarhus convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. Role of the media.
- Past examples of integrated flood risk management: case studies, lessons learned and best practices.

Climate change and the risk of natural disasters are intrinsically linked: it is expected that climate change on the one hand will continue to cause an increase in the frequency and intensity of weather and climatic hazards, and on the other hand will lead to further ecosystem degradation, reduced availability of water and food, and adverse impacts on livelihoods, all of which will reduce the capacities of communities to cope with hazards.

Effective public awareness raising, sharing of information and education on climate change and disaster risks can empower local communities to acquire the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions on how to reduce their vulnerabilities to disasters, enhance their capacity and adapt their livelihoods to withstand current and future risks. The UNECE Convention on Access to

Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, known as the Aarhus Convention, and the network of Aarhus centers, supported by the OSCE, could play a role in promoting the access to information on climate change and disaster risks, facilitating public participation in risk management and related natural resource management, and contributing to increased capacities of communities on disaster risk reduction.

According to estimates of the United Nations University (UNU), the number of people living in areas prone to floods will double in the coming fifty years, reaching almost 2 billion people. Economic losses due to flood disasters in the European Union alone are estimated to surge to 23.5 billion Euros by 2050 according to a report by the Institute for Environmental Studies recently published in *NatureClimate Change*. Driving factors affecting flood risk in terms of frequency and magnitude are climate change, large-scale change in land use, modification of rivers, urbanization, and deforestation, as well as population growth. The concept of integrated flood risk management aims at minimizing vulnerabilities to floods by recognizing both the opportunities provided by flood-prone areas for socioeconomic activities and the associated risks.

This session will focus on coping instruments for disaster risk reduction at a local level.

Questions that could be addressed:

- What are the interlinkages between climate change and natural hazard triggered disasters and what are their implications for security and stability?
- What are the risks and vulnerabilities at local level and what coping and adaptation instruments exist to successfully address climate change and natural disasters at a local level?
- What role can the network of Aarhus Centres and local NGOs play in raising awareness and furthering participation of local communities in addressing climate change and disaster risk challenges?
- What is integrated flood risk management and what structural (dams, floodways, and barriers) and non-structural measures (land use changes, natural resource management, incl. urban planning, restoration of wetlands, public awareness) should be considered for mitigating flood risk in urban and rural environments?
- How can the OSCE address the security challenges associated with the climate change-natural disaster interlinkages?

SESSION II

PANEL DEBATE

Cross-dimensional impacts of natural and man-made disasters

Selected topics:

- Possible impacts of natural and man-made disasters on public security.
- Population movements in the context of natural disasters.
- Approaches to mitigating these effects.

Natural disasters, by increasing resource scarcity, by causing or revealing acute imbalances and social inequities, or by exposing government indifference or incompetence may exacerbate tensions and pre-existing conflicts. The disruption caused by natural disasters can provide favourable economic grounds for criminal activity, while their socio-economic impact can lead to radicalisation and increased activity of armed groups.. At the same time, rapid-onset large-scale and small-scale disasters can provide a window of opportunity to reduce conflict, build capacity and trust, reduce local tensions, and build peace. Disaster risk reduction activities might be conducive to cooperation between different actors and thereby used to promote social cohesion and to reduce conflicts.

According to the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) over 144 million people were displaced by sudden-onset disasters in more than 120 countries between 2008 and 2012 - a number far greater than the number of refugees and IDPs displaced by persecution and conflict. OSCE participating States have been affected by significant disaster-induced displacements (e.g. the United States, mostly due to hurricane Sandy and forest fires; Russia, mostly due to flood disasters; or Italy, due to earthquakes). However, important normative, institutional and organizational gaps exist with regard to dynamics of displacement in the context of natural disasters, including with regard to cross-border movements, and the protection of the concerned populations.

Consolidated findings about the phenomenon as well as a range of adequate tools are urgently needed to protect the rights of people displaced by natural disasters.

This panel will explore the impacts of natural and technological disasters on conflicts and population movements, the challenges encountered in protecting populations as well as existing and potential new responses.

Questions that could be addressed:

- How do natural disasters affect criminality and public security? What is the interplay between disasters and (ongoing or potential) interstate or intrastate tensions? What is the role of efficient and swift response, recovery and reconstruction measures after a disaster on the onset of tensions, the rise of poverty and inequality, and the deterioration of public security?
- In what cases and under which conditions do natural disasters increase the risk of tensions and vice-versa, which conditions of conflicts can exacerbate the vulnerabilities to natural hazards?
- How could effective cross-border disaster risk management build trust and confidence thereby decreasing the risk of tensions and conflicts?
- What are the links between conditions of vulnerability and risks associated with the nexus of natural disasters, conflict and fragility?
- Which population movements can be observed in the context of natural disasters, what protection gaps exist and which responses have been developed so far?
- How can the protection in the context of displacement and natural disasters be strengthened, both internally and with regard to cross-border movements?
- How well is the OSCE prepared to respond to the challenges and how can existing instruments be improved?

Coping measures to reduce disaster risks at international, cross-border and national levels

Selected topics:

- Improving international coordination for environmental emergencies, search and rescue and the use of military and civil defence assets.
- Increasing preparedness for cross-border implications (OSCE Self-Assessment Tool).
- Strengthening the capacity of national coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction in the OSCE region.

Through the many international networks and partnerships for environmental emergencies, search and rescue and the use of military and civil defense assets (e.g. International Search and Rescue Advisory Group - INSARAG, United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination - UNDAC, and others), bilateral and multilateral cooperation has increased, resulting in greater synergies and enhanced quality of preparedness for response and delivery of assistance when disasters happen. These individual networks have produced effective normative guidance. In addition, well recognized and highly utilized preparedness and response tools such as the INSARAG External Classification System (certification of Urban Search and Rescue teams) have been developed. The outputs and impact of these tools demonstrate the added-value of inter-organizational networking around issues of common interest. A disaster-affected State has the primary responsibility to respond to emergencies and to co-ordinate its assistance. Should a crisis situation exceed national capacities, the affected State should seek international and/or regional assistance to address the needs of the affected persons, and should coordinate, regulate and monitor disaster relief and recovery assistance provided by assisting actors on their territory. In 2013, the OSCE published a self-assessment tool for nations to increase preparedness for cross-border implications for crisis. This guide is aimed at national agencies of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation who would deal with cross-border movements following a crisis. Strengthened capacities of coordination mechanisms or National Platforms are essential to define policies, plans and programs for disaster risk reduction and to coordinate activities for implementation.

This session will assess and seek to define what role the OSCE could play in this vital context. National Platforms are multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral mechanisms that serve as a forum to facilitate the interaction of and coordination between the ministries, disaster risk reduction related institutions, civil society, and academia. They support national consultation and consensus building, the identification of priorities for disaster risk reduction, the formulation of policies and overall monitoring of disaster risk reduction implementation at the national and local levels.

This session will focus on coping instruments for disaster risk reduction at international, cross-border and national levels.

Questions that could be addressed:

- How best to ensure synergy and inter-operability between regional and global networks and partnerships? How could the local, regional and global efforts be coordinated best?

- Is there a role for OSCE in creating effective coordination mechanisms for these networks and partnerships at a regional level?
- How could participating States of the OSCE advocate at the strategic level among resource providers and in policy decision-making fora for better synergy between local, regional and global networks and partnerships for preparedness and response?
- How the self-assessment tool can be best implemented in a cross-border context? What could the role of OSCE-Secretariat be in spreading the OSCE self-assessment tool?
- What possible role could OSCE play in promoting DRR governance? Should the OSCE play a role in increasing preparedness for cross-border implications?
- How could the lack of communication and awareness on the operational, policy and donor level be resolved?
- How should the OSCE and participating States contribute to the preparatory process towards the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in Sendai in 2015?

CONCLUDING SESSION

Concluding Discussion / Closing Statements

Selected topics:

- Wrap-up.
- Outlook to the Concluding Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague.
- Organizational remarks concerning field visits on 21 May 2014.
- Closing Statements.

The Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the Chairman of the Permanent Council will make their closing statements, wrap-up the discussion and give a short preview of the agenda of the Concluding Meeting that will take place from 10-12 September 2014 in Prague (Czech Republic). A representative of a think tank will reflect upon the possible role of the OSCE in the areas discussed during the day. An expert from the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment will provide an outlook for the field visits taking place the following day and give some logistical and organizational indications. After the closing statements of the participating states, the meeting will be formally closed.

III. SELECTED ISSUES TO BE VIEWED. FIELD VISIT SEGMENT. WEDNESDAY, 21MAY 2014

FIELD VISIT 1

Cross-border cooperation in applied disaster risk management along the transnational route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard (Italy – Switzerland)



Transit route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard,
Swiss side

The route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard over the Alps is a significant transit route linking Italy and Switzerland. It is part of the *Via Francigena* and had been used long before by the Romans as a road to the north. In mediaeval times the *Via Francigena* became an important trade and pilgrimage route. It has been designated a “Major Cultural Route of the Council of Europe”.

Nowadays, the route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard is often affected by a variety of natural hazards. Risk management relates therefore not only to transport safety, but also to a number of Alpine settlements.

Field visit 1 will provide insights into applied integrated disaster risk management, including the Italian-Swiss cooperation, early warning systems related to hazards and risks in a narrow alpine corridor, protection measures against different natural hazards (debris flows, rockfalls, snow avalanches), traffic control and tunnel safety.

FIELD VISIT 2

Management of natural and technical risks (floodplain of the river Rhone)



Floodplain of river Rhone, upper
Rhone valley

The first reported natural hazard of Switzerland is the *Tauredunum* landslide on the river Rhone in 563 AD that had produced a wave of up to 16 meters high reaching lake Geneva. Depending the season, the volume of water conducted by the river Rhone varies significantly. Nowadays, river Rhone is an important economic factor and supplier of energy. The Rhone's plain is endangered by floods from the Rhone and its tributaries, earthquakes (the Canton of Valais is the region with the greatest seismic threat in Switzerland) and also by natural-hazard triggered industrial accidents.

Field visit 2 will provide insights into applied integrated disaster risk management, including the 3rd river Rhone correctional training works, monitoring and warning systems, earthquake retrofitting measures, emergency plans and precautionary measures.

Annex 1 BACKGROUND ON THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

A detailed information brochure on the field visits will be made available to all participants in electronic form in May 2014. Printed versions will be available at the Meeting in Montreux.

The Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) is the main annual meeting within the Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE. It was established by the 1992 OSCE/CSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Prague, and further defined by the 1992 Helsinki Document, Chapter VII, paragraphs 21 to 32. The EEF's objective is to give political stimulus to the dialogue on economic and environmental issues linked to security and to contribute to the elaboration of specific recommendations and follow-up activities to address these challenges. It also reviews the implementation of the participating States' commitments in the economic and environmental dimension.

Based on Permanent Council Decision 958 of 11 November 2010, the EEF cycle comprises two preparatory meetings and a concluding event. The annual EEF process brings together representatives from governments of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, OSCE institutions, OSCE field operations, international organizations.

Moreover, subject to provisions contained in Chapter IV, paragraphs 15 and 16, of the 1992 Helsinki Document, civil society representatives - including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and academia – with relevant experience in the area under discussion are also invited to participate at the Forum.

The EEF focuses every year on a theme proposed by the Chairmanship and agreed upon by the 57 participating States.

Further readings:

- The documents of the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum are available at http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep2
- The consolidated summary of the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum as well as all documents and speaker's presentations are available at http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep1
- The Document for the Concluding Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague will be available at http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_2014
- Consolidated summaries of previous Economic and Environmental Forum preparatory meetings are available at <http://www.osce.org/eea/66005> and of previous Economic and Environmental Fora (concluding meetings) at <http://www.osce.org/eea/66004>
- The OSCE EED factsheet can be accessed at <http://www.osce.org/eea/30348>
- The OSCE Strategy Document for the EED (2003 Maastricht Document) can be found at <http://www.osce.org/eea/20705>

Annex 2 PC.DECISION No. 1088 (*in this document to be found in Annex 1*)

Annex 3 INTEGRATED DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Mitigation and prevention is a long term commitment that means *inter alia* strengthening institutions, human resources, and infrastructure in order to anticipate and reduce the potential risks. Disaster losses can be mitigated – and in some instances even prevented – through

integrated disaster risk management. Preparedness is key to ensuring an effective response to disasters and entails forecasting, early warning and alert systems as well as emergency management procedures (e.g. temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations). The response delivered in the wake of a disaster concerns the short term management of the after effects (basic needs such as food, shelter, and water sanitation). Coordination of response units (e.g. between civilian and military actors, between different government levels, between international and national emergency relief organizations) is of crucial importance for a rapid and effective response to natural disasters. Recovery and rehabilitation entails the reconstruction or replacement of severely damaged physical structures incl. the natural environment, the restoration of the (local) economy and the restoration of institutional and social structures. It makes sense to introduce disaster-risk-reduction measures during the recovery phase so as to limit possible losses in the future. These measures take into account the lessons learned from past events. Both recovery and reconstruction efforts should avoid creating new risks. Special protection from future damage should be given e.g. when reconstructing critical infrastructures. Recovery and reconstruction measures are thus again preventive measures, completing the circle of integrated risk management. The concept of resilience addresses the ability of a system (individual, household, community, state) to resist, absorb, accommodate to, and recover from the effects of shocks and stresses in a timely and efficient manner while undergoing necessary changes. DRR in the frame of resilience building explicitly tackles the root causes of disasters and disaster losses. These include the management of natural resources, land use and land management considerations, maintaining and protection of critical infrastructures or financial assets. The reduction of environmental, social and economic vulnerabilities contributes to the overall resilience of societies. The concept of 'resilience' has achieved significant attention on international agendas over the last few years because of a growing recognition that different types of risks and their negative impacts (e.g. climate change, natural disasters; health, violence and conflict) are inter-connected.

The term adaptation denotes the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Adaptation can occur in autonomous fashion, for example through market changes, or as a result of intentional adaptation policies and plans. Many disaster risk reduction measures can directly contribute to better adaptation. Fundamental to the whole integrated risk management cycle are comprehensive risk assessments and evaluations.

Annex 4 OSCE DOCUMENTS AND EVENTS ABOUT DISASTERS

The topic of natural disasters/accidents has been emphasized several times in documents by OSCE participating States, *inter alia*:

- In the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 under Chapter 4 (Science and Technology), the *"study and forecasting of earthquakes and associated geological changes; development and research of technology of seism-resisting construction"*, as well as *"human adaptation to climatic extremes"* is agreed as a topic of co-operation.

- At the Meeting on the Protection of the Environment of the CSCE in Sofia in 1989, participating States stressed the need to prevent and control the transboundary effects of industrial accidents and recommended *"consultation and exchange of information on the prevention and control of*

industrial accidents and their transboundary effects”, the “mutual assistance, co-operation and coordination including emergency response for the implementation of measures to control the effects of industrial accidents” and to enhance the scientific and technological co-operation for “emergency response, including criteria for the monitoring and assessment of transboundary damage”.

- At the Helsinki Summit in 1992, the ministers agreed that *“the participating States will work towards the development of policies aimed at increasing environmental awareness and educating citizens to reduce the risks of natural and technological disasters, as well as preparing appropriate actions when such disasters occur”*. Furthermore, participating States encouraged exchange of information *“on early warning and assistance in environmental emergencies”*, to designate national *“task forces, which could co-ordinate the dissemination of relevant information on expertise and equipment to countries facing emergencies”* and to connect the UN Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance to the *“CSCE communications network, which could serve as a supplementary information system in emergency situations”*.

- At the Ministerial Council of Budapest in 1995, MC decision 2/95 on *“A Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-first Century- A New Concept for a New Security”* participating States decided that the Chairman-in-Office will organize the work *inter alia* by *“co-operation in solving environmental problems and managing disasters”* (Annex to MC Dec. 2/95).

- At the Istanbul Summit, in 1999, participating States declared that given *“the major impact of natural disasters (...) we need to strengthen the international community’s ability to respond to such events, by improving the co-ordination of the efforts of participating States, international organizations and NGOs”*.

- At the Ministerial Council in Porto, in 2002, the Ministerial Declaration (MC(10).JOUR/2) referred to the catastrophe caused by the loss of the oil tanker Prestige and called *“on participating States, the International Maritime Organization and other relevant international organizations to enhance their efforts to ensure the protection of the marine environment against such disasters by strengthening co-operation on the prevention, reduction and control of pollution by oil on the basis of full respect for international law”*.

- The OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council, in 2003, noted that *“ecological disasters resulting from natural causes, economic activities or terrorist acts may also pose a serious threat to stability and security”* and demanded that *“(…) environmental threats, including risks of natural and manmade disasters (...) should be identified in a timely fashion and tackled by the common efforts of the participating States”*.

- Equally in the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial Council, in 2003, the participating States affirmed that *“environmental degradation, unsustainable use of natural resources, mismanagement of wastes and pollution affect ecological systems and have a substantial negative impact on the health, welfare, stability and security of States. Ecological disasters may also have such effects”*.

- At the Ministerial Council in Sofia in 2004, MC decision 17/04 on the OSCE and its Partners for Cooperation, the OSCE referred to the *“possibility to exchange views on how Civil Military Emergency Planning (CMEP) activities could serve as a confidence- and security-building measure with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-Operation”*.

- In the Ministerial Declaration on the 20th anniversary of the Disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (MC.DOC/3/05) in Ljubljana in 2005, the participating States stressed *“how important it is for the international community to develop and apply commonly agreed policies and strategies to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the prevention of, and response to, technological accidents and their consequences for human beings and the environment”*.

- In the 2005 MC Decision 02/05 on Border Security and Management Concept the *“facilitation of cross-border co-operation in case of natural disasters or serious accidents in border zones”* is being encouraged.

- The OSCE Forum for Security Co-Operation (FSC) called in FSC Decision 16, 2007 on Extended Dialogue with the OSCE Partners for Cooperation in Civil-Military emergency preparedness *“upon the participating States to remain seized of this matter and continue to engage OSCE partners for Co-operation in dialogue on a bilateral basis on co-operation in activities relating to Civil Military Emergency Planning (CMEP)”*

- In the 2007 Declaration on Environment and Security adopted at the Madrid Ministerial Meeting the participating States referred to *“the environmental risks, notably those related to land degradation, soil contamination, desertification and water management, and the environmental impact of natural and man-made disasters, such as the Chernobyl accident, which may have a substantial impact on security in the OSCE region and which might be more effectively addressed within the framework of multilateral co-operation”* and highlighted that *“environmental degradation, including both natural and man-made disasters, and their possible impact on migratory pressures, could be a potential additional contributor to conflict. Climate change may magnify these environmental challenges”*. They noted that *“the OSCE could raise awareness on the potential impact on security of environmental challenges, by using its forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences and best practices and also by integrating these considerations into its activities”*.

- At the Ministerial Council in Helsinki, in 2008, MC decision No. 9/08 on the Follow-up to the 16. Economic and Environmental Forum on Maritime and Inland Waterways Co-Operation, participating States recognized the *“need to step up regional, subregional and inter-regional efforts, in particular in addressing the challenges and opportunities related to (...) emergency situations and the need for joint emergency responses”*.

- At the Ministerial Council in Athens, in 2009, MC decision No. 5/09 on Migration Management, the Ministers recognized that *“the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons throughout the OSCE area, including resulting from conflicts, violations of human rights and natural or human-made disasters, requires enhanced co-operation of all participating States and concerted action”*.

- At the 2011 Ministerial Council in Vilnius, MC decision 03/11 on Elements of the Conflict Cycle, the Ministers noted within the “Elements of the Conflict Cycle” that *“threats to environmental security, including environmental degradation, natural and man-made disasters and their possible impact on migratory pressures, could be potential contributors to conflict”*.

- At the 2013 Ministerial Council in Kyiv, on MC decision 5/13, on “Improving the Environmental Footprint of Energy-related Activities in the OSCE Region” tasked *“the OSCE executive structures, within their mandates, to further follow the cross dimensional aspects of the environmental impact of energy-related activities when exacerbated by natural or man-made disasters, and to assist participating States upon their request in making best use of the OSCE as a platform for a broad dialogue, co-operation, exchange of information and sharing of best practices on these aspects”*.

- At the same Ministerial Council, MC decision 6/13 on “Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-made Disasters” decided to protect energy networks from natural and man-made disasters thereby encouraging participating States *“to consider necessary measures, including the identification and assessment of risks, countermeasures and relevant procedures, at the national and local level, to increase protection of energy networks from natural and man-made disasters”* and *“States, in the context of attaining sustainable development, to implement integrated environmental and natural resource management approaches that incorporate disaster preparedness and risk reduction, in order to obviate adverse effects on energy networks”* and tasking the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities *“to identify opportunities for co-operation with international organizations and regional organizations and agencies in the field of protection of energy networks against natural and man-made disasters and to facilitate discussions on possible areas for co-operation”* and *“to facilitate the exchange of good practices, technological innovations and the sharing of information on effective preparedness for, and responses to, disaster risks to energy networks without duplicating activities already carried out by other relevant international organizations”*.

A series of **events in the field of natural and man-made disasters** have taken place in the past years under OSCE guidance, *inter alia*:

- An OSCE-led Environmental Assessment Mission to fire-affected territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region in October 2006, in order to assess the short-term and long-term impact of the fires on the environment in the fire-affected territories;

- A seminar on “New Challenges and Crisis Management: Demobilization, Disarmament, Rehabilitation, Disasters and Disruption – EU and OSCE response” in November 2006 in Vienna, in co-operation *inter alia* with the Austrian Institute for International Affairs and the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management;

- A joint OSCE/UNEP Environmental Assessment Mission to Georgia in October 2008, investigating *inter alia* the impacts of forest fires around the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park and the oil spills in the port of Poti;

- A Lithuanian OSCE Chairmanship Event in May 2011 in Vienna called “V to V Ambassadorial Meeting on Challenges posed by Natural and Man-made Disasters and the Coordinated Response

of the International Community”, addressing the activities of the OSCE in disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction and response, multilateral environmental agreements and their role in disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction and response in the OSCE area, good practices in disaster relief, and safety of sensitive infrastructure from disasters;

- A workshop organized by the OCEEA on “International Response to Major Natural and Man-made Disasters: The Role of the OSCE” in September 2012 in Vienna with the aim to facilitate the exchange of best practices in the area of national and multilateral international civil emergency response to major disasters, to review the activities of existing multilateral and regional structures in the sphere of natural and manmade disasters civil emergency response, and address major challenges to the international civil emergency response to natural and man-made disasters;

- In March 2013 the OSCE Centre in Astana together with UNISDR organized a “Regional Conference on Reducing Disaster Risks” in Almaty in the context of the post-2015 disaster risk reduction Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA);

- The Border Management Unit of the OSCE TNT Department organized in June 2013 a Seminar on the “Development of a Self-assessment Guide for Nations to increase Preparedness for Cross-Borders Implications of Natural Disasters and Crisis”. The guide contributes to overall response preparedness by promoting existing tools and pointing national authorities to international and regional assistance frameworks. The document compiles expertise from various organizations working on different aspects of disaster response, and thus offers States a comprehensive overview of relevant aspects when preparing for cross-border implications of natural disasters and crises.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



EEF.GAL/15/14
5 June 2014
OSCE+
ENGLISH only

Chairmanship's Perception Paper
on the outcomes of the two Preparatory Meetings of the
22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

***"Responding to environmental challenges with a view to
promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area"***

On 27-28 January 2014 (http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep1) and on 20-21 May 2014 (http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep2) the two Preparatory Meetings of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) took place to prepare the ground for the Concluding Meeting of the Forum in Prague on 10-12 September 2014 (http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_2014).

Prior to the two meetings, Background Papers of the Chairmanship (EEF.GAL/3/14 and EEF.GAL/10/14) were circulated that included, *inter alia*, an overview of all the decisions, declarations, documents and main events of the OSCE related to the topic of natural and man-made disasters.

Thanks to the rapporteurs, comprehensive consolidated summaries of the two meetings have been (EEF.Gal/9/14/Rev.1) and will be prepared and distributed by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

The severe flooding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia in May 2014 that resulted in casualties and injuries, and left hundreds of thousands of people homeless and without electricity or drinking water was another powerful reminder of the relevance of this year's topic for the OSCE participating States.

The Chairmanship would summarize the main outcomes of the two Preparatory Meetings including the key suggestions and recommendations made by participants as follows:

i. **Natural disasters are not "natural".** Natural hazards can only trigger disasters due to exposure and vulnerability of human societies. Disaster risk is the product of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and lack of capacity. Risks of natural disasters can therefore be reduced through efforts to reduce vulnerabilities, hazards and the exposure to hazards, and to increase knowledge and capacity. Furthermore, humanity has a major impact on the main drivers of disaster risk such as environmental degradation, climate change, inappropriate land use and urban development planning, poor construction quality/missing building codes, rapid population growth, increased disparity and the lack of imposition of the rule of law, all of which create vulnerable societies.

ii. The **number of natural disasters and their overall impact is increasing**, thus posing a serious threat to the security of the OSCE participating States while at the same time the mortality rate is decreasing *inter alia* thanks to better early-warning, preparedness and response measures. It has been highlighted that there is a great potential to decrease the impact and mortality rate through better prevention of disasters.

iii. Pursuing a comprehensive risk management approach, including disaster risks, is in accordance with the **multi- and cross-dimensional nature of the OSCE**. Disaster risk management is therefore relevant for the OSCE's overall security agenda.

iv. Disasters and conflict can have a direct **impact on all three security dimensions**. On the one hand, **natural disasters can lead to increased tensions** and aggravate pre-existing conflicts. Furthermore, **environmental challenges can lead to migration and displacement of persons**; and uncontrolled migration can increase vulnerability to natural hazards. On the other hand, addressing common environmental challenges presents an opportunity for cooperation among participating States.

v. Environmental challenges, including climate change and disasters, do not respect national borders. Incidences with cross-border impacts are particularly challenging to adequately address. On the positive side, co-operation between nations and communities in **transboundary disaster risk reduction** (e.g. coordinated risk assessment, aid and rescue coordination) and the opportunities that cross-border response to shared threats and hazards offer to **build trust and confidence** among OSCE participating States were highlighted. The **OSCE**, *inter alia* through **its field operations** and through its partnership within the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) would be well placed to **assist participating States in cross-border co-operation in disaster risk management**.

vi. The OSCE Secretariat through the OSCE **self-assessment tool** (<http://www.osce.org/borders/104490>) could assist participating States in implementing increased prevention and preparation for cross-border implications.

vii. The **gap between insured (20-30%) and total losses** remains important, contributing to the severe impacts disasters often have on the economy/GDP of a country. This reflects a major **lack of financial resilience**. It was underlined that a combination of layered financial risk management tools providing financial resources in post-disaster situations (such as credit opportunities, access to social funds, remittances, national and international aid) as well as public-private-partnerships (e.g. risk transfer solutions supported by the public and private sectors) could respond to this challenge.

viii. **Small-scale and slow-onset disasters** should not be neglected over extreme and extraordinary events that dominate the public perception; indeed their frequency and their impact contribute a major share to the total losses due to disasters.

ix. Disasters tend to disproportionately affect the most **vulnerable of a society**, including children, women, the elderly, the poor, and the disabled. Measures to adequately consider the special needs of these groups and to reduce their vulnerabilities and exposure should represent a main focus.

x. There is **interdependency between natural hazard-triggered disasters and technological/industrial accidents**: natural disasters might impact critical infrastructure, leading to technological/technical accidents. The need to better combine natural and technical risk mapping was repeatedly stressed.

xi. **Climate change** will likely affect the frequency and severity of disasters and should therefore be seen as one of the drivers of hazards. Furthermore, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation policies share common goals and contribute to security and stability within and across borders, and hence ought to be coordinated.

xii. The importance of an **integrated multi-hazard disaster risk management approach** that includes prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery lay at the core of all endeavours. In this context, many participants underlined the necessity to **shift the focus from reactive to proactive measures** and to put emphasis on reducing vulnerabilities and underlying causes. It was noted that financing preventive measures should be seen as an investment rather than a cost. It was shown, that the **OSCE**, *inter alia* through its activities within the ENVSEC Initiative, has **accumulated expertise** in the past years in assisting countries in how to better prevent and prepare against wildfires and floods. Specifically, the OSCE could serve as a platform for dialogue and exchange of best practices between experts on a regional level in regions where the OSCE is best placed to fulfil that role.

xiii. Disaster risk management must entail a **multi-level approach** (international, national, regional and local level), the integration of the **local community level** was highlighted in particular. Several participants put forward that the OSCE could support participating States in raising risk awareness of local communities and promoting **community-based disaster risk reduction** e.g. through the **Aarhus Centers network**.

xiv. Disaster risk management should involve a **multi-stakeholder approach** where both governmental, civil society and private sectors co-operate and co-ordinate among each other. In particular, the importance of a stronger inclusion of the **business community** to build **public-private-partnerships** in disaster risk management and the key role **local civil society** organization can play was stressed.

xv. A recurrent theme was the need for better co-ordination especially between environmental, planning and emergency ministries. In general it was stressed that **climate change adaptation and disaster risk management should be mainstreamed** in the elaboration and implementation of policies of all concerned government ministries (including for sustainable development) and in all relevant projects and activities (e.g. in the agriculture & food, health, water & sanitation, or housing sectors) of other relevant stakeholders. Along this line, **the OSCE and its field operations** should integrate a systematic analysis of climate change and disaster risk implications in their programming, where appropriate.

xvi. It was mentioned that the OSCE should support the implementation of already existing frameworks, principles and standards (e.g. the Oslo Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets or the Military and Civil Defence Assets Guidelines).

xvii. Some participants referred to the importance of **good governance and transparency** for a sound implementation of disaster risk management.

xviii. **Access to technical innovations and modern ICT applications** is a prerequisite for state-of-the-art disaster risk management. Several participants complained about the lack of modernized ICT and its accessibility, while some deplored that well-developed tools remain underutilized.

xix. The importance of the **Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR)** in Sendai in 2015, the **post-Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)**, as well as the **post-2015 agenda on sustainable development** was repeatedly stressed. The security implications of climate change and natural disasters were highlighted. The need for stronger links between climate change adaption and disaster risk reduction both at policy and practical level was underlined. It was suggested that the **OSCE should become involved in these global discussions and should feed into the process in the lead-up to WCDRR.**

xx. Several participants pointed to the fact that many OSCE participating States are major international donors and stressed therefore the responsibility of OSCE participating States to show **solidarity beyond the OSCE borders.**

xxi. The number of international and regional actors in disaster risk management is high. It was generally agreed that the **OSCE should avoid duplicating activities** in areas where other and better placed institutions are already leading efforts. The OSCE should rather study how to **fit into existing initiatives** and how to best cooperate and support major institutions. This does not preclude that the OSCE could play a role in specific niches, where the organization could have a comparative advantage. A natural entry point for the OSCE would be security and stability aspects linked to disaster risk management.

Based on these outcomes, the Chairmanship proposes to deepen *inter alia* the following issues at the Concluding Meeting in Prague:

a. Current discussions on the global Disaster Risk Reduction agenda, such as the WCDRR, the discussions for a post-HFA framework, and the negotiations on how to integrate disaster risk reduction in the post-2015 agenda on sustainable development, as well as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and their implications for the OSCE should be addressed by the Concluding Meeting. The OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum should positively contribute to these discussions with a security perspective and, as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, prepare the ground for these important processes. Furthermore, with the support of the participating states, an OSCE side event on the margin of the WCDRR could be envisaged.

b. In particular, by reviewing the implementation of the current OSCE commitments and by further assessing the concrete needs in the different regions of the OSCE area, the Concluding Meeting should identify further steps and commitments to be taken by the OSCE and its participating States. In all sessions spotlight shall be given to identifying the role, if any, of the OSCE and how it can best contribute to further enhance the safety and security of its citizens through cooperation.

c. An in-depth discussion about modern ICT-application in disaster risk management and the presentation of examples of valuable tools and public-private partnerships is needed. A possible role for the OSCE as a knowledge-sharing platform of such tools should be examined in this context.

d. The potential role of the OSCE in cross-dimensional issues of environmental challenges (e.g. the nexus between disasters and conflicts as well as disasters and population movements, and linkages between climate change, natural disasters and security) should be further explored. Emphasis could be given to slow-onset disasters that are often forgotten but carry the risk of affecting the security of people by fuelling local and regional tensions.

e. The ultimate goal of an integrated disaster risk management approach is to further strengthen the resilience of our societies. The concept of resilience and what it entails in its broad sense should be better understood.

OPENING and CLOSING REMARKS

CONCLUDING MEETING OF THE 22nd ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Welcoming remarks

by H.E. Lubomír Zaorálek

**Minister of Foreign Affairs
Czech Republic**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished Guests,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you in Prague on the occasion of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. I would most sincerely like to welcome the President of the Swiss Confederation and the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter, the Secretary-General Lamberto Zannier, the representatives of the fifty-seven participating States in the OSCE, members of the OSCE Secretariat, as well as the representatives of Partners for Cooperation and of international organizations and other participants in this meeting.

At the outset, let me take this opportunity to thank the Swiss Chairmanship and the OSCE for all the efforts in assisting to solve the crisis in and around Ukraine. The recent developments are of deep concern to us. The security situation within the OSCE area has drastically deteriorated since we gathered in this forum last year. What is at stake are the established fundamental principles that have provided a solid cornerstone for our area in the last almost 40 years. As we know from our own history, it is very easy to destroy trust and it takes years to rebuild it again. Therefore I reiterate the urgent need for a sustainable political solution based on respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence. In this regard, I welcome Friday's agreement in Minsk on a ceasefire and on launching a political process to resolve the crisis, with the assistance of the OSCE. Let me also express my wish that, also in view of the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, the fundamental OSCE principles will be yet again reconfirmed and built upon by the participating States.

Let me now turn to the theme of our today's gathering and thank the Swiss Chairmanship for all the efforts that made the First and the Second Preparatory Meetings of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum successful. The present concluding meeting will enable us to consider again environmental challenges as a means to greater cooperation and security in the OSCE area. The previous discussions held in Vienna and in Montreux revealed the paramount importance of an efficient Disaster Risk Management at the international level. Nowadays the disaster risk is growing simultaneously with the ongoing climate changes, global warming and increasing human interaction with nature. Therefore, we hope that the open discussion we are going to hold during the next three days will lead to concrete outcomes.

Environmental challenges often overpass national borders. It is important that the OSCE promote trans-boundary cooperation since a lot is to be improved in the area of harmonization and

simplification. In general, a closer cooperation between the OSCE countries in Disaster Risk Management is desirable. Networking, promoting the dialogue with different stakeholders including the civil society and exchange of information, experience and knowledge can only increase the OSCE countries' resilience to natural and human-made disasters.

However, the OSCE's role is not only to promote cooperation between countries. The OSCE could also make an effort to enhance the participating States' capacity for prevention, response and recovery from environmental disasters. The Economic and Environmental Forum could have an impact on capacity building of the OSCE countries if it called for specific measures. The EEF could require an increase in the awareness of disaster risks among populations, promote the role of local authorities in prevention mechanisms or try to involve the private sector.

I would like to stress again the importance of Disaster Risk Management for security and stability in the OSCE region. If we succeed in reducing disaster risk and in enhancing our capacity to respond effectively to environmental challenges, it will contribute to greater security of populations. Furthermore, close cooperation in the field of Disaster Risk Management can act as an influential Confidence-Building Measure.

In conclusion, let me once again express again my thanks to the Swiss Chairmanship and also wish much success to the upcoming Serbian Chairmanship.

Hoping that the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum will give rise to a productive and enriching debate, I would like to wish you a pleasant stay in Prague.

Thank you for your attention.

Opening Address

by H.E. Didier Burkhalter

**Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE
Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs**

“More Economic and Environmental Cooperation for More Security in Europe”

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is a pleasure and an honour for me to open the 22nd edition of the Economic and Environmental Forum.

On behalf of the OSCE, I would like to thank the Czech authorities – in particular Foreign Minister Lubomír Zaorálek – for the warm welcome and for hosting the OSCE in this magnificent palace, year after year.

A hallmark of the OSCE is its comprehensive security approach. The notion that cooperation in a broad range of issues is essential for enhancing security in Europe and rendering it indivisible goes back to the Helsinki Final Act.

Today, this notion is more relevant than ever. We need comprehensive measures to address the complex and often transnational security challenges in our globalized world. With its broad set of tools for preventing and resolving conflicts, the OSCE is well positioned to make relevant contributions in this regard.

There is of course still considerable room for improvement in order to enhance the organization's capacity to act. This holds true for all three dimensions of the OSCE's work – the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension, and the human dimension. Switzerland is committed to strengthening the role and clout of the OSCE, and we will pursue this goal beyond our Chairmanship year.

The economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE has traditionally been somewhat in the shadow of the other two dimensions. The Ukraine crisis with its economic underpinnings is a stark reminder of how important the economic aspects of security are – not just for the stability of Europe but also for the well-being of the people.

My main message to you today is that there is a strong case for making more use of the OSCE to strengthen cooperative security in the economic and environmental fields.

We, the participating States, should further engage in order to develop and reinforce the activities undertaken both by the Secretariat – in particular the Office of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities – and by the OSCE field operations in this area.

One specific field where the Swiss Chairmanship is promoting the logic of cooperation concerns the effective prevention and response to natural disasters. We are gathered here to discuss how we can best move forward in this field, and I will outline the Chairmanship's position on this in a minute.

But let me first elaborate on why we think there is a need for more economic and environmental cooperation in general.

The Helsinki Final Act made the case for developing cooperation in the fields of trade, industry, science and technology, the environment and other areas of economic activity as a means to reinforcing peace and security in Europe. Participating States also undertook to work towards the widest possible harmonization of international standards and technical regulations to that end.

Implementation work on these issues within the OSCE framework has remained limited to this day – more so in the economic field than in the environmental field, but much more could be done in both.

During the Cold War, the division of Europe was an obvious reason for the limited progress. A second reason is that economic and environmental issues have traditionally been predominantly addressed elsewhere.

This holds particularly true for the economic realm. The landscape of relevant international institutions speaks for itself: There are specialized organizations like the WTO and the OECD for questions concerning international trade and the international economic order. And there is the EU, which has been at the forefront of efforts to structure economic relations in Europe beyond its borders.

I am not suggesting that the OSCE should seek to pick up any of the functions of these organizations. The OSCE is a security organization – the world's largest regional security organization –, and it should stay that way.

But the fact is that there are economic border lines and frictions within the OSCE area that have contributed to the rapid decrease in security we have witnessed in Europe in the past few months. The OSCE as a pan-European organization could and should be a platform for addressing some of these problems and finding ways of mitigating them in cooperative ways.

Since the early 1990s, the EU and Russia have attempted to create a joint economic framework. There was a "Partnership and Co-operation Agreement". There was also the project of the "Common European Economic Space" that was jointly launched by Brussels and Moscow. There were ideas such as a free-trade zone from Vancouver to Vladivostok, an energy partnership and a pan-European transport infrastructure.

All these initiatives have failed to materialize. Today, we have two different integration schemes, the European Union and the Eurasian Union. These two schemes are difficult to reconcile in terms of standards and regulations. They have also come to stand in political competition to each other.

The lack of a stable pan-European economic order and the broader estrangement between Russia and the West over the past decade have contributed to the Ukrainian crisis and to the related crisis of European security. Conversely, the deteriorating security environment and the application of the political instrument of sanctions have had major negative *economic* effects – on everyone involved. The link between security and economics is manifold.

It is precisely at the interface of security and economics that the OSCE should play a bigger role.

How to render Ukraine a trade bridge rather than a trade frontier must be worked out in the ongoing trilateral talks between Ukraine, Russia, and the EU. But implementing any solution will likely require accompanying measures to rebuild confidence and assure verification of commitments through transparency and impartial monitoring and reporting. This is one area where the OSCE could play a role.

Applying traditional OSCE instruments such as confidence-building measures and monitoring to economic challenges may reflect out-of-the-box thinking at this stage. But such ideas are worth exploring. We may well conclude that building up such kinds of capacities within the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE could make a vital contribution to strengthening pan-European security and stability.

Irrespective of whether and when such OSCE measures come into play, there is much scope for using the OSCE as a platform for dialogue on the economy-security nexus. The OSCE can contribute to efforts to return to shared perspectives on economic cooperation and build bridges between integration schemes. It can serve as a reference frame for the 57 participating States to identify ways of strengthening pan-European connectivity through cooperation, and this well beyond the economic field.

None of this will happen overnight. But it is time for a thorough discussion on these issues. The Ukraine crisis has demonstrated how important they are.

Concerning Ukraine, let me add here that I strongly welcome the ceasefire agreed by the parties in Minsk last Friday. The agreement marks a real opportunity to finally reverse the logic of escalation. The OSCE remains fully committed to helping de-escalate and resolve the crisis.

The Swiss Chairmanship has been involved in the efforts that led to this agreement from the outset through Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini who represents the CiO in the Trilateral Contact Group. It remains a priority for us to actively support dialogue aimed at sustaining the ceasefire and launching a political process in accordance with the Minsk protocol. In this context, we are also ready to facilitate and host any meeting between Ukraine and Russia at the presidential level.

A second current priority of the OSCE is to expand the Special Monitoring Mission and rapidly adapt it to the new monitoring needs arising from the ceasefire. More than 70 specialists are now in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions to monitor the ceasefire. Further monitors are being recruited and deployed as we speak.

The SMM has also established a clearing house mechanism among the parties to deal with reported violations of the ceasefire and other incidences. Moreover, discussions are underway on possibilities of integrating as soon as possible national drones as in-kind contributions by

participating States into the SMM monitoring scheme. OSCE-owned drones will also be deployed soon.

Finally, a third priority concerns the OSCE's assistance with the broader processes of reconciliation and reform in Ukraine. One major contribution the OSCE can make is to support inclusive political dialogue within Ukraine. Public debates on all issues relevant to bringing back peace and stability to Ukraine, including decentralization and reconstruction, will be an important way of rebuilding trust and fostering a sense of common purpose.

The Chairmanship has made all necessary preparations to nominate a Special Representative and provide mediation expertise in support of any such dialogue formats in Ukraine.

Ladies and gentlemen

The Ukraine crisis is a prime example of how important comprehensive security approaches are today. The OSCE has come to play an important role in this crisis not just as a platform for dialogue but also because of its broad set of tools for preventing and resolving conflicts.

By strengthening the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE we will further strengthen the organization's comprehensive security approach. Progress is most likely to be made if we proceed on an incremental basis, topic by topic.

The Swiss Chairmanship – in the framework of our joint work plan with Serbia – has proposed that the focus this year be on cooperation in the context of natural disasters. The objective of this 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum is to promote an integrated disaster risk management approach in order to improve the resilience of population groups at risk in the OSCE region.

We have chosen this topic for three reasons.

First, we think the topic is relevant. Natural and man-made disasters impact everything: our planet, our health, our livelihoods. And they can happen anytime and anywhere. Changes in the earth's climate can have an impact in the form of extreme weather events, including worsening heat waves and droughts, increased flooding, and more severe storms. Such extreme events have a serious impact on development efforts, particularly in fragile states. But they also affect industrialized countries, where they can result in the loss of human life and material damages.

The OSCE region has seen a number of natural hazard triggered disasters lately. Russia and Greece had to fight large scale wild fires in 2010. In the USA, "Superstorm Sandy" was the deadliest and most destructive hurricane of the 2012 Atlantic hurricane season, as well as the second most costly hurricane in United States history. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia, the heaviest rainfalls in the past 120 years caused the worst flooding disaster in over a century in May this year.

Second, improving effectiveness in dealing with natural disasters will have a direct positive impact on our citizens. This is in line with the leitmotiv of our Chairmanship, which is to contribute to the creation of a security community for the benefit of everyone – rather than just for the benefit of states.

Third, managing disasters is a suitable topic for fostering cooperation. The challenges of natural hazard-triggered disasters can mobilize *people* to work together, and thus help build confidence beyond borders and despite conflicts.

The topic is also suitable for fostering cooperation between OSCE participating States east and west of Vienna. I am very pleased that the 2015 Serbian Chairmanship will continue our work in the field of disaster risk reduction, and more precisely in the field of water governance.

Moreover, the topic of disaster management concerns all three dimensions of the OSCE and is likely to spur cross-dimensional cooperation in the spirit of comprehensive security.

Within the OSCE, discussion on disaster risk reduction has been sporadic so far. Some work has been done on cooperating on disaster preparedness and response. Based on the discussions held in two preparatory meetings in Vienna and Montreux, the Chairmanship proposes building on this work and taking it further in three areas:

- disaster *prevention*,
- integrated disaster risk management, and
- cross-border co-operation.

Let me make a few observations on each of these areas in turn.

First, prevention is better than cure.

Major natural and man-made disasters often act as wake-up calls for decision makers. They generate a set of lessons learned that sometimes dramatically change public perceptions and national policies. Much suffering could be avoided if we did more on the *prevention* side. While natural hazards are inevitable, high mortality and large-scale destruction are not.

The benefit of shifting the paradigm from emergency response to a more proactive, integral, and systematic approach is broadly acknowledged. Yet moving from a culture of reaction towards one of prevention of natural hazard triggered disasters is a major political challenge involving different policy sectors and stakeholders at multiple governmental levels.

Particularly through its field operations, the OSCE is well placed to raise awareness of the importance of disaster prevention, to engage communities in preventive action, and to incorporate local knowledge into national contingency plans.

The second proposal of the Swiss Chairmanship is for the OSCE to adopt an integrated risk governance approach. As such, disaster risk governance will only be “integrated” and “comprehensive”:

- if there is political will from the respective governments;
- if it takes into account multiple hazards and their numerous interactions;
- if it encompasses all main stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society; and

- if it involves all levels of authorities: from national down to local governments.

Integrated disaster risk management should be an integral component of a comprehensive security perspective. Reducing risks means increasing security and safety.

The OSCE has to offer added value in this regard as it brings in a security perspective in ways that other organizations do not. The OSCE should focus on this comparative strength while at the same time avoiding duplicating activities in areas where other institutions like the EU are better placed to lead efforts.

As a third point, the Swiss Chairmanship proposes strengthening cross-border cooperation. Natural hazard-triggered disasters, like other cross-cutting global risks such as cybercrime, often transcend national boundaries. Collective prevention, preparedness, and response are indispensable.

The transboundary and global characteristics of disaster risks require cooperative efforts across borders both in their assessment and in their management. In particular we must be looking at the systemic linkages between the politico-military, socio-economic, financial, environmental, and transnational components of disasters.

One of the points often raised during the two preparatory meetings was that cooperation based on expertise and experience in the field of disaster risk reduction can have a positive impact on relations between states. Such cooperation can build trust. Technical cross-border co-operation in disaster risk management is a win-win situation for all parties involved and can be a powerful apolitical way to bolster trust among stakeholders.

Switzerland supports a number of projects to this end. One of these projects aims at “Restoring Ecosystems to Mitigate Floods and Improve Co-operation between Countries in Transboundary River Basins in Eastern Europe”. It includes practical work to mitigate floods through the restoration of ecosystems in the transboundary Dniester river basin shared by Moldova and Ukraine. It also promotes partnership and the sharing of expertise among Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum comes at a crucial time as we engage in global efforts to define an ambitious post-2015 agenda on sustainable development. Reducing the risk for natural disasters increases our prospects for building the sustainable future we want.

To advance these efforts, we are also preparing for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai (Japan) next March to agree on a post-Hyogo Framework for Action agenda for disaster risk reduction. The new international agreement on climate change post-2020 will also become an important future instrument for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

The Swiss Chairmanship encourages OSCE participating States to demonstrate political leadership at the regional and the global level by bringing the comprehensive security approach into this global agenda and promoting the notion of integrated disaster risk management.

I welcome this morning's respective keynote speeches by UN Special Representative Margareta Wahlström and Professor Thomas Stocker. You are both most influential in shaping this global agenda, and the OSCE will greatly benefit from your insights.

Ladies and Gentlemen

For many years, the Prague Forum has served as an important platform to discuss current economic and environmental issues and to formulate recommendations to be considered at the Ministerial Council of the OSCE.

Let us be ambitious and work together on the road to Basel towards a strong commitment of the OSCE in the second dimension.

- Let us address disasters smartly, on the prevention side. Doing better in preventing natural and man-made disasters today will help us prevent tragedies tomorrow.
- Let us pursue an integrated disaster risk management approach. This will improve the resilience of our societies and thereby promote the peaceful co-existence of our states and communities.
- And let us facilitate cross-border engagement in addressing environmental challenges. This will contribute to building trust among the OSCE participating States – trust that is much needed today to reconsolidate European security as a common project across the OSCE area.

Welcoming remarks

by Ambassador Lamberto Zannier

Secretary General
OSCE

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to join our host and the Swiss Chairmanship in welcoming you to this Concluding Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. I am very pleased to see so many high-level representatives of the OSCE participating States, Partners for Co-operation, and of various international, regional and non-governmental organizations, as well as experts from academia and the private sector.

This year, within the framework of this Forum, we have focused our discussion on addressing environmental challenges with a strong focus on managing natural disasters in the OSCE area and how the OSCE can best support international efforts in reducing disaster risks. In May, the devastating floods in South-Eastern Europe underscored that this topic warrants our shared attention. Confronted with this catastrophic event, the OSCE field operations in Serbia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina took immediate action in assisting the flood victims. Even though this support was modest given the scale of the problem, it was heartening to see that the Organisation could respond quickly to unexpected challenges of this sort.

As an organization, which deals with security in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, the OSCE is well placed to contribute to international processes that aim to address global challenges, including the post-2015 development agenda and the climate change negotiations. *[We look forward to hearing more about the current and future developments in these areas from this morning's keynote speakers, Her Excellency Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction; and Professor Thomas Stocker, Co-Chair of Working Group I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.]* Our Organization can have a contributing role and should focus on areas where it can bring added value and offer relevant expertise. I would like to mention just some of the areas where I believe the OSCE has proven its strength:

- We are a well-established platform for multi-level and multi-stakeholder dialogue that is well placed to foster co-operation, exchange of information and sharing good practices on issue affecting our common security, including disaster risk reduction.
- Because of our comprehensive security mandate, we can address disaster risks from a cross-dimensional perspective, making best use of available expertise and well-established partnership relations within each security dimension.

- Thanks to our field operations we can work closely with national stakeholders while our network of Aarhus Centres enables us to promote community-based activities.
- Finally, our partnership in the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) fosters cross-border co-operation while ensuring effective co-ordination and co-operation with other international actors.

Finding successful solutions to environmental security challenges requires engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, practitioners, academic experts and the private sector. In July, together with the Swiss Chairmanship, we organized an OSCE Security Days conference on Water in an effort to bring new perspectives into OSCE debates on environmental security. The discussions highlighted the link between climate change and water-related disasters such as floods and droughts and confirmed the need for strengthening water diplomacy. They also brought forward a number of practical recommendations, for instance raising the profile of water on the political agenda, development of a toolkit for water diplomacy to categorize different types of water conflicts and identify appropriate solutions, strategies and tools, establishing regular regional trainings at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek or enhancing public participation through sub-regional and cross-regional projects.

I believe that in view of the forthcoming Ministerial Council, this Forum will offer useful platform for discussion that will help us identify concrete roles for the OSCE in disaster risk reduction efforts. It could also contribute to a larger debate on the strategic orientation of the economic and environmental dimension, which is an important element in the Organisation-wide discussion leading up to the 40th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act next year.

Before closing, let me once again stress how much we appreciate the co-operation and partnerships we have built in disaster risk reduction with a number of international organizations, including in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC). These partnerships help us to ensure synergy of efforts and reinforce our action based on respective mandates and capabilities. Today's Review Session, where our colleagues from UNDP will present their report on the OSCE's implementation of commitments in disaster risk reduction, is an example of such close co-operation.

Thank you, and I look forward to productive discussion over the next days.

Closing Remarks

by Ambassador Thomas Greminger

**Chairperson of the Permanent Council
Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE
2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship**

Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have reached the concluding session not only of our meeting here in Prague but of this twenty-second Economic and Environmental Forum process. We have had an ambitious agenda and covered an extensive range of issues during the three meetings we have held. Our discussions have benefited from the insights of a vast range of experts and stakeholders. On behalf of the Swiss Chairmanship, I would like to express our thanks to all panelists, speakers and moderators who have participated in the meetings and shaped our dialogue.

When Switzerland proposed the theme of the Forum, our intentions were two-fold:

On the one hand we wanted to put the comprehensive management of natural disasters on the agenda of the OSCE, as we are convinced that the challenges of natural hazards can mobilize people to work together, and thus can help build confidence and trust, beyond borders and despite conflicts. On the other hand, our objective has been to not only raise awareness of this important issue, but also to propose viable ways to strengthen our capabilities, encourage co-operation and generate political will for further engagement of participating States.

When it comes to drawing conclusions at the end of this Forum process - and that is what I was asked to do here – I would start by saying the following. The (high interest and) attendance during the whole Forum of high-ranking officials from our capitals and partner organizations, as well as from Vienna delegations, the fruitful debates we witnessed during this year's Forum meetings and the numerous bilateral meetings

that took place in the margins of our discussions, do confirm the relevance of Disaster Risk Reduction in the OSCE area. There is no doubt that the OSCE can bring real value added to the ongoing international efforts and that the Organization has a role to play when it comes to disaster risk reduction. Just listening to the panel debate this morning, I felt compelling evidence of this was offered.

It has also come clearly out of the discussions that the OSCE should fit into existing initiatives and cooperate and support major institutions, including global processes taking place this year and next year. In this regard, we had a very interesting panel on Wednesday on such global processes and discussed how the OSCE could bring added value to them. From the remarks and suggestions made, I have noted the following 5 points:

1. The OSCE community has been invited several times to contribute a security perspective to the global Disaster Risk Reduction Agenda (Hyogo Framework for Action 2) and Development Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals).
2. DRR as a common theme has a potential to link the main current global processes (HFA2, Post 2015 Development Agenda, International Climate negotiations)
3. Organisations like the OSCE are needed to translate the global commitments into concrete actions at the regional level fully in line with Chapter 8 of the UN Charter.
4. Coming to the climate change issue, I liked very much one of the headline presented by Prof. Stocker. He said: "A 1-in-20 year hottest day is likely to become a 1-in-2 year event by the end of the 21st century". That illustrates quite well the increasing probability of extreme weather situations and the knock-on effect that will have on the frequency of disasters.
5. That reinforces another quote we heard: "we are the first generation that can feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do anything about it".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have also seen in the course of the 3 meetings that the OSCE does have expertise in dealing with environmental challenges and disasters— both in the secretariat and the field presences. It was repeatedly noted that the OSCE has experience in environmental good governance which is a key element in the effective management of natural disasters. This is obviously not to say that we should not aim at further expanding and strengthening the capabilities of the OSCE, including field missions and secretariat.

The review report by UNDP on the implementation of OSCE Commitments related to natural and man-made disasters also gives us an excellent overview and a set of recommendations for further engagement. During Session IV yesterday, the examples of Forest fires and floods were presented as concrete areas where the OSCE has been very active in the past. We should build upon this expertise, further develop it, exchange best practices and reinforce our commitments where it is needed.

We have heard in the panel debate this morning some concrete messages on where the role of our Organization lies in promoting cooperation between States in disaster risk reduction. Let me just recall the following three aspects:

1. The OSCE as a platform for dialogue in coordinating Disaster Risk Reduction across borders in areas where this needs to be facilitated. We also heard this can be effective as a confidence-building measure in the security context.
2. The key role that Aarhus Centers play when it comes to information and awareness raising at the local level. Switzerland is currently reinforcing the capacities of Aarhus Centers in different countries in DRR through an ENVSEC project. As we heard from an OSCE Field office, continued support in this vein is needed.
3. The OSCE should reinforce its role in facilitating the sharing of knowledge and the exchange of best practices across borders and regions.

We had an insightful and engaging session on the management of the horrendous floods in South Eastern Europe on the first day of our meeting and identified some points that could be further deepened and reflected on, such as:

Regional/cross-boundary cooperation was crucial and effective in the response to the situation. As was demonstrated by the presentations of representatives from the three Balkan countries, this emergency assistance does not have to be politicized.

The floods in South East Europe have shown the crucial role of the media in information-sharing with affected populations. By quickly and accurately informing population, panic situations can be averted. The media can also advise on effective responses to a disaster and inform of measures taken by governments to address concerns of immediately affected populations. The OSCE can further assist in providing training to media officials to ensure responsible reporting of disasters and in the dissemination of information following these incidents. I was also struck by the fact that presentations almost exclusively focused on disaster management . Processes on identifying lessons learnt in view of Disaster Risk Reduction, in view of Disaster Risk mitigation and prevention have hardly started. This is certainly also a field where the OSCE could play a supporting role.

I will not linger on this topic as the incoming Serbian chairmanship will be best placed to continue working in this area, especially with the theme they have chosen for the 23rd EEF, Water governance. Ambassador Vuk Zugic will give us some initial indications of their plans in a minute. Be assured that Switzerland will remain committed to the topic beyond our current Chairmanship and will closely work with Serbia on this.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like now to turn to the follow-up of this Forum.

I see an immediate need to work on a wording about the linkages between climate change, disaster risks and security, that the OSCE could contribute to the drafting of the new Hyogo Framework of Action that it currently ongoing. As it was suggested, the Swiss Chairmanship will task the Secretariat to come up with a wording that could be presented and discussed within the Economic and Environmental Committee quite soon.

Another concrete follow-up emerging from the Forum is a Ministerial decision to be discussed in the coming weeks. The Swiss Chairmanship has indicated that it plans to bring forward elements on supplementing OSCE commitments related to DRR to be adopted at the Basel Ministerial Council. We have developed some proposals in our food-for-thought paper. Listening to discussions here in Prague, the Swiss Chairmanship has been encouraged as our own thinking appears to be in line with the views being expressed by the delegations. We will be reflecting on the recommendations from this meeting in the coming days and, in close collaboration with the Secretariat, we will be issuing a text in the next few weeks.

Allow me to mention some of the key elements the Swiss Chairmanship would see as part of this draft:

- focus on disaster prevention and preparedness,
- concentrate on the nexus between disasters, climate change and security
- adopt a comprehensive risk management
- foster cross-border cooperation, especially in light of its potential as a confidence-building measure
- act as platform for knowledge sharing
- foster local resilience through its OSCE field presences
- mainstream DRR into the OSCE comprehensive security approach
- engage in the global processes currently going on.

This is not an exhaustive list, but I believe these are some of the pillars of renewed commitments which could be adopted by the Ministers in Basel.

Let's join our efforts, so that by the end of the year, many of this Forum's conclusions and recommendations are successfully translated into political decisions!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding this Forum Meeting, I would like to thank all participants for their active involvement in the discussions and debates, all the speakers and panelists for the high quality and pertinent interventions. In addition, I would like to congratulate the moderators for their professionalism and the rapporteurs for making sure that all the voices are well reflected in the summaries.

I would like also to express my gratitude to Dr. Yigitgüden and his team for the excellent cooperation and in particular for their work in preparing this year's Forum, as well as to the Prague Office and technical staff of the meeting who work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of this event here each year. Another vital contribution has been the work done by interpreters. Thanks as well to the Economic and Environmental Officers from the OSCE field presences for their recommendations for speakers and input.

Last but not least, I would like to warmly thank our host, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, for providing us with all the facilities to organize the concluding part of the Forum in this beautiful city.

Finally, I would like to wish every success to the incoming Serbian Chairmanship, in organizing and conducting the next Economic and Environmental Forum cycle on water governance. You can count on our support.

I wish you all safe trip home. Thank you.

Closing Remarks

by Ambassador Vuk Žugić

Permanent Representative of Serbia to the OSCE incoming 2015 OSCE Serbian Chairmanship

Ladies and Gentleman,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to address the concluding session of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum and to outline a way forward to the next year's Forum.

On various occasions and meetings, our heads of states and governments reconfirmed their will to strengthen this dimension and expressed their will to pursue and intensify co-operation, thus reaffirming conviction that co-operation in this area contributes to the reinforcement of peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole. And as a result, we have witnessed some positive changes in the Economic and Environmental dimension during previous years.

The OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum remains the most important annual meeting within the dimension and it pleases me to witness such a level of involvement and interest from the participating states. As incoming Chairmanship of the OSCE, Serbia will strive towards strengthening the effectiveness of the Economic and Environmental Dimension of the OSCE. With this in mind, we believe that the theme proposed by the Swiss Chairmanship for this Forum is of utmost importance, especially in the light of recent catastrophic floods that occurred in the Western Balkans region and other environmental and man-made disasters happening around the world. Once again, it was shown that no country can meet these challenges alone but that we need transboundary co-operation. By tackling relevant and contemporary issues such as these, we are able to make a tangible contribution to the enhancement of security and prosperity of the OSCE as a regional organization, in line with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

This year's Forum discussions have certainly generated interesting thoughts and ideas and have deepened our knowledge on how to promptly and effectively respond to environmental challenges as well within our region. Water-related natural disasters are even less "natural" than others: floods are often aggravated by previous river management decisions and droughts can be a result of human-driven climate change. Here, more than ever we see that improving management and governance of natural resources is the best disaster risk reduction strategy we can pursue. It was clearly visible that the extension our cooperation regarding disaster prevention and the process of disaster impact alleviation within the OSCE is of vital importance. Recommendations for future activities in this area that were put forward in the previous three days should be followed-up in a result-oriented manner in preparation for the Basel Ministerial meeting.

Given the amount of interest shown among the participating States during the discussions on this subject and in the spirit of continuity embedded in the consecutive Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships, we will further pursue deliberations regarding economic and environmental challenges, particularly in the area of water governance. Even before our Joint Work Plan was presented at the PC in July last year, it was stated that our two Chairmanships will dedicate

special attention to the issue of water management. Also, a substantial part of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act Chapter on Co-operation in the Field of Economics, Science and Technology and of the Environment is, actually, dedicated to different aspects of water governance. Whether it refers to topics such as environmental protection, energy sustainability and transport, or provisions on agriculture and hydrology, or those on industrial, science and technology co-operation, the Helsinki Final Act gives a wide range of opportunities for participating States to develop mutual co-operation in the area of water governance. We believe that it serves as a postulate on which we are supposed to build our co-operation and is also the basis upon which we defined the title of the next Prague Forum – “Water governance in the OSCE area – increasing security and stability through co-operation”.

The motto that we envisaged for the next Prague Forum is – water is fundamental, water unites, and water connects. With it we want to show that the approach we propose to take in addressing these topics is a positive one, based on best practices and oriented towards further strengthening of co-operation. Water is a fundamental resource and key to our common future development and water governance is indeed a prerequisite for environmental sustainability and for economic and social prosperity and stability.

During next year, we will look for ways how better water governance can contribute to increasing security and stability in the OSCE. As we have seen in the course of this Forum, the floods in the Balkan region proved to be a good example on how transboundary co-operation can be of importance in addressing negative impacts of disasters. Our plan is to promote dialogue on good water governance within the OSCE area through sharing of best practices and lessons learned and raise awareness of the importance of water governance at all levels – transboundary, national, and local.

In that regard, we intend to put forward for consideration several topics, like:

- Water governance as a prerequisite for environmental sustainability and for economic and social prosperity and stability;
- Promotion of dialogue in good water governance within the OSCE area through sharing of best practices and lessons learned;
- Raising awareness of the importance of water governance at all levels;
- Water governance within the context of disaster risk reduction, to name a few.

It is envisaged that the First preparatory meeting focuses on the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in the following areas relating to water governance: improving integrated and cross-sectorial approaches to water resource management in an efficient and sustainable way, fostering food and energy security, protecting ecosystems and increasing water productivity, reducing pollution and increasing collection, treatment and re-use of water. We could also consider the opportunities for providing mutual assistance and exchange of information, particularly in the area of sharing of technology and know-how.

Second preparatory meeting, which is planned to take place in Serbia, will be dedicated to other two main topics - Raising awareness of the importance of water governance and Water governance within the context of disaster risk reduction. The First one will give the participants an opportunity to get acquainted first hand, not only with the activities of both OCEEA and the OSCE Mission in Serbia, but also with other executive structures related to awareness raising and training projects with regard to water management. It will pose an opportunity for other OSCE

field presences to present and share their experiences together with delegations and to produce recommendations for better streamlining of activities of the OSCE structures in the future. Second segment of this meeting will represent the follow-up of this year's Prague Forum deliberations, placed into the context of the impacts and lessons learned from the recent devastating floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia.

Disaster risk reduction will continue to be in our focus as disaster management and water governance are linked in various different ways. It is not only floods, but also water scarcity, droughts, pollution and climate change that are among the top issues countries have to deal with. Furthermore, we would like to emphasize that disasters always have the potential to pose a serious challenge to security and stability, as the results of this Forum have clearly shown.

During the Forum, we noticed a strong call for strengthening the OSCE's input into global processes. We will embrace this task of increasing the visibility of our Organization and contribute our expertise and approach to these global deliberations. I would also like to remind you that, apart from the global processes on Disaster Risk Reduction, climate change and the post-development agenda, both the 7th World Water Forum (South Korea) and the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Japan) will take place in 2015, thus providing us with yet another opportunity to contribute with our experiences.

One of the tasks of the country chairing the OSCE is to promote the broader capacity of economic and environmental dimension in strengthening the synergy between OSCE's dimensions and its potential in contributing to the general OSCE's agenda. Even though there has certainly been some positive progress in this Dimension, we consider that the second dimension of the OSCE has remained underutilized, despite its essential role in the comprehensive approach to security. Therefore, the ongoing "Helsinki +40" process is a good opportunity to tackle this issue. The incoming Serbian Chairmanship will continue to support the strengthening of this dimension in order to provide the participating States with assistance and expertise needed for responding to the new economic and environmental challenges.

Let me thank the panelists and participants for their thoughtful contributions. We would also like to thank the Office of the coordinator of the OSCE economic and environmental activities for their support and the Czech Government for hosting such an important event.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Swiss Chairmanship for organizing a successful Forum and thank them for excellent co-operation in the framework of our consecutive Chairmanships.

I thank you, Mr. Moderator

SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE 22nd ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Welcoming remarks

**by State Secretary Mr. Yves Rossier
Head of the Directorate of Political Affairs, Switzerland**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished guests

Welcome to Switzerland and welcome to Montreux on the occasion of the Second Preparatory Meeting of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

Montreux, on the shores of Lake Geneva, is best known as the city of Jazz. And Jazz is probably the musical genre that has been most effective in bringing people, religions, countries, and traditions together by fusing styles and crossing cultures.

Also the OSCE - as the largest regional security organization encompassing 57 participating States from Vladivostok to Vancouver - has a reputation for successfully bringing people and countries together around a same table. And with its unique multi-dimensional security approach it would appear a predestined melting pot for fusing and crossing politico-military, economic, environmental and human security perspectives in order to build peace and security, confidence and trust amongst its participants.

So why is it that unlike Jazz we don't always feel the groove and swing in the OSCE's daily pulse?
Integration of the three Dimensions in the OSCE – Integrated Risk Management

We all acknowledge that the Economic and Environmental Forum is the main meeting of the OSCE in the second dimension; as the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is the main conference in the third dimension. This is setting the stage: generally, the three dimensions work independently, focusing around dimension-specific goals and deliverables, while overlaps and interaction between them remain the exception rather than the rule.

Why is it that these three dimensions predominantly perform as soloists, when everybody agrees that the OSCE's holistic approach to security, based on the legacy of the historic 1975 Helsinki Final Act, is its key asset and comparative advantage? How do we blend these three dimensions together to form a merry combo?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The goal of this year's Forum is to identify the role of the OSCE in assisting participating States in how to better respond to environmental challenges. As a matter of fact, Disaster Risk Reduction should be an integral component of a comprehensive security perspective. One possible niche for

the OSCE could be exactly at the crossroads between its three dimensions. Indeed, natural disasters can trigger instability and conflicts, human rights violations or displacements.

I therefore particularly welcome today's Keynote speech by Dr. Tipson on the nexus between disasters and security, and the Panel Debate in the early afternoon on the impacts of natural and technological disasters on conflicts and on population movements. Probably not many of us are aware that more people are being displaced by disasters than by persecution and conflict. Furthermore, I am convinced that natural and environmental risks affecting emerging or pre-existing tensions and conflicts, as is often the case with slow-onset disasters such as droughts, should become an integral component within the OSCE's conflict cycle. To give you an example: the period of severe drought in Syria between 2006 and 2011 led to the displacement of around 1.5 million people within the country and might have contributed to the outbreak of this bloody conflict.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Breaking down the barriers and shelving the silo mentality is also a - if not the - key challenge to a comprehensive risk management approach. Disaster risk governance will only be "integrated":

- if there is a political will from the government,
- if it is taking into account multiple hazards and their numerous interactions,
- if it is spanning across relevant policy sectors,
- if it is encompassing main stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society,
- and if it is involving all levels of authorities: from national down to local governments.

Let me stress the local echelon. Indeed, most kinds of hazards are local and have predominantly local impacts. The first to be affected and to respond to a disaster are local actors. It seems therefore only natural to empower them such that they can develop the necessary instruments to assess, prevent and mitigate risks at a local level. I'm confident that today's first session dealing with disaster risk reduction at a local level will advance some answers to this challenge. Do we need disasters in order to progress?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Until the unfolding of the crisis in Ukraine and the establishment by consensus decision of the Special Monitoring Mission, the OSCE was not highly on the agenda of the world top news and had a rather low profile. The crisis was the defining moment that allowed the organisation to reassert its *raison d'être*.

Similarly, experience shows that major natural and man-made disasters are often wake-up calls for decision makers generating a set of lessons learned that sometimes dramatically change public perceptions, national policies and socio-economic patterns.

Does humanity need stresses and shocks, tensions and disasters in order to learn? Are we going to evolve through crises rather than proactive behaviour?

Sure, our modern society with its main institutions, including our democratic political systems and our market economies are tuned to maximise short-term benefits sometimes at the cost of future problems. So when considering the challenges climate change is potentially posing to our existence: do we actually have to rely on disasters to bring us to reason and to save us from more severe calamities as philosopher Hans Jonas put it 25 years ago? In other words: should we really engage in disaster risk reduction, if crises might be the fuel necessary for human development and change?

The answer is clear-cut, if we don't want to sound sardonic: Prevention is always the better and more efficient investment than response and rehabilitation. All the people affected by severe disasters will certainly also agree with this.

This is true across all sectors. Preventing disease and maintaining good health is better than any medical therapy. Preventing conflicts and radicalization before violence erupts could save lives, avoid the destruction of infrastructure and the impairment of the economy. These are often irrevocable processes that post-conflict rehabilitation cannot reverse. That's why the spectre of new rifts looming on Europe's horizon must be taken seriously by the OSCE in order to build bridges and prevent these rifts from widening.

Natural hazard-triggered disasters have caused more human casualties world-wide in the past hundred years than both World Wars combined. Last year alone, natural disasters have generated economic costs of almost 200 billion \$. So yes: we should definitely invest in disaster prevention and risk mitigation!

In this context, let me express on behalf of the Swiss government and of the Swiss people our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy to the people and the government of Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Croatia, especially to those who lost loved ones and are suffering from the devastating floods and triggered secondary effects like landslides. Switzerland stands ready to assist the affected people in their difficult situation.

The road to resilience. Cross-border cooperation as CBM.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The growing interconnectedness, complexity, technical dependence and urbanization of our multipolar world exacerbate the vulnerabilities of societies to hazards and the risks of unforeseen cascading effects. Building risk resilient nations – the topic of our second keynote speech today – will indeed be of paramount importance. Disasters, like other cross-cutting global risks such as cybercrime, often transcend national boundaries. No state can deal with such risks in isolation. Collective prevention, preparedness and response are indispensable.

Hence, a pillar to achieve resilience in our interdependent world is stronger cross-border collaboration both among governmental and non-governmental actors. Technical cross-border cooperation in disaster risk management is a win-win situation for all parties involved and can be a powerful apolitical way to bolster trust and confidence among stakeholders. Those who have chosen to participate in tomorrow's first excursion along the transit route of the Great St Bernard

will get the chance to learn more about a specific example of cross-border cooperation between Italy and Switzerland.

In this context, let me seize this opportunity to convey the best regards of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Mr. Didier Burkhalter, to the participants of this Preparatory Meeting. He cannot be with us today, as the president of the Italian Republic, Mr. Giorgio Napolitano, is currently paying a state visit to Switzerland and is being received by the Swiss Federal Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Collaborative risk management and collective action not only among neighbouring states but involving stakeholders from across government, private sector and civil society will be imperative to achieve national resilience. Resilience - the capacity of a system to buffer against outside attacks - is as such a comprehensive concept that goes far beyond disaster mitigation. In particular we must be looking at the systemic interlinkages between politico-military, socio-economic, financial, environmental and transnational components.

The OSCE, if it fully taps its potential as an organization with a broad, multi-dimensional security perspective, is well placed to adopt an integrated risk governance approach and to contribute to pave the road to resilience. It might be a long and winding one. But I hope that the swing of Montreux will accelerate our pace towards this target.

Welcoming remarks

by Ambassador Manuel Bessler

Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA)

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished guests,

I would also like to welcome you all to Switzerland, to Montreux, and to the field visits in the Canton of Valais that the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation has arranged for you tomorrow, in cooperation with the authorities of the Canton and the Federal Office for the Environment. The examples you will be shown tomorrow will focus on natural and environmental risks in a mountainous region.

For the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship intends to link this official meeting with practical observations in the field, while bringing people together to share their knowledge and expertise. I very much hope that you will enjoy the field visits that we have organised!

My initial thoughts go to the individuals, families and communities that were severely affected by the floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and their neighbouring countries. Switzerland has offered financial contributions and assistance to the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, and is continuing to closely monitor the situation.

Knowing your risks is at the heart of disaster risk management, be it in a mountainous area or anywhere else. It is not only important to correctly assess risks, but also to understand how risks are interconnected. A clear picture of the risk landscape is fundamental for preventing new risks as well as reducing and transferring existing risks. It will be of the utmost importance for the flood affected areas in south-eastern Europe to delve deep into disaster analyses in order to draw lessons for the future – in terms of understanding risks, planning land use, making/implementing laws and taking constructional measures. The field visit in the floodplain of the river Rhone will show how these different types of measures are combined. Since resources for risk reduction activities are limited, prioritising public policy measures is key.

Managing disaster risks is not static. Hazards, vulnerability and risk exposure change over time, particularly in the context of climate change. Tomorrow, the field visit along the Great St Bernard route will show how risk reduction measures have to be adapted to the consequences of climate change.

Achieving resilience of nations and communities is not only a concept, but a long-term programme and investment. Resilience embraces at the same time the ability of people, communities and systems to withstand adapt and recover from disasters – such as floods, storms and earthquakes – as well as to prevent, withstand, adapt and recover from wars, conflicts and crises. It is our very obligation to secure people from violent attacks and to reduce people's vulnerability and exposure to disasters.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to briefly elaborate three components of successful risk management that are also relevant for the OSCE:

First, pursuing a comprehensive risk management approach, including disaster risks, that leads to resilience, is in accordance with the multi- and cross-dimensional nature of the OSCE. Disaster risk management is therefore relevant for the OSCE's overall safety and security agenda. Not only because natural disasters may endanger people's lives and livelihoods, cause economic losses, or have a devastating impact on critical infrastructure, but also because cooperation in reducing disaster risks may contribute to clearly defining responsibilities and building confidence between nations, communities and people that are potentially at risk.

Second – and as mentioned before – prevention is better than cure. This is valid for crises, conflicts and disasters. However, the shift from response to a combination of preventive and preparedness measures faces many challenges. Prevention is politically not attractive: It is easier to raise public resources for assistance when a disaster strikes than for preventive measures before a possible emergency situation occurs. And prevention is complex, involving many policy sectors, stakeholders at different governmental levels, and also non-governmental actors.

At the global level, Switzerland is very engaged in disaster risk reduction. This year, we will host the two inter-governmental preparatory committee meetings in Geneva to work out a new international agreement on disaster risk reduction to replace the existing Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). Governments around the world should agree on this new framework at the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), scheduled for March 2015 in Sendai, Japan. We realise how important it is to involve all the relevant actors in this process, be it regional organisations such as the OSCE, local governments, communities or the private sector.

Finally, the time has come for OSCE participating States to show political leadership and commitment for the Sendai process. In addition, we all need to advocate that the post-2015 agenda, which will define the sustainable development goals for the next generation, fully integrates the spirit and the action of disaster risk reduction. In this regard, the ties between Geneva, New York and also Vienna must be strengthened, especially as we move ahead with preparations for new global frameworks.

Dear participants,

I am looking forward to accompanying you during the two coming days, to learn from your experience in the field of disaster prevention and to take a common step towards the risk-informed, sustainable development of our societies in the OSCE area. We bear a special responsibility because OSCE participating States are among the key donors for humanitarian aid and development cooperation, and the largest providers of military and civil defence assets (MCDA) for disaster relief.

Thank you for your attention.

Welcoming remarks

by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

Allow me to start by expressing my gratitude for the warm hospitality of the Swiss Chairmanship. I am confident that this beautiful venue on the shores of Lake Geneva will inspire us in our deliberations. I also highly appreciate the commitment of the Swiss Chairmanship to promoting more reliable management of natural disasters in the OSCE area which also contributes to strengthening the role of OSCE's economic and environmental dimension in this field.

Please let me express my deep sympathy to our colleagues from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. The recent flooding that affected South-Eastern Europe reminds us painfully about the importance of the topic we discuss today. Please accept our sincere condolences for the losses suffered.

We planned to have a representative of the Emergency Management Sector of the Serbian Ministry of Interior with us today. We invited him to share with us the Serbian experience about national co-ordination mechanisms. We fully understand that under the current circumstances, he had to cancel his participation.

The devastating wildfires in the Southern California was another recent disaster that the world witnessed.

We send our thoughts and best wishes to all those working for the remedy of these disasters in the affected regions. To reduce sufferings from disasters like this is the very reason why we are here today.

Today, we start the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum, dedicated to "Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area". This meeting is unique in the sense that it will combine an in-depth discussion of disaster risk reduction with hands-on experience of its practical application. During tomorrow's field visits we will be able to see how Switzerland applies integrated disaster risk management, including in transboundary areas.

Our discussion today will build on the results of the First Preparatory Meeting in January in Vienna. Back then, we examined the human, social and economic consequences of disasters and concrete case studies of past disasters and co-operation in this field. We also analysed the role of environmental good governance and sustainable management of natural resources in addressing environment and security challenges that are linked to disasters. Our discussions in Montreux will shed light on a number of important topics ranging from disaster risk reduction at the local level to cross-dimensional impacts of disasters. This will also cover impacts on security and population

movements, as well as coping measures for reducing disaster risks in the international, cross-border and national contexts.

From the very outset, I would like to emphasize that our Forum's deliberations should benefit from the dynamic exchange of ideas among different stakeholders. No single group or organisation can address every aspect of dealing with disasters. If we aim for making a significant progress in disaster risk reduction, we should seek and encourage an active involvement of civil society and the private sector.

Allow me a few words on the specific sessions of today's meeting:

Disaster-related challenges faced by the urban and rural settlements highlight the importance of adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction at a local level. This will be the focus of our discussion in the first session. Emergency response and recovery capacities are critical for a community's resilience to disasters. Equally important are the availability of risk assessments and prevention measures. Well-functioning early warning mechanisms are yet another important prerequisite for effective local action. These measures and instruments can be effectively brought to life only if people are aware and have reliable access to environment- and climate-related information as is envisioned by the Aarhus Convention that the OSCE has been supporting over a decade.

As we know, disasters may have far-reaching consequences for the security and safety of individuals, communities, countries and even whole regions. Such disasters tend to aggravate pre-existing problems and disproportionately affect vulnerable segments of the society. The consequences can be felt for years, with some people being compelled to move to other areas or countries. In our second session today we will take a closer look at the existing approaches to mitigating these effects.

The third session today will be dedicated to coping measures to reduce disaster risks at an international, cross-border and national level. Within our efforts to strengthen disaster preparedness, it is important to recognize that disasters do not have respect for political boundaries. Addressing disasters in such context requires effective international and cross-border co-operation as well as robust co-ordination mechanisms at national level. Preparedness for cross-border implications is vital to facilitate a speedy and effective response and to deal with cross-border movements as a consequence of disasters. This session will also introduce a self-assessment tool developed by the OSCE to increase participating States' preparedness for cross-border implications of such crises.

Distinguished participants, let me now touch upon the role of the OSCE in disaster risk reduction:

The OSCE provides a platform for dialogue and for the exchange of best practices and information on important issues that have implications for security and stability. Disaster risk reduction is one of them. The OSCE is therefore well placed to contribute to international co-operation and global discussions in this field, including those within the framework of the 2014 Climate Change Summit, post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

My Office and the OSCE field operations already support participating States in their efforts to strengthen disaster risk reduction at different levels and to promote transboundary co-operation through the development and implementation of concrete projects. The Environment and Security Initiative - ENVSEC-, provides an effective framework for co-ordination and implementation of on-going and future OSCE projects in this field.

The wildfire management project in South Caucasus is a good example of how OSCE can contribute to institutional capacity building, policy formulation, and inter-agency co-ordination for management of a disaster- in this case fires. We hope that our deliberations this year will pave the way for replicating this project in other regions and further deepening OSCE's engagement in this field. Another example is the climate change adaptation project including flood management in Moldova and Ukraine.

In addition, several new projects have been launched or are about to be started in partnership with other ENVSEC partners. Let me mention just a few examples.

This month, the OSCE is launching an ENVSEC-project to strengthen the capacities and roles of communities in disaster risk reduction through the Aarhus Centres. Under the leadership of the OSCE, the project will be implemented in selected countries of South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia.

One more project planned within ENVSEC will aim to increase the potential for ecosystem restoration to mitigate floods in two transboundary river basins in Eastern Europe. The OSCE in partnership with UNECE and UNEP will support a combination of activities that aim for capacity building and concrete implementation.

The OSCE Field Operations are also active in disaster management field through several initiatives and projects. In an effort to mainstream disaster risk reduction to the work of our field operations, my Office has been collaborating with the Swiss Chairmanship to organize Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance (CEDRIG) trainings targeting our field colleagues. Last week, the training for South Caucasus region was successfully conducted in Tbilisi. This will be followed by trainings for Central Asia and South Eastern Europe in fall.

I would like to thank my colleagues in field operations for their efforts and to strongly encourage them to actively participate and contribute to our Forum's discussions.

Once again, welcome to all of you here. I am looking forward to fruitful discussions.

Thank you for your attention.

Keynote address

by Dr. Frederick S. Tipson
Special Advisor, PeaceTech Initiative, US Institute of Peace

I thank the organizers for affording me this time in this important O.S.C.E. forum.
I've tried to frame these views with care, in meter and in rhyme, and hope that this won't violate decorum.

Though I am an advisor at the Institute of Peace, the views that I express are just my own.
I only hope that as the risks from habitats increase, the views expressed will not be mine alone.

**

The future of the planet has been coming into view, and various scenarios are forming.
Trends are now in motion we no longer can undo from population growth and global warming.
In just a generation, we will add two billion persons, and warm up by another two degrees.
And as these trends continue, and the situation worsens, more and more of us will feel the squeeze.

Our habitat increasingly presents us with the clues that humans are at ever greater risk;
And every week some expert body warns us on the News, or stark reports on Web or compact disc.

The I.P.C.C. helps distil the evidence from science, its last Report especially emphatic;
Despite its cautious tone and its empirical reliance, the human implications are dramatic.
The gist is that new stresses will bring larger-scale eruptions, disasters will increase in scale and scope.

Causing social strains and more political disruptions, and challenging all governments to cope.

And yet, the general public seems disturbingly detached, and governments contribute to the drift;

Until these risks and peoples' sense of urgency are matched, priorities will not begin to shift.

Societies will try to be resilient, stern and stoic, emphasizing basic self-reliance.

And when resilience falters, people often are heroic, responding to disasters with defiance.
The U.N. and the World Bank press Disaster Risk Reduction, and plan a conference next year in Japan;

And U.N. OCHA tries to lead relief and reconstruction, as more disasters overwhelm their plan.

Yet, while we try to focus on resilience and relief, and batten down the hatches of Manhattan,
The surging seas will likely bring more coastal zones to grief, where there may not be hatches left to batten.

The scale of new assaults will breach both stoic and heroic, and overwhelm this normal kind of focus;

We're entering an era that we might call "ecozoic", when many people have to shift their locus.

This era will transform how our security is felt, as people are compelled to face the facts.

For, as we come to recognize the hand that we have dealt, our fate will hinge on how each state reacts.

It's time that we acknowledge what the data represents, and where the dangers are most existential.

It's time that we think harder of unthinkable events, in order to reduce their worst potential.

I do not make this argument to call for mitigation; I don't think things will change soon just by pleading.

The Population/Climate train already left the station; our chance to stop more train wrecks is receding.

Cold War Precedent?

These days we are distracted by the Russian intervention, dressed up in a strange Eurasian rubric;
A product of nostalgia for that Stalinist pretension: Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik.

Yet, nothing that this current dangerous crisis represents, short of major nuclear exchange, Can match the size and scale of coming natural events, whose impacts will uproot and rearrange.

I came of age, like many here, with Cold War expectations, we lived with many narratives of gloom;

Superpower conflicts through mistakes or escalations were captured in scenarios of doom.

No one then suggested that such guesswork was too tough: or too far-fetched, too dire or depressing;

A one-in-twenty likelihood was likelihood enough to prompt elaborate planning and assessing.

More recently, Dick Cheney even further stretched that math; he said that to protect our nation's treasures,

Odds of even one per cent should justify our wrath, and vindicate "extraordinary measures".

Does anybody really think the chances are that low, of super-storms, pandemics, massive quakes?

Should we not anticipate the ways that things could go, and gauge not just percentage risks but stakes?

In fact, the point of working on scenarios like these, is not to scare us into indecision, But rather by converging our ideas and expertise, they help us to steer clear of a collision.

Nearly forty years ago, and as the Cold War raged, and nuclear deployments were intense, Up north in Helsinki a large conference was staged, with governments from both sides of the fence.

Divisions seemed unbridgeable, alliances were fixed, and public expectations then were low; And yes, Helsinki's overall accomplishments were mixed, and many people said "I told you so!"

Critics thought the documents were diplomatic caskets that froze forever World War II aggression.

The final statements organized as principles in baskets, which only seemed to overlook oppression.

But over time the value of Helsinki's Final Act, crystallized within a declaration,

Was how it represented a pan-European pact, a kind of manifesto in gestation.

Rather than a typical rhetorical endeavour, a meaningless political exchange, Basket Three became a kind of democratic lever, a rally point for movements bent on change. A source of solidarity and grass-roots innovation, for human rights and other points like those. A form of “higher power” that transcended every nation, and helped to bring the Cold War to a close.

A New Helsinki?

So, as the O.S.C.E. now approaches middle age, forty years beyond that Final Act;
Maybe it is time for it to turn another page, and contemplate another type of pact.
As we confront the prospect of huge natural assaults, and challenges from heat, disease and
weather,
We can’t afford our pattern of decisions by defaults; we need some tools to tie our fates
together.

Europe should again prepare for existential pressures, and find the terms for future solidarity.
It ought to set its sights upon these ecozoic stressors, assessing risks and remedies with clarity.

By framing local challenges as European choices, citizens may see the larger trend;
Making hard decisions with the weight of wider voices sometimes makes them simpler to defend.

Basket One of course would be commitments to **resilience**, priorities related to endurance.
Unlike rocket science this does not require brilliance, the elements are known with some
assurance.

Infrastructure hardening and popular awareness of plans for shelters and evacuations.
And public health facilities that operate with fairness, when crises overwhelm our preparations.

Basket Two would emphasize commitments to **relief**, reaffirming ethics of assistance.
Principles providing that when people come to grief, they still deserve a dignified existence.
That implies increasing our capacity for aid, but also stronger standards for its use.
Relief should not perpetuate bad choices people made; emergency should not be an excuse.

Basket Three will prove to be an even greater lift, the one that frames the needs for relocation.
This subject could provoke a very deep, divisive rift, involving fears of government dictation.
So what we must ensure is that through data and debate, decisions will be based on frank
discussions;
Failure to find fairness when large numbers relocate, could foster very deadly repercussions.

I realize this proposal may seem far-fetched and naive, that governments and publics are not
ready.
Perhaps ten years will have to pass before we all believe, that change could be more radical than
steady.

But certainly within ten years, before it is too late, and if, by then, this entity survives,
We’d have a manifesto that affirms our common fate, for when that wider urgency arrives.

Containing Mother Nature?

Perhaps we also need to find some guiding metaphor, some slogan that will motivate decisions. A molder of morale as these assaults strike more and more, to transcend our political divisions. Americans would say we fought the Cold War by containment, building on the ideas of George Kennan.

That was what, we say, our anti-Soviet campaign meant, to bottle up the threat from Marx and Lenin.

Should that be our mantra now: “Containing Planet Earth”, by treating “Mother Nature” as the foe?

Should we see our habitat as hostile from our birth, and blame the planet for each fatal blow?

No, I don’t think treating Mother Nature as the villain gets us to the changes that we need, There are no simple fixes, no quick shot of penicillin, and metaphors like that will not succeed.

Nature is indifferent to humanity’s survival, we dare not treat our planet as the devil. Assaults do not negotiate the terms of their arrival; the oceans won’t dial down their rising level. And Mother Earth will not address the danger of division among a human family in stress. This ecozoic era calls for leadership and vision, and very human measures of success.

For I predict that sooner than some analysts suppose, these fateful facts will dawn upon the masses.

The era of avoidance will come sharply to a close before another passive decade passes. And then, I fear, the danger is that we won’t be prepared, to hold the bonds of decency together. Peaceful people can revise their values when they’re scared—and decency can change, just like the weather.

Indeed, what history shows is that we humans can be manic; we’re subject to wide swings from peace to war.

Avoidance and complacency can also turn to panic, as humans have done many times before. People won’t be patient, once they fear for their survival, for ineffective words or vague designs. This August marks a century since Word War I’s arrival, and that should send a shiver down our spines.

And so, rather than build a case for Mother Earth’s arraignment, we should focus brainpower and passion,

In fashioning the frameworks for humanity’s “**sustainment**”: security through wisdom and compassion.

The prior generation somehow managed to foreclose the nuclear exchange that nearly stung us; To undergo the massive changes nature will impose, the forces to contain are those among us.

Crying Wolf?

Am I just Chicken Little, who proclaimed “The Sky is Falling,” and organized a march to tell the King?

(An acorn struck her head and Chicken Little started bawling, before she checked the science of the thing.)

Or maybe I sound like the Boy Who Cried “Wolf” immaturely, before the Wolf was really at the door,
And thereby lost his audience, by warning prematurely, and lost the sheep that he was liable for.

Well, Chicken Little’s theory was unfounded and unvetted, her principal hypothesis was dumb;
And crying Wolf too soon, while both short-sighted and regretted, simply came before its time
had come.

No, I prefer the metaphor of Boston’s Paul Revere, a hero of American tradition.
Paul Revere was famous as a horse-back volunteer, to warn about a British expedition.
Paul’s battlefield scenarios were limited to two: one by land, the other one by sea.
The British troops were coming, that prediction was quite true; the question was just which route
it would be.

We can’t be sure from place to place just which assaults will strike; both land and sea can mount
severe attacks;

We can’t be sure what local people’s actions will be like, or how the wider human race reacts.
But as with Boston’s Minutemen, the danger signs are clear, the answer to the question can’t be
neither.

The risks we see from land and sea will not just disappear, real lives depend on readiness for
either.

Keynote address

by Mr. Axel Rottländer, Chief Executive Officer

German Committee for Disaster reduction (DKKV)

Chair of the Working Group on Climate Change Adaption and Disaster Risk Reduction European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR)

Resilience has become a buzzword and many concepts concerning Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) are referring to resilience. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) refers to the concept of resilience by stating its aim: “Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters”, and the framework describes in priority three a number of activities. Quite a number of definitions for resilience are existing and they highlighting different aspects. For example, UNISDR defines resilience as resistance to disasters, ability to recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely manner, preservation and restoration of basic structures. For others resilience to natural hazards consists of three pillars: resistance, recovery and adaptive capacity. Other definitions highlight the ability to learn from disasters as one of the main aspects of resilience. As a result, the term resilience is used in many different ways and it is often not clear what resilience actually means.

Resilience is obviously the result of different factors, there is an economic, political and social dimension of the term resilience, and it describes a status rather than a process. Livelihood for example of an important factor when increasing resilience and wellbeing is another one. In addition, social protection and good governance do play an important role. Hence, these factors need to be taken into consideration when communities and states want to become more resilient.

Nevertheless, these different factors of resilience also require concerted action of different levels and actors. Hence, increased resilience is a result of comprehensive efforts, which need to be deeply rooted at all levels. Efforts for increased resilience have to come from a society itself and it seems difficult to “make” a society resilient. Resilience is a result of factors that deeply rely on culture and society. Individuals, communities and states have to develop their own specific strategy to influence the factors for resilience.

Communities with economic stability, social services, social protection and good governance will be resilient. These communities will also be in a position to apply all the tools resulting from the Disaster Management such as prevention and preparedness as well as emergency response and reconstruction, which makes them even more resilient.

These factors are also very much connected to the concept of sustainable development and this is in line what UNISDR proposed as elements for the new Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). “The expected outcome of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction should not be described only in terms of reduced loss but rather in positive and aspirational terms such as secure, healthy, wealthy and resilient nations and communities.” The new HFA will strengthen the efforts on the local, national and international level to foster resilience by making a link to the SDGs.

Due to climate change, extreme weather events are likely to appear more often with an increased intensity. This means that our capacity to learn natural disasters has to go beyond the reference to the past but we have to anticipate the impact of future disasters. Currently predictions are still uncertain as the second report of the IPCC outlines. Therefore, climate change adds another risk that need to be considered when working on the resilience factors and disaster risk reduction.

Resilience cannot be seen a tasks for a community or a state only. Disasters do not stop at borders, and comprehensive efforts are required to extend and improve coordination and cooperation of the international community for increased resilience. The existing HFA and new HFW will provide tools, methods and guidance on how international cooperation and coordination for increased resilience can achieved.

Closing Statement

by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Dear Ambassadors,
Dear Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, please allow me to express my gratitude for the constructive discussions, the comprehensive presentations, the competent moderations as well as the ideas put forward today.

The keynote speeches by Dr. Tipson and Mr. Rottländer have pointed to the various aspects of natural disasters and their implications for security. Dr. Tipson warned that natural disasters are likely to become the biggest threat to security and co-operation in our era. He called for a renewed commitment of the OSCE towards addressing this new set of threats. Mr Rottlaender reiterated one of the key messages of the first preparatory meeting: that increasing resilience to natural disasters requires concerted action of different levels and stakeholders. He further emphasized the relevance of the tools provided by the existing Hyogo Framework for Action and the new post-2015 framework in advancing this process.

The focus of this Second Preparatory Meeting is very relevant not only to the policy and decision-makers but also to ordinary people in all 57 participating States. In the coming years, one of the greatest challenges will be to adapt societies to a changing environment. Only then can they successfully cope with the effects of climate change, including growing climate-related disaster risks. In our first session we have examined different ways for reducing these risks at local level. As an example, we have learned how an Aarhus Centre in Tajikistan has been providing effective tools to this end.

The second session was dedicated to a discussion of cross-dimensional impacts of disasters, including in the context of population movements. In this regard, presentations by UNHCR, the Norwegian Refugee Council and by OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre gave a good opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of this topic.

In the third session, we addressed disaster risk reduction from another perspective, looking at reduction of risks in international, cross-border and national contexts. The speakers highlighted the need for robust co-operative arrangements at different levels, including at the cross-border level. We also had a chance to learn of a self-assessment tool developed by the OSCE applicable also to increase states' preparedness for cross-border implications of disasters.

Our today's discussions have resulted in a number of recommendations from the experts and the participants about the possible areas where the OSCE could provide its support. Mr Kemp provided a concise summary of these recommendations and gave us food-for-thought for our preparations of the Concluding Meeting in Prague.

I wish to highlight two areas of our work that were once again emphasized as being highly relevant: first, to further promote capacity development on disaster risk reduction at all levels in close collaboration with national and local authorities. And second, to continue fostering dialogue and co-operation among the participating States in this area. This should include enhanced co-operation among different national agencies as well as among civil society and the private sector.

We will closely review the recommendations that are generated today and assess possible follow-up activities. My Office will continue to build on the experience acquired by the OSCE and our ENVSEC partners to support disaster risk reduction efforts. This will include further advancement of our activities in the areas of wildfire management, flood risk reduction and climate change risk assessment and adaptation. My Office will also support the implementation of last year's MC Decision on the protection of energy networks from natural and man-made disasters, a topic related to this year's Economic and Environmental Forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would also like to say a few words about the Concluding Meeting in Prague in September. One of the essential elements of a concluding meeting is a review of the OSCE commitments related to the topic of the Forum of that year. We are looking forward to the results of this year's review to be prepared by the United Nations Development Programme.

What is very important is that the Concluding Meeting will consolidate the outcomes of the Forum discussions throughout the year. It will help crystalize conclusions and recommendations for OSCE action in the area of disaster risk reduction, also taking into account a possible Ministerial Council decision at the end of the year.

Reverting to today's meeting and concluding my speech, I wish to note that a Consolidated Summary including the key suggestions and recommendations made by participants during today's deliberations, will be compiled by my Office and made available to all of you within the next weeks.

Thank you.



FIELD VISIT ASSESSMENT

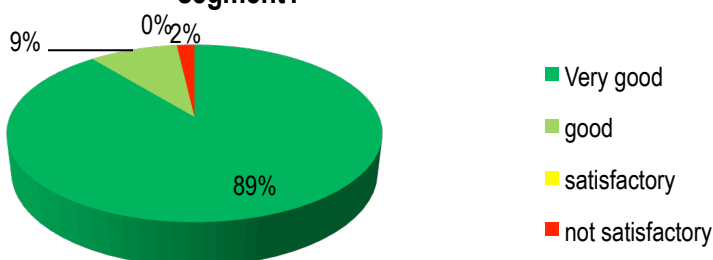
Number of received evaluation sheets:

55

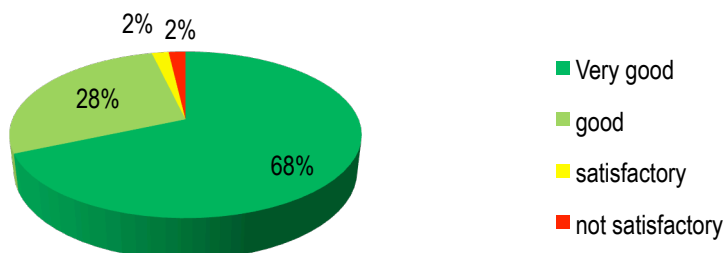
Question 1				
How useful is the combination of a conference segment and a field visit segment?	49	5	0	1
Question 2				
Did the field visits contribute to good practice sharing between participating States/ experts?	37	15	1	1
Question 3				
Are field visits recommendable for future OSCE Chairmanships?	46	8	1	0
What did you like most at the field visits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Professionalism • Everything • Concrete examples • Good organization • Explanation and tour • Practical side of DRR • Trip itself was useful • St. Bernhard • To see things in action • Practical and technical information • The visit at the school (Monthey) • Well-presented information • Getting a concrete sense of DRM • The Swiss Team! • Tunnel facilities 			
Any additional comments you want to share?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More advice to the teams from the rest how to engage in international system • A Field visit may be only appropriate for certain topics • Rather than theory may be case studies, practice will be more useful • It was a perfect activity • fantastic scenery and Swiss hospitality • one stop less would have been better 			

- skip or separate the statements during the forum, it kills any discussion
- Well organized conference, thank you!
- Would be interesting to see the cooperation in a real situation- assist to an international/ cross border exercise
- Field visit took up too much time in the context of a 2 day forum
- Thank you

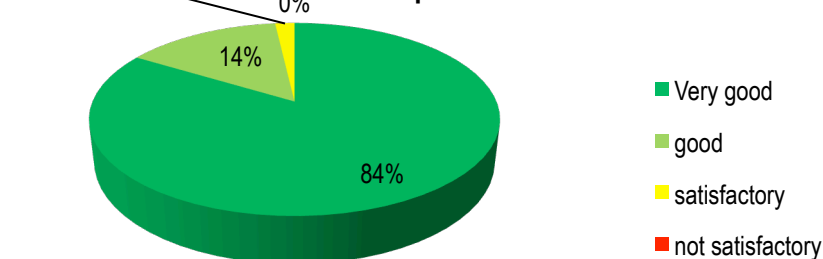
How useful is the combination of a conference and a field visit segment?



Did the field visits contribute to good practice sharing between participating States/ experts?



Are field visits recommendable for future OSCE Chairmanships?



**FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING
OF THE 22nd ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Opening address

by Ambassador Thomas Greminger

**Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council
Head of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE,
United Nations and International Organizations
2014 Swiss OSCE Chairmanship**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Swiss Chairmanship it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22st OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

I would like to thank the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for their efforts in organizing this Preparatory meeting as well as for their contribution to our common goal – “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”.

I warmly welcome all representatives of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, high-level officials from ministries and agencies, representatives of international, regional and non-governmental organizations as well as experts from the business sector and academia and last, but not least, the officers from OSCE field Missions in charge of economic and environmental activities.

We are pleased to have you all here and to see that some delegations have integrated representatives of their National Platforms for Natural Hazards or Hyogo Framework for Action Focal Points.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Natural hazards can strike anywhere, at any time, regardless of boundaries, political situations or other circumstances. They can turn into disasters if we are not well prepared. Many participating States, represented in this room, know from their own experience that the scale, frequency, and severity of such events are increasing. 2/3

It is our common responsibility to be ready to respond to environmental challenges. We are convinced that the OSCE participating States should increase cooperation in this field in order to be able to improve the security of their populations.

That is the reason why one priority of the Swiss Chairmanship is dedicated to reinforcing the management of natural disaster risks in the OSCE region. We intend to focus on promoting integrated disaster risk management through awareness building and capacity development using mutual learning opportunities as well as targeted cooperation efforts. We are closely working with the future Serbian Chairmanship to create continuity and consistency. In fact, the theme of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum is part of our joint work plan.

This year, the Swiss Chairmanship proposes to focus on the promotion of an integrated disaster risk management approach. What do we mean by "integrated" and what do we understand when speaking about "disaster risk management"?

"Disaster risk management" means the management of risks before, during and after the event. Managing risks means to work on preventing and mitigating risks. "Integrated" relates to different aspects: to a holistic view of disaster risk management that sees prevention, preparedness, response and recovery as interlinked elements; to a multi-stakeholder approach in which a variety of actors - governmental and non-governmental actors, civilians, academics and practitioners - work together for effective disaster risk management; to an outlook that understands managing disaster risks is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development and security.

This topic is not new to the OSCE family, but it has so far received limited attention within this organization. There are a number of OSCE commitments that relate to the need to work together in order to promote security and cooperation in relation to environmental challenges and natural risks. These commitments focus on fostering cooperation on disaster preparedness and response. We believe that the OSCE participating States should also increase cooperation when it comes to prevention and mitigation of existing risks. Effective disaster risk management must happen well before a disaster strikes. The fact that natural disasters such as earthquakes, droughts or floods are often transboundary in nature makes cooperation between OSCE participating States not only desirable, but necessary. The transboundary and global risk factors require cooperative efforts in their assessment and management.

This First Preparatory meeting and the 2nd Preparatory meeting in May, will allow for an exchange between governmental and non-governmental actors, between those who might be affected by a natural disaster and those who are working for effective public policies to prevent vulnerabilities, to manage a disaster situation once it hits a community or to recover and reconstruct. At this 2nd Preparatory meeting that will take place in Montreux, in Switzerland, we would also like to invite you to a field visit and we very much hope that a great number of participants will attend. 3/3

We want to see the two Preparatory Meetings before "Prague" instrumentally contributing to, and culminating in, an outcome in Prague which we will have defined together in a consultative manner. In Prague we shall come to conclusions on what the OSCE can contribute in managing risks, increasing the security of nations and communities, and in which concrete areas enhanced cooperation of participating States is needed. The Swiss Chairmanship will facilitate this process and count on your support to reach consensus on practical and balanced recommendations for the OSCE.

I would like to thank you in advance for actively participating in this year's Prague Cycle, for your willingness to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on disaster risk management, and in that way, hopefully, for contributing to the increased resilience of nations and communities in the OSCE region.

Thank you for your attention.

Opening address

by Ambassador Lamberto Zannier

Secretary General

OSCE

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I warmly welcome all of you to Vienna to the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum devoted to addressing the challenges of managing natural disasters in the OSCE area.

1. As a security organization, the OSCE must acknowledge the fact that natural disasters affect the security of nations and individuals. Disasters injure and kill people, damage homes and infrastructure, and undermine key sectors of the economy. Their consequences can fuel tensions and lead to conflicts within and among societies. This is why trans boundary co-operation on preparedness and response to natural disasters is important not only as a tool to address the immediate consequence of the disaster, but also as a co-operative and a confidence-building measure aimed at avoiding the risk of tension and conflict.

2. In fact, natural disasters know no borders. Since the year 2000, almost half of the world's population has been affected by them. More than one million people have lost their lives. Disasters have proven to be able to wipe out decades of progress – disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable categories: the poor, women, children, the elderly, youth and people with disabilities.

In an interconnected world, even disasters of local nature can have far-reaching consequences. Let me remind you, for instance, of the earthquakes, tsunami and floods that hit the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Japan and Thailand in 2011 and their impact also on the people and economies of faraway countries.

3. Within the OSCE area, natural disasters also pose significant transboundary risks. To mention just a few examples, participating States in Central Asia, South Caucasus, Southern Europe, North America and some regions of the Russian Federation face serious seismic hazards. Wildfires occur frequently in the South Caucasus, the Russian Federation, Belarus and Ukraine as well as in North America and Southern Europe, and at times across borders between states.

The OSCE region is also vulnerable to water-related transboundary risks, including a shortage of water. For instance, the multi-year droughts at the beginning of the last decade in Central and South-west Asia and the Caucasus affected some 60 million people and caused significant economic losses. Too much water can be of equal concern: less than a year ago, in June 2013, heavy rainfall over Europe caused rivers to burst their banks, causing disasters that affected several countries, including our host country, Austria. Tens of thousands of people had to be evacuated and the combined economic loss amounted to the equivalent of 17 billion euros.

In addition, climate change, coupled with rapidly increasing rates of urbanization, makes the impact of disasters much worse. The frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters have been increasing in different parts of the world in the past two decades. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has forecasted that climate-related disasters will increasingly become a global challenge of the twenty-first century, affecting security world-wide.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Responding to natural disasters requires fostering local, national and international capacities for prevention, preparedness, early warning, and response.

With its comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach to security, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is well placed to contribute to the international community's efforts to improve co-operation on disaster risk reduction. The OSCE's broad membership, with its 57 participating States, enables us to support co-operation, and share experiences and best practices within and between OSCE sub-regions.

In the OSCE context, the importance of co-operation on natural and man-made disasters for the security in our region was already recognized in the Helsinki Final Act, which identified meteorology, hydrology and seismological research as important areas of co-operation; a number of subsequent OSCE documents have also highlighted the need for co-operative efforts in dealing with disasters.

Today, as we move towards the 40th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, enhancing the strategic orientation of the economic and environmental dimension is one of the key areas of focus of our discussions, as we seek to enhance the Organization's ability to effectively address contemporary security challenges. The Forum can make a substantial contribution to this process by identifying possible roles for the OSCE in disaster risk reduction that build on the discussions that took place under the Lithuanian Chairmanship on challenges posed by natural and man-made disasters, and on the Decision on the Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-made Disasters adopted at the Kiev Ministerial Council.

As many of you know, I am a firm advocate of strengthening links between the Organization and Track II initiatives to introduce different perspectives and fresh ideas into OSCE debates. Finding solutions to environmental challenges requires participatory processes involving civil society, experts and academia, among others. I also believe that this is an area in which greater co-operation is needed among regional organizations. This is why this year's main Security Days event in May, on Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, will explore the role of regional organizations in addressing climate change and natural disasters, among other security challenges. It is also why we are organizing, together with the Swiss Chairmanship, a Security Day on Water in July. I am convinced that these discussions will generate fresh ideas and complement the outcomes of both this Forum and the Helsinki +40 process.

The 22nd Economic and Environmental Forum will help to consolidate a shared view on the possible role of the OSCE, as a regional security organization, in the disaster risk and crisis

management cycle. Insights into how the OSCE can create synergies with other actors and mobilize our own tools to address natural disaster risks more effectively could become valuable outcomes of the Forum process. We can also discuss how the OSCE could contribute to the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda, where disaster risk reduction can become a cross-cutting issue. The Forum's discussions are also relevant to the preparation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction that will replace the current Hyogo Framework for Action.

In particular, it will be important to consider preventive investments in risk reduction and emergency preparedness, as this has proved to be a cost-effective approach to significantly reducing the impact of natural hazards.

In addition, one should also look at ways to reduce the risks of natural disasters. A multiplicity of actors have a role to play in reducing these risks. By taking the right approach, governments, communities and people can make sure that a coming storm or flood will not turn into a disaster.

And finally, throughout the meeting there should be a strong focus on the role that the OSCE can realistically play in disaster risk management and in fostering co-operation in this field, taking into account the activities of other partner institutions..

In concluding, I wish to express my gratitude to the guest speakers and to all participants for joining us here in Vienna to take an active part in our deliberations. I look forward to your discussions over the next two days, and especially to practical suggestions to further develop the OSCE's role in this important area.

Thank you.

Opening address

by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden

Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,

It is an honour to address this opening session of the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. This year's topic focuses on a special aspect of environment and security: the risks of natural disasters and ways of mitigating these risks and strengthening resilience.

I am very pleased to welcome today so many experts that are here to share their knowledge on these issues: government officials from the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, representatives of international and bilateral organisations, of international NGOs, academia and the private sector.

Within the OSCE, challenges posed by natural disasters and the need for co-ordinated response have already been discussed on several occasions, starting with the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, as mentioned by the Secretary General. Since then, participating States have repeatedly recognized the importance of managing disasters in a co-operative way: in the 1999 Istanbul Summit Document, the 2002 Porto Ministerial Declaration and the 2005 Ministerial Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant as well as in the 2003 OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension and the 2007 Madrid Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Security.

The cross-dimensional nature of the topic and its links to different aspects of security are also reflected in several policy documents of the Politico-Military Dimension, including the MC Decision 02/09 on Further OSCE Efforts to Address Transnational Threats and Challenges to Stability and Security, and the MC Decision 03/11 on Elements of the Conflict Cycle. The OSCE Border Security and Management Concept adopted at the 2005 Ministerial Council in Ljubljana also referred to facilitation of cross-border co-operation in case of natural disasters or serious accidents in border zones.

Within the Second Dimension, we have taken some concrete steps to put these commitments into action. Let me give you some examples of what my Office has been doing:

Since 2006, we have been actively engaged in wildfire management in the South Caucasus. We started with an OSCE-led Environmental Assessment Mission to fire-affected territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Our next engagement was the Joint OSCE/UNEP Environmental Assessment Mission to Georgia in the fall of 2008 following the forest fires that occurred as a consequence of 2008 conflict in Georgia. Based on the needs identified in these

assessments, we have since 2009 been supporting a fire management capacity building programme covering all three countries of the South Caucasus. Our leading expert in this project will share his experiences in the panel debate this afternoon.

These activities are taking place in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative – ENVSEC - where the OSCE co-operates with UNDP, UNEP, UNECE, REC and NATO as an associate partner. ENVSEC offers a unique mechanism to create synergies and jointly address environmental challenges related to natural and cascading disasters. In November last year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of this initiative, and we can discuss during our meeting how we can further facilitate sharing of best practices and their replication, as appropriate.

Let me mention just one other example of our disaster-related work within ENVSEC, one which addresses water: the joint efforts by the OSCE, UNECE and UNEP to support a framework for co-operation in the Dniester River Basin. It resulted in the bilateral Treaty on the Dniester River Basin signed by Ukraine and Moldova in 2012. One major element of our activities was a basin-wide impact and vulnerability assessment, as well as detailed flood-risk modelling in two selected sites.

The Dniester is also a pilot basin for the development of a transboundary climate change adaptation strategy and vulnerability assessment in the framework of an OSCE-led ENVSEC project on climate change and security. This project, financed by the European Union's Instrument for Stability, and implemented together with UNEP, UNDP, UNECE and REC, assesses security implications of climate change in three regions – Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia. The impact of climate change on the frequency and severity of natural disasters will be one of the security concerns we will address.

Apart from the ENVSEC activities, my Office organized in 2012 a workshop on International Responses to Major Natural and Man-made Disasters and the Role of the OSCE. It facilitated the exchange of best practices in the area of national and multilateral civil emergency response to major disasters. It also reviewed the respective activities of multilateral and regional structures, and discussed major challenges in this sphere.

The OSCE Field Operations are also very active in this field. Let me mention just two examples of activities implemented last year:

- The OSCE Centre in Astana co-organized, together with the UN, a regional conference on reducing disaster risks for Central Asia and the Caucasus.
- The OSCE Mission in Serbia held a regional workshop on inclusive flood risk management practices. I am happy to see many of our colleagues from the Field Operations here and we are looking forward to your contributions to the discussions.

Based on the existing experience of my Office and the Field Operations, we will continue to foster dialogue and co-operation between various stakeholders at local, national, and regional levels. In this regard, the OSCE-supported Aarhus Centres are well positioned to reach out to communities and promote community-based disaster risk reduction activities in close partnership with local administrations and civil society organizations.

Excellencies,

Responding to environmental challenges and promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area are key priorities of the Second Dimension and an integral part of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. The increasing importance of sound environmental governance and co-ordinated action to reduce disaster risks require continuous dialogue.

Our agenda for the next two days will provide an opportunity for this. We will start by discussing the human, social and economic impacts of natural disasters in order to learn how preparedness and prevention can reduce losses. We will hear concrete case study examples of past disasters and of successful co-operation in natural disaster management: co-operation between different states, between the military and civilian actors, between government and civil society, and between local and national levels of government. We will discuss how environmental good governance and sustainable management of natural resources can foster addressing environment and security challenges. And we will also take into account gender aspects. Better education of women has measurable effects on reducing vulnerability through better awareness as well as faster responses to alerts and more reliable social networks. In this respect, civil society and business sectors are important actors and we will have a chance to benefit from their contributions in these two days.

Once again, welcome to all of you here. I am looking forward to fruitful discussions.

Thank you for your attention.

Keynote speeches

by Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir

**Director CRED and Professor at the University of Louvain
School of Public Health
Belgium**

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

"Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area"

FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27-28 January 2014

Presentation by CRED, Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir

EEF.IO/1/14

27 January 2014

ENGLISH only



The slide is a title slide for a presentation. It has a blue header bar with the CRED logo on the left and the UCL and World Health Organization logos on the right. The main text is centered and reads: "Natural disasters 1994-2013 : Trends for OSCE countries", "OSCE – Vienna, 27th January 2014", and "Debarati Guha-Sapir". Below the name, it lists the affiliation: "Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters – CRED", "Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium", and the website "www.cred.be".

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
CRED
A WHO Collaborating Centre

UCL
World Health Organization

**Natural disasters 1994-2013 :
Trends for OSCE countries**

OSCE – Vienna, 27th January 2014

Debarati Guha-Sapir

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters – CRED
Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium
www.cred.be



The slide is an overview slide for the presentation. It has a blue header bar with the CRED logo on the left and the UCL and World Health Organization logos on the right. The main text is centered and reads: "OVERVIEW". Below this, there are two columns of text. The left column is titled "EM-DAT" and lists: "1900 – 2014", "184 countries", "All natural and technological disasters", and "Systematic methods and definition". The right column is titled "Moving forward" and lists: "Mapping the footprint", "Using standardise indicators and not absolute numbers", "Evidence on cross border events", and "Community based risk profiles".

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
CRED
A WHO Collaborating Centre

UCL
World Health Organization

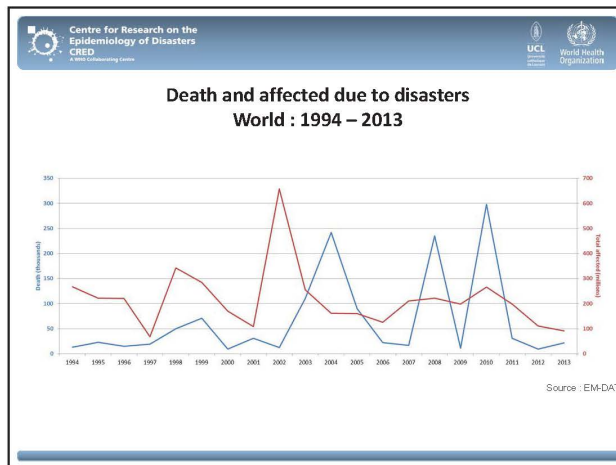
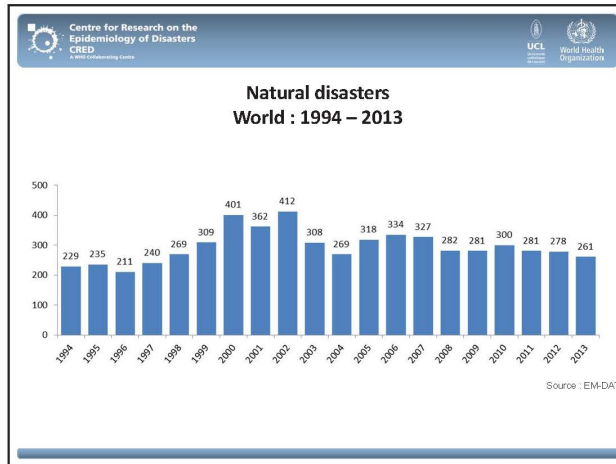
OVERVIEW

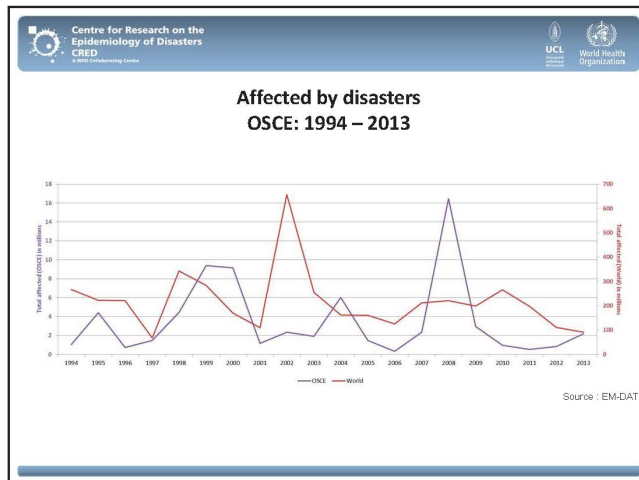
EM-DAT

- 1900 – 2014
- 184 countries
- All natural and technological disasters
- Systematic methods and definition

Moving forward

- Mapping the footprint
- Using standardise indicators and not absolute numbers
- Evidence on cross border events
- Community based risk profiles





Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
CRED
A WHO Collaborating Centre

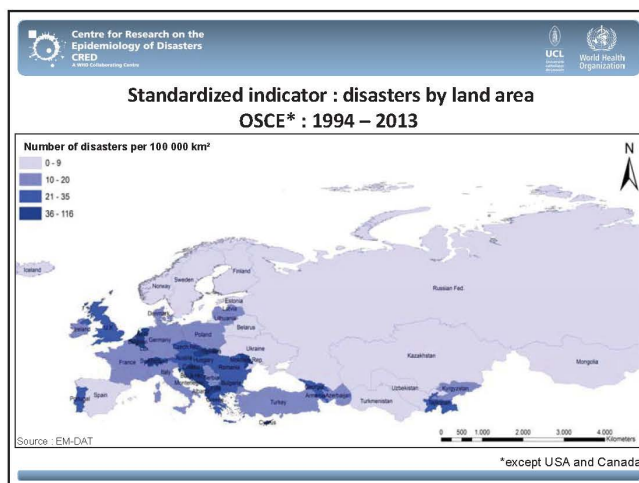
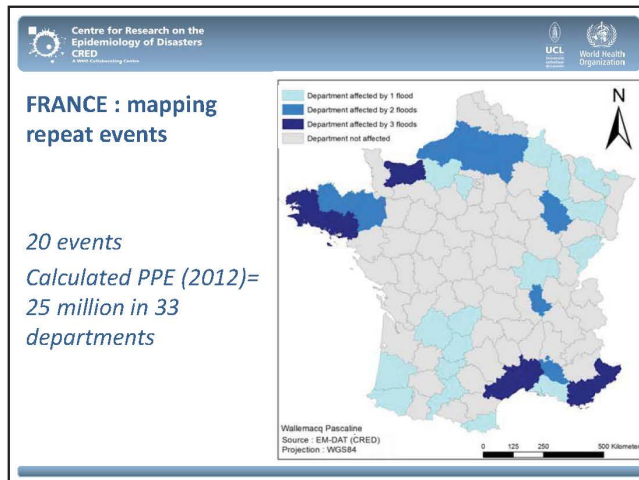
UCL
University College London
World Health Organization

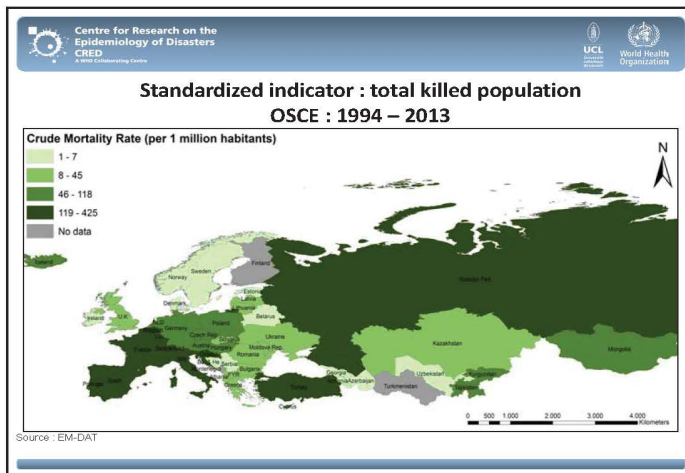
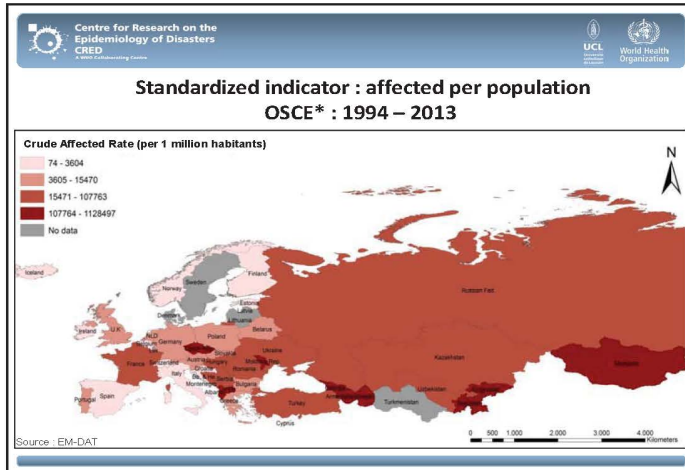
Georeferencing disaster impact for footprints

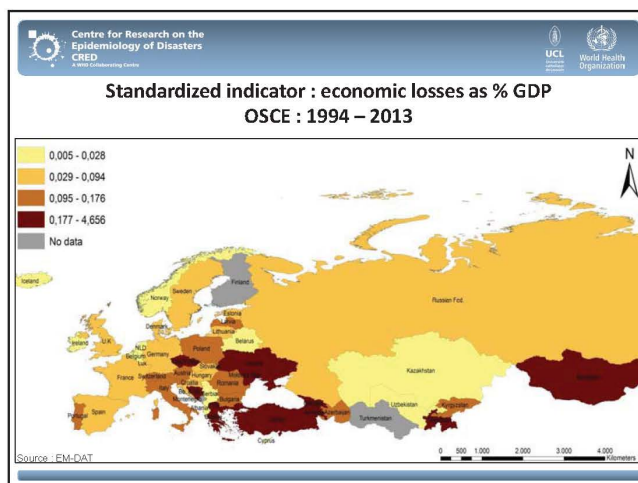
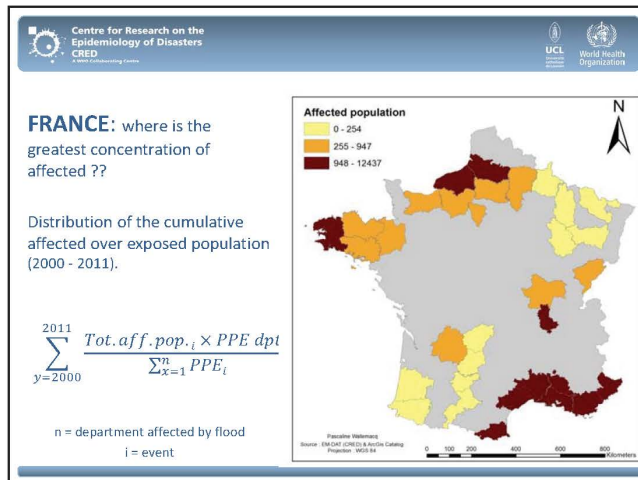
Data added to EM-DAT (Excel):


- admin code
- centroid coordinates
- precision of the georeferencing and details of the location

year	seq	country_name	location	Adm0_code	Adm1_code	Adm2_code	Adm3_code	Data_source_adm	Lat_centroide_lastadmin	Long_centroide_lastadmin	Precision	Details
2000	656	Japan	Tottori, Simane, Okayama, Saihaku (Saihakutyoo-Tottori district), Mizokuchi (Saihakutyoo-Tottori)	126	1691 1686 1680		-	GAUL2013	35,3621627 35,0785791	133,8094411 132,5642492	0	1
2000	743	Tajikistan	Khesonov village (Tarkhor region, Khatlon province)	239	2848	37595	-	GAUL2013	37,409766	69,257375	1	1
2000	749	Papua New Guinea	East New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville (Northern Solomons)	192	2292 2302 2304		-	GAUL2013	-5,1440291 -3,4788891	151,5734311 151,5278521	1	1
2000	761	Indonesia	Pandelang, Lebak, Serang	116	75610	18020 18022 18024	-	GAUL2013	-6,6423231 -6,5879121 -6,1447171	106,213431 105,7422021 106,146727	1	0











Centre for Research on the
Epidemiology of Disasters
CRED
A WHO Collaborating Centre





UCL
University College
London



World Health
Organization

CONCLUSION

Solidarity	Co-operating generally pays dividends
Incidents with cross border impact	Toxic or other forms of pollution; common watersheds planning; migration
Rationalising resources	Identify disaster types that cause most damage
Economic impact	most relevant in OSCE region



Centre for Research on the
Epidemiology of Disasters
CRED
A WHO Collaborating Centre

UCL
University College
London

World Health
Organization

Thank you ...

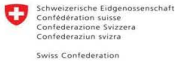
Debarati Guha-Sapir

E-mail: debby.sapir@uclouvain.be
pascaline.wallemacq@cred.be
www.emdat.be

Presentation

by Mr. Josef Hess

**Vice-Director of Federal Office for the Environment
Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of the Environment,
Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC
Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

EEF.DEL/11/14
29 January 2014

ENGLISH only

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”

FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27-28 January 2014

Opening Session

Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters

27.1.2014

Josef Hess, Dr. sc. ETH, Vice Director
Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland



Contents

- Understanding natural disasters
- Approaches to reduce risks
- Principles of integrated risk management
- Situation in Switzerland
- Building capacities
- Conclusion



Understanding natural disasters

- Disaster:
 - serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread losses
 - exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources
- Result of combination of:
 - exposure to a hazard;
 - conditions of vulnerability that are present;
 - insufficient capacity or measures to cope with the potential negative consequences



Understanding natural disasters

- Usually risk is expressed by the notation:

risk =



x



process, frequency, magnitude,
location

exposure, value, susceptibility

→ The focus on the notion of risk constitutes a shift from hazard-orientated actions to more risk-based approaches



Understanding natural disasters

- Reducing disaster risks means strengthening resilience by:
 - knowing the risks
 - avoiding exposure
 - reducing vulnerability
 - increasing capacity to manage emergencies
 - addressing recovery capacity to overcome disturbance
 - building adaptive capacity for long-term changes
- Applying an integrated risk management.



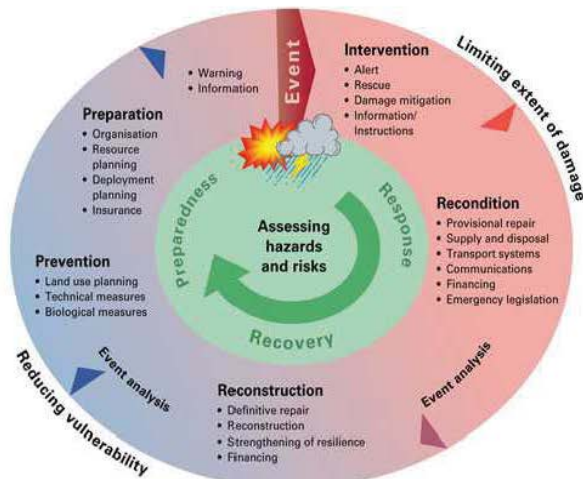
Approaches to reduce risks



risk management: continuous assessment of risk situation as well as planning and realising protection measures



Approaches to reduce risks

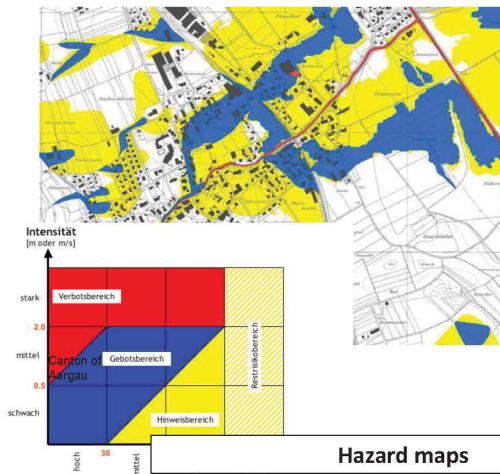


Approaches to reduce risks

Hazard assessment (hazard and intensity maps)
Risk assessment (loss potential, risk, protection objectives and deficits)
Prevention: planning of protection measures (land use planning, biological and technical measures)
Preparedness (organisational measures, monitoring and warning, information dissemination)
Response: Evacuation, short-term damage mitigation
Reconstruction, contingency planning, insurance
Learning from past events (event analysis)



Hazard assessment



- Detailed hazard assessment
- Scale 1:5,000 - 1:2,000
- 4 hazard categories
- Basis for land use planning

Hazard maps

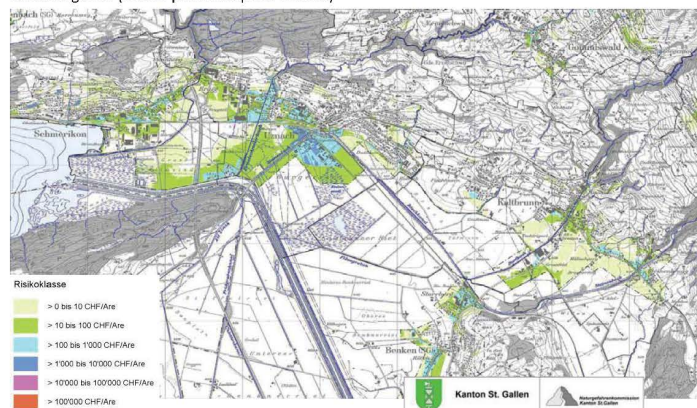
Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

9



Risk assessment

Risk categories (in CHF per 100 square metres)



Risk maps

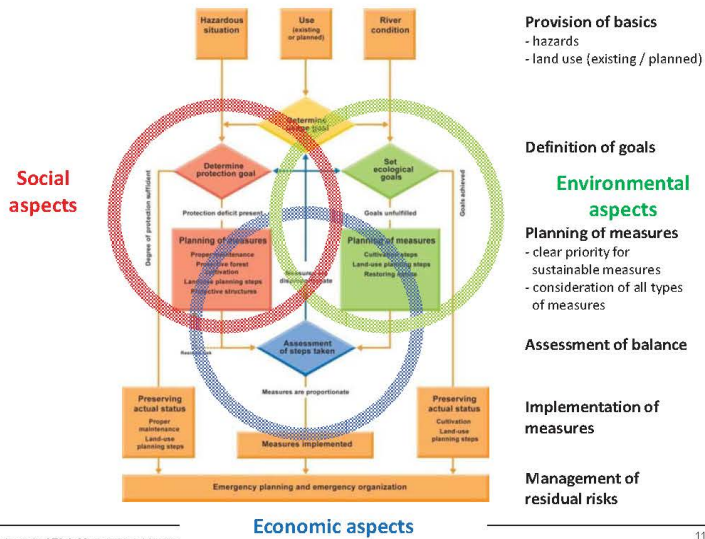
Linth 2000 project

Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

10



Prevention: Holistic planning



Integrated Risk Management to pre
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

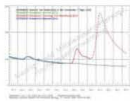
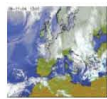
11



Preparedness



Collection
of data



Modelling,
forecasting



distribution of
information

**Successful
intervention**



Transmission
of data



Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN



Issuance of
bulletins, warning



Local interpretation,
training, emergency plans





Response

Short-term damage mitigation



Evacuation



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

13



Recovery and reconstruction

- Get back to normal as soon as possible
- Better construction of buildings
- Reserve space for nature



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

14



Learning from past events

Event analysis

Learning lessons from previous events, corresponding adjustment of strategies.

Monitoring and evaluation

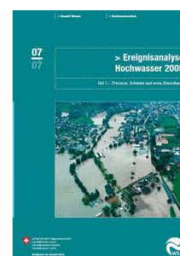
of the current hazard and risk situation. Corresponding adaptation of protection measures.

Risk dialogue

Active participation of municipalities in planning of protection measures.

Adapt objectives to new situations

Protection, utilisation, ecological objectives



Principles of integrated risk management

An integrated risk management:

- considers all natural hazards
- respects spatial and process-related conditions
- involves all actors and affected people
- considers all possible means for action
- accounts for future trends
- bases on principles of a sustainable development



Situation in Switzerland

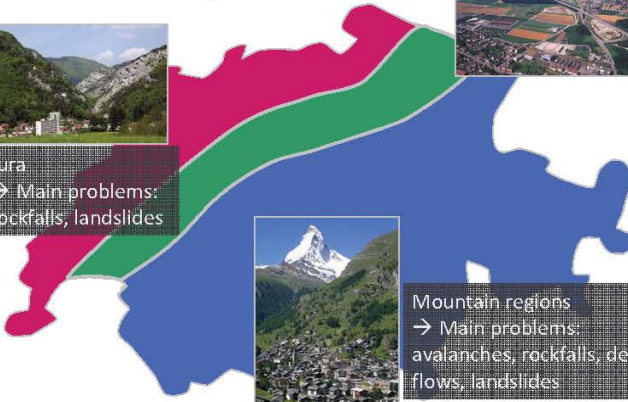
→ Goal: Guarantee equal safety for everyone in Switzerland



Jura
→ Main problems:
rockfalls, landslides



Central plateau
→ Main problems:
floods, storms,
some landslides



Mountain regions
→ Main problems:
avalanches, rockfalls, debris
flows, landslides

Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

Integrated Risk Management in Switzerland 7.1



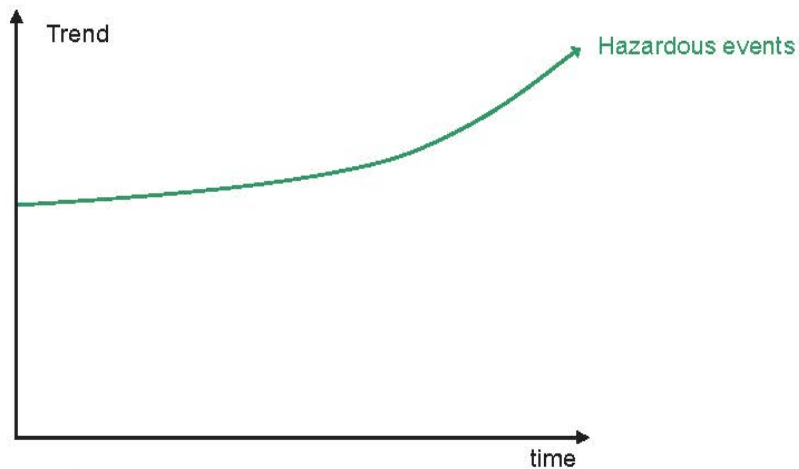
Situation in Switzerland

- Increase of damage potential (settlements, industry infrastructure etc.) and vulnerability
- Frequent natural events in the past years with major damage (floods 1999, 2005, 2007, avalanches 1999)
- Major natural disasters in the last 150 years led to a review and new formulation of the protection policy
 - 1868 floods → Law on the Forests resp. Flood Control
 - 1951 avalanches → First hazard maps
 - 1987 floods → Paradigm shift, integrated risk management

Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

18

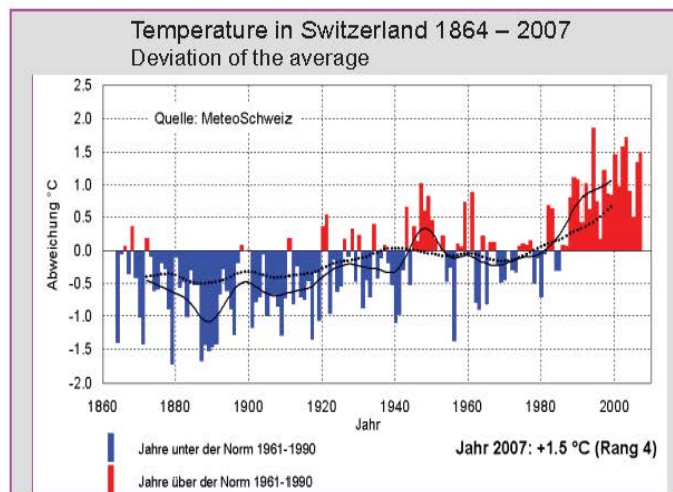
Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

19

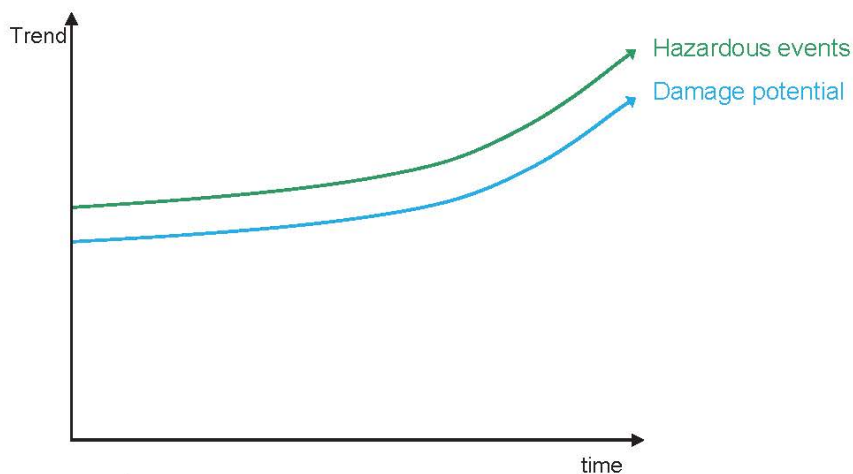
Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

20

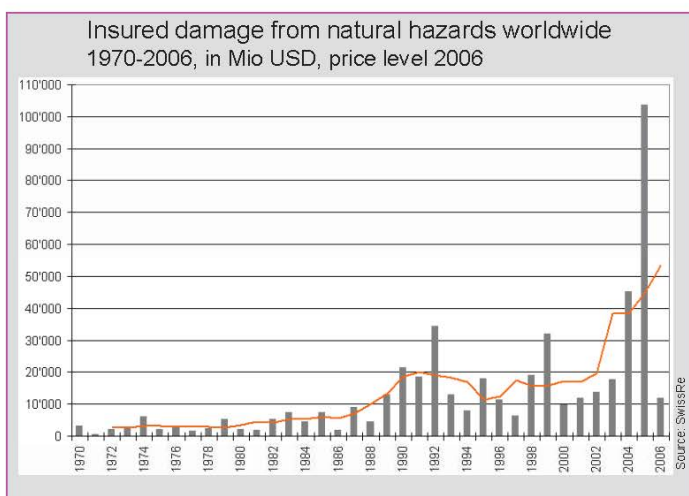
Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

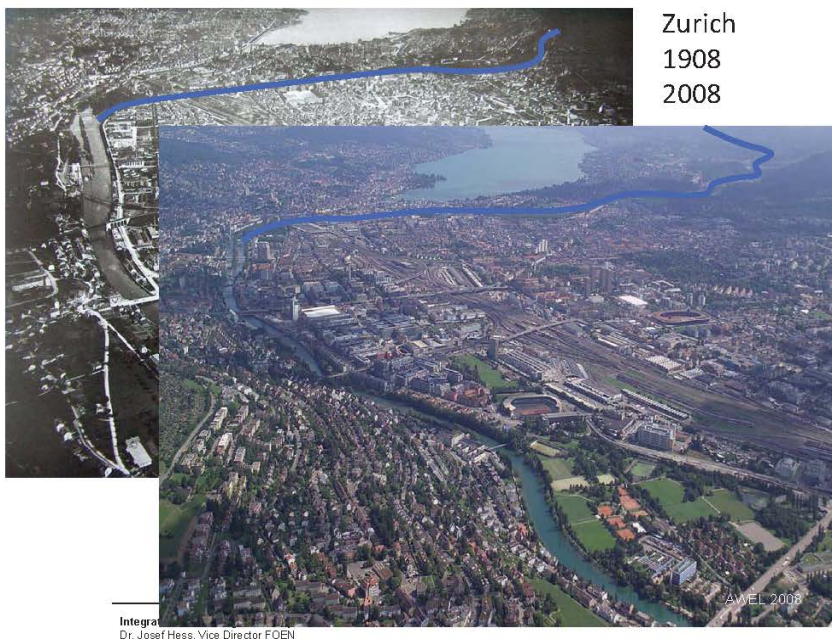
21

Management of natural risks

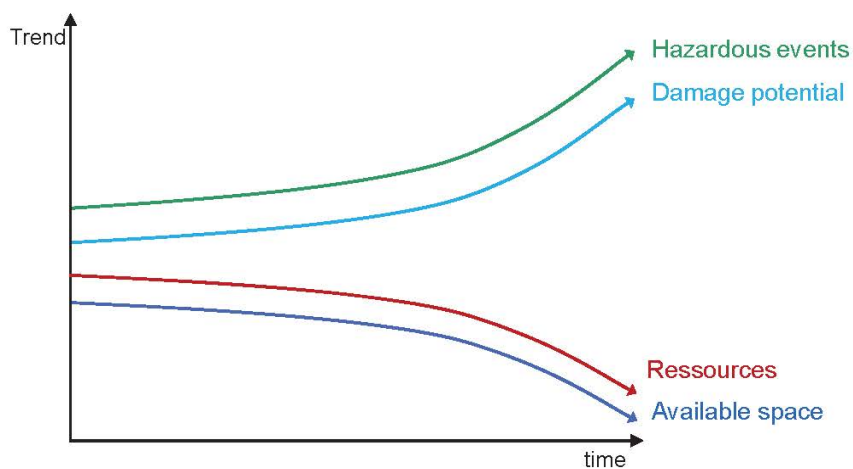


Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

22



Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

24

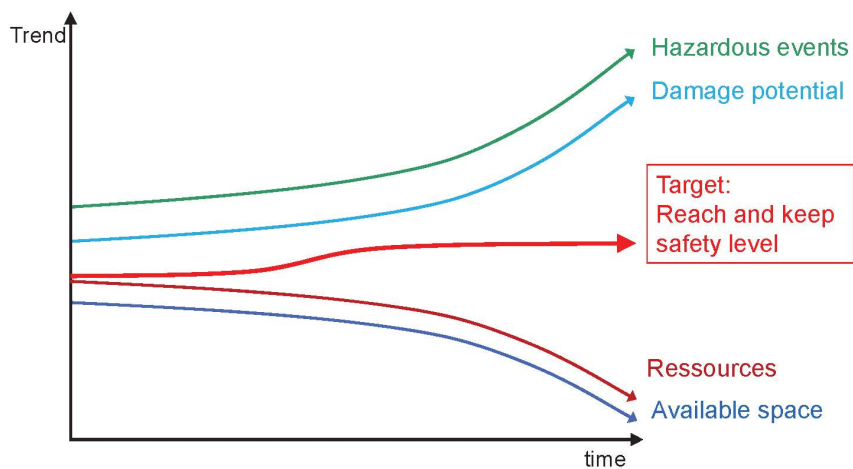
Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

25

Management of natural risks



Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters
Dr. Josef Hess, Vice Director FOEN

26



Task sharing in natural risk management

- Federal authorities: Legislation; policy; guidelines; financial support; support of research, education; warning and alerting
- Cantons (26): enforcement of laws; cantonal structure planning; hazard mapping; cantonal emergency management
- Municipalities (2408): communal land use planning; building permissions, local emergency management
- Insurance: mandatory insurance (all buildings), covering the remaining risk
- Property owner: local protection; precautionary measures



Building capacities

- Study courses at technical colleges and universities on natural hazard understanding and assessment as well as on engineering
- Education and training of emergency management units
- Formation of local hazard advisors
- Advanced training and experience exchange among practitioners
- Establishment of monitoring equipments and forecast models
- Cooperation between authorities, stakeholders etc.
- Optimisation of Early Warning and Alerting and improvement of interdepartmental cooperation through the “Steering Committee Intervention against Natural Hazards”



Conclusion

- We have to live with natural hazards, however we can reduce their adverse effects.
- New risks should be avoided by adaptation of land use and reduction of the damage potential.
- Necessary funding and resources for prevention at all levels should be provided.
- Past disasters offer important lessons to develop adapted strategies.
- All involved players have to be sensitised and trained.
- Close co-operation between the involved actors is a key factor.



**Thank you very much for
your attention**

Closing Statement

by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Dear Ambassadors,
Dear Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area”, please allow me to express my gratitude for the constructive discussions, the comprehensive presentations, the competent moderations as well as the ideas put forward over the last two days.

The theme of this year’s Forum proves to be of major importance for all 57 participating States of the Organization, by placing a particular focus on risks related to natural disasters and on how we, as a part of the international community, could contribute to finding solutions for reducing these risks.

We in the OSCE will spare no efforts to enhance the results achieved at this First Preparatory Meeting, also by complementing the efforts and activities of government agencies, UN organisations, the business sector and non-governmental organisations in this area of debate. We have seen that disaster prevention is not just a technical matter, but that it is closely linked with environmental good governance and sustainable management of natural resources. This represents also one of our core activities in the Second Dimension.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The two excellent keynote speeches by Ms. Guha-Sapir and Mr. Hess as well as the presentations in the first session showed clearly the urgency of addressing this topic and the devastating impact on human, social and economic life which disasters can have if we fail to invest in prevention, preparedness and management.

We have learned about global statistics and trends, but we have also got familiar with the concrete impacts of past disasters in the OSCE sub-regions, like the earthquakes in Turkey and Central Asia, or the recent floodings that affected various OSCE participating States. In this respect, the presentation on the flooding in Georgia which caused leakage of arsenic waste, showed the particular management challenge when natural disasters cause secondary technological accidents.

Other practical case studies showed us successful approaches of co-ordination and co-operation among different actors and levels in disaster management – for example the co-operation of public entities with insurance companies, the cross-border co-operation within the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe or the manifold bilateral co-operation of Slovenia with its neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, over the last two days we have addressed the topic of disasters from various perspectives, including the role of human interactions with environment, such as: unsustainable development practices, inadequate land management, poor spatial planning or infrastructure failures. And once again the role of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation was stressed.

Aware of the fact that a successful approach towards an integrated disaster risk management requires a multi-stakeholder approach, we have dedicated one session of this meeting to the role of civil society. It showed that co-operation with local communities, civil society and the business sector provides concrete added value in strengthening resilience. Also the work of the Aarhus Centres has been and continues to be of high value in this respect. We will continue to further expand the capacities of Aarhus Centres on disaster risk reduction in order to further enable them to strengthen in particular the awareness and capacities of communities.

There were suggestions and recommendations from the experts and the participants about the possible areas where the OSCE could provide its support and where it could play an important role in the field of reduction of disaster risks.

It is our responsibility to closely consider these recommendations and to look at possible follow-up activities. At the same time, we will continue to promote ratification and implementation of the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements to support efforts in the field of disaster risk reduction.

Moreover, my Office, with the support of the participating States, will continue to promote training and capacity development on relevant topics for national, regional and local administrations, as well as for the business community and civil society. Our Organization has engaged itself over the last decade, together with our ENVSEC partners, in disaster risks reduction - including on fire management related activities and we will further advance our engagement in this framework in close partnership with Global Fire Monitoring Centre and other specialized partners.

At the political level, as laid down in several Ministerial Council decisions, we will continue our efforts to promote dialogue and co-operation both among the participating States, as well as among non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector on issues related to environment and security including disaster risk reduction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last two days, we have received answers to many of our questions. However, there is still room for debate. The Second Preparatory Meeting, which will take place in Montreux on 20- 21 May, will provide opportunity for this and will bring us closer to achieving the main objective of this year's Forum process: to renew, deepen and better define the OSCE's political commitments and engagement in addressing preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to environmental challenges.

Thanks to the rapporteurs, a Consolidated Summary including the main key suggestions and recommendations made by participants during the deliberations will be compiled by my Office and made available to all of you within the next weeks.

Before passing the floor to Ambassador Greminger for the closure of this session, I would like to thank the Swiss Chairmanship, the Moderators, Speakers and Rapporteurs, the interpreters, the conference service staff, as well as the colleagues from my Office for their joint contribution to the success of this event.

I also want to thank all of you, dear participants, for your active contribution, and to wish you a safe trip back home.

Closing Statement

by Ambassador Thomas Greminger

**Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council
Head of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE,
United Nations and International Organizations
2014 Swiss OSCE Chairmanship**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are now concluding the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. I would like to express our satisfaction for the dynamic and constructive discussions we have had. In a couple of sessions during the past two days, we have indeed seen the kind of interaction between speakers and the audience that we are aiming at. I truly hope that together we can continue on this path.

I was equally encouraged to note the willingness, expressed by many of you during the debates, to deepen our co-operation to address together - and in a spirit of solidarity - environmental challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Integrated Disaster Risk Management is an investment”. That is a sentence that came up during one of yesterday’s sessions and that I would like to elaborate on for these concluding remarks.

Managing disaster risks is not only about managing disasters, but first and foremost about managing risks. We have heard that risk prevention and risk reduction are investments that ultimately limit the potential human, social and economic costs of disasters.

The trans-boundary and global characteristics of risks require cooperative efforts in their assessment and management. In our view, the OSCE, as the largest regional security organization, is very well placed to address these risks and enhance co-operation between participating States. Cross-border cooperation in disaster risk management might moreover serve as a confidence-building measure to be further explored in the context of the OSCE.

Another point that was raised several times and that is fundamental when it comes to disaster risk management is the collaboration between all involved actors, starting with children. Effective risks management requires action from a variety of stakeholders of local, sub-national, national, regional, and global levels as well as those of a public and private nature. For instance, activities on the level of local communities and of small-scale disasters are often neglected. Let me also recall the previous session that clearly showed that civil society has a crucial role to play. In this context we should take duly into account that women are essential actors.

Let me also come back to the international framework of disaster risk management. Within the UN family, a couple of important global review processes related to this topic are ongoing as it was pointed out several times. The work of OSCE participating States, also being part of the UN family, should not be disconnected from ongoing global UN processes. The debates we are having under the umbrella of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum should feed into the reflections leading to the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and the post-2015 development agenda and goals (MDGs) as it has been suggested by several speakers.

In the current frameworks and national platforms, the emphasis has so far been put on disaster preparedness and response. We have heard repeatedly, that we have to go beyond this stage and look more systematically into vulnerabilities, underlying causes of disasters, and disaster prevention.

Within the OSCE we see the same pattern. Current OSCE commitments are dealing with disaster preparedness and response, but not with disaster prevention. The OSCE could endeavor to find a role in the context of disaster prevention, risk mitigation and in making our societies more resilient. For instance, the OSCE could support, e.g. through the network of Arhus centers, activities that increase awareness on disaster risks.

During this two-day meeting we have received some answers to some of the key questions that have been raised; for some questions we have received only partial answers and there are many questions which require further attention and that we will address during the upcoming meetings in Montreux and Prague.

Let me therefore turn now to the second preparatory meeting, taking place in Montreux, Switzerland. In one of the sessions in Montreux the Swiss Chairmanship would like to further deepen the understanding on how to deal with the underlying causes of disasters, be it Unplanned Urbanization or Environmental Degradation. These have been mentioned several times during the past two days and the issue of “un-action” was raised by the representative of UNISDR. Another session could address the topic of Disaster-Induced Cross-Border Displacements and the potential implications of natural disasters on conflicts. Finally, we would also like to focus on Cooperation with International Organisations and concrete Capacity Building in the OSCE region. We understand from several interventions that capacity building is an important component where participating States can profit from each other’s know-how and where we could exchange good practices and lessons learned. That could be the programme of the first day.

On the second day of the Preparatory Meeting in Montreux we will go on a field trip. As you can see from the pictures, it will be a very different experience than sitting in a conference room. So don’t forget to pack your boots when coming to Switzerland in May!

We will break out of the conference premises and look into applied disaster risk management in the field. In two groups we will go on a field trip to the canton of Valais in order to have a deeper look into possible ways of managing disaster risks in a mountainous region. On the one hand we will look into the transnational Italian-Swiss cooperation in applied risk management along the transnational route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard. On the other hand we will look into the risk

management of natural hazard triggered disasters that could have a spillover effect causing industrial accidents.

The Concluding Meeting in September in Prague 2014 will be dedicated to conclusions on what the OSCE can contribute in managing risks, increasing the security of nations and communities, and in which concrete areas enhanced cooperation of participating States is needed. The Swiss Chairmanship will facilitate this process and count on your support to reach consensus on practical and balanced recommendations for the OSCE.

Let us try to increase the political and economic imperative for managing disaster risks, changing the perception of investment in risk management as an additional cost to one of an opportunity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I cannot conclude without thanking the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for the excellent collaboration with our Chairmanship in the preparation of this event. As in past years, the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities will compile a Consolidated Summary of this meeting which will serve as a background for further discussions. Thank you for that.

Last but not least, let me thank all those of you who contributed to this successful 1st Preparatory Meeting: the Moderators, Speakers, Rapporteurs, representatives of International Organizations and of NGOs, the conference service staff and interpreters as well as my colleagues involved in the preparation of this event at the Swiss mission and in Bern.

My thanks go also to you, dear participants, for your active participation, in particular those of you coming from the capitals. I wish you a safe trip back home and see you all in Montreux!

2014