

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentleman,

On behalf of the OSCE Spanish Chairmanship, I would like to join previous speakers in this opening session in welcoming you all in this Conference. And on behalf of the Spanish Chairman in Office, I would like to deliver a message of support for this relevant conference and of goodwill to its participants.

First and foremost, I would like to extend on behalf of the Chairman-in-Office, H.E Miguel Angel Moratinos, my gratefulness to the government of Tajikistan for its hospitality, and to express his best wishes to H. E. Khamrokhon Zarifi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan as well as H. E Minister of Transport of Tajikistan, Abdurahim Ashur who are sponsoring and co-hosting this conference. The CiO would like as well to extend his warmest greetings to the other Ministers, Vice-ministers and personalities who are attending this Conference. Needless to say, the Spanish Chairmanship must once again praise the work and devoting efforts of the OCEEA, and would like very much to thank its coordinator Mr. Bernard Snoy for his resolute labour in achieving such good results. At the same time, I join previous speakers in thanking Mr. Erdenebileg who represents the UN Office for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing Countries, as well as Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin and the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe, without his support this conference could not have come into true.

In the last couple of years the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension develop an ascending path and gains a new impetus. Progress has been achieved in particular with regard to the effectiveness and the outcome of the annual Economic and Environmental Forum. The Forum is generating each year a number of follow-up activities and concrete results. This has been the merit of past able Chairmanships, of the OCEEA, of the OSCE field presences, and above all of the OSCE participating States and partners for Cooperation itself. This Dushanbe Conference on Transport Transit Development is an excellent proof of this ascending path. It is a follow-up conference to the 14th Forum under the Belgium Chairmanship. It is the result of an initiative of the Government of Tajikistan, which was then supported by other countries from Central Asia and from other regions as well. It is a concrete task of a Ministerial Decision adopted in Brussels last year. Last but not least it was made possible due to the work and dedication of the OCEEA and the Centre in Dushanbe.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentleman,

Enhancing Second Dimension related activities and the focusing the OSCE's attention more sharply in relevant regions such as Central Asia are two fundamental Spanish Chairmanship's priorities for its 2007 term of Office. Generating substantive follow-ups to the activities carried out throughout our Chairmanship, which follow the lead of Conferences like this one, is, in our view, an aim in the interest of the OSCE as a whole.

The development of the comprehensive concept of security within the OSCE is inextricably linked to the Economic and Environmental Dimension. If last year the Belgium Chairmanship chose the focus on economic issues and selected as topic in this matter Transport Development Cooperation and Transport Security, during 2007 the Spanish Chairmanship decided to focus in environmental issues and examine the challenges of land degradation, desertification and water management. Spain believes that there is a need for the OSCE to properly address the links between environment and security in the OSCE region and as a result, this need has led us to present a draft OSCE Strategy on Security and Environment, which Spain would like to see adopted by Ministers in Madrid next November and for which I ask your support.

The links between security on the one hand, and economy and environment on the other, are factually even deeper than it seems. Enhancing the profile of Second Dimension activities in both the economic and environmental fields is thus complementary, it goes hand in hand. Let me put an example related to this very conference. Landlocked countries which experience difficulties in transport and trade need to have those barriers removed. Similarly, those countries can also experience water dearth associated problems which need to be overcome. In both cases actors are closely interdependent, solutions have to be mutually satisfactory and cooperation is needed. Improvement in both scenarios, economic and environmental, inevitably leads to overall and reinforced security.

The Spanish Chairmanship is intent on turning theory into practice. Consistently with this approach, the Spanish Chairman in Office has deemed from the beginning of his term that the OSCE's focus in Central Asia should be further stressed. In this context, I would like to recall the visits that the CiO paid to all five Central Asian republics last April, in which he had the occasion of meeting his colleague Ministers and with several Head of states and Governments, and to discuss with them matters of mutual interest. As a result of this political impetus, several important initiatives in Second Dimension issues, with a particular emphasis on environment, have been carried out during 2007 in Central Asia or will be carry out in the near future. In this respect, I would like to take advantage of this occasion to invite you all to the incoming Tashkent Conference on Water Management, Desertification and Land Degradation, whose aim is to facilitate the transfer of water technologies and which will be held on October 30th and 31st.

Ladies and gentleman,

The development of transportation is a challenge and a responsibility. It also provides important opportunities to all OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation.

The OSCE offers a unique forum where we take stock of policies and opportunities in the field of transportation in the OSCE area.

The OSCE always valued the interactions between stakeholders and I am looking forward to the presentations and debates of the next two days. Aspects

related the implementation of international legal instruments, best practices and standards, as well as the public-private partnership for cooperation in addressing common challenges are extremely important. I want to emphasize the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of existing policies and the importance of promoting good governance in the field of transport.

This conference in Dushanbe also represents an opportunity for exchanging best practices and experiences in an interregional context, and for strengthening political commitments in this regard. It also offers the opportunity to establish and strengthen partnerships with other actors and to integrate OSCE activities into other regional or global processes.

I thank you and wish you all a successful conference.