



EUROPEAN UNION

24th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum Concluding Meeting Prague, 14-16 September 2016

EU Opening Statement

The European Union and its Member States wish to thank the Czech Republic for hosting another Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague and the German Chairmanship and Dr. Yigitgüden, OSCE Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, and his staff for organising this meeting. We also thank the keynote speakers for their insightful presentations.

Advancing good governance is a high priority for the European Union. This is reflected both in the EU's internal and external policies. With its clear link to sustainable development, security and stability, we believe good governance also belongs at the forefront of the OSCE's work. Being a regional security organisation and a forum for political dialogue, we regard the OSCE as well-placed to facilitate exchanges of best practices and stimulate further compliance of participating States with international commitments.

In discussing how to advance co-operation on good governance in the OSCE, we particularly appreciate the continued focus on combatting corruption, which remains among the greatest challenges for a number of participating States.

Following up on the Second Preparatory Meeting in Berlin, we look forward to continuing our discussions on the link between good governance, a positive investment climate, economic growth, stability and security as well as on good migration governance.

We also look forward to continuing our discussions from the 1st Preparatory Meeting in Vienna on good environmental governance, where the OSCE makes an important contribution to strengthening national capacities, promoting transboundary co-

operation and enhancing regional and international co-ordination mechanisms, as well as on promoting sustainable development and fighting climate change.

The inclusion of relevant stakeholders is key to advancing good governance. We therefore welcome that the business sector has been given a stronger voice in this year's forum. To this end, the Chairmanship Business Conference in Berlin in May also provided a useful platform for getting the private sector perspective on many of the topics on our agenda in the 2nd dimension.

Our discussions should focus on how to improve co-operation between OSCE participating States on issues related to good governance and on how to enhance the OSCE's contribution to concrete results on the ground. To this end, we welcome the discussion later today on the way to the Hamburg Ministerial Council.

With these remarks, we look forward to interesting and hopefully fruitful discussions in the days ahead.

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 LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

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