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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 15 June 2005

To: All OSCE Delegations
Partners for Co-operation
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

Subject: **Follow-up to the 13th Economic Forum**

Please find attached a document on implementing the recommendations of the 13th Economic Forum, prepared by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities

Vienna, 15 June 2005

Implementing recommendations of the 13th Economic Forum

**“Demographic Trends, Migration and Integrating Persons belonging to National Minorities:
Ensuring Security and Sustainable Development in the OSCE area”**

This document summarizes some key recommendations and preliminary follow-up ideas formulated during the 13th OSCE Economic Forum and its preparatory process. It also presents some immediate actions the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) is prepared to take in order to contribute to the implementation of these recommendations.

The objective of this document is to stimulate an initial discussion in the Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee (EESC) on the recommendations of the 13th Economic Forum and ways to implement them.

The OCEEA, in support of the Chairmanship, will continue to assess all the recommendations that emerged from the Forum and which have been included in the Consolidated Summary. With due consideration for the guidelines received through the EESC, the OCEEA will prepare and present to the EESC at a later stage a more comprehensive plan of action to implement the recommendations of the 13th Economic Forum.

Action Plan or Strategy for managing migration issues for adoption at the Ministerial Council meeting in Ljubljana in December 2005

This follow-up idea of the Chairmanship received broad support during the Forum.

The OCEEA could propose an initial draft of such a document reflecting the issues discussed in the preparatory process and at the Economic Forum. The OCEEA would engage in the initial drafting process of this document a number of experts who had been involved in the preparatory process for the Forum.

If the participating States so decide, the structure of such a document could be presented to the EESC by the summer recess. A first draft could then be submitted to the EESC in September. The OCEEA is aware that the participating States have the main responsibility in negotiating and adopting such a document.

Statement of Principles for the integration of persons belonging to national minorities to be endorsed at the Ministerial Council meeting in Ljubljana in December 2005

If the participating States so decide, the OCEEA stands ready to work together with the Office of the OSCE HCNM to formulate a proposal for such a statement of principles. A draft document could be presented to the EESC for discussion in September.

Advisory Group to the OCEEA on demography, migration and integration issues

During the preparatory process for the Forum, the OCEEA established good working relationships with a number of experts on demography, migration and integration (representatives of other international organizations, academic institutions, consultants etc). The OCEEA intends to continue and deepen the co-operation with them and utilize their expertise in the follow-up process to the Forum. These experts have expressed their willingness to continue the co-operation with the OSCE.

This “Advisory Group” could take the form of a network of experts who would be consulted on matters of interest and who could be involved in various follow-up activities. Some meetings of the Advisory Group could be organized when needed or could take place on the margin of other events.

Regional workshops

The Forum emphasized the importance of regional co-operation and of identifying regional solutions to challenges related to demographic trends, migration and integration (which often have a regional dimension). To that end, organizing regional follow-up seminars/workshops, in particular in the CIS region, was encouraged. Relevant and concrete topics should be selected for such events in order to achieve effective results.

The OCEEA intends to organize a regional workshop addressing the needs of countries in the CIS region and is now in the process of identifying the most appropriate topic(s) for such an event. The OCEEA will consult with other relevant partner organizations and members of the Advisory Group in order to learn more about other existing regional initiatives and processes and thus to avoid duplication and promote synergies. The Economic and Environmental Officers (EEOs) in the region and the relevant countries authorities will also be consulted in order to establish the priorities.

Such a workshop could be organized either by the end of 2005 or during the first half of 2006.

Establishing a discussion forum for the participating States by broadening the mandate of the Informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking to incorporate demography, migration and integration related issues

It was suggested during the Forum that such a broadening of the mandate would strengthen the role of the OSCE as a forum for dialogue and co-operation and that it would also represent an opportunity to keep the above-mentioned issues on the OSCE’s agenda.

If participating States so decide, the OCEEA stands ready, within its competences, to provide assistance to the work of such a group.

Co-operation with partners

The OCEEA stands ready to reinforce its co-operation with other international and regional organisations in carrying out the recommendations of the 13th Economic Forum (particularly with the International Organization for Migration, the International Centre for Policy Development, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Council of Europe and the European Union) as well as to contribute to an enhanced cross dimensional coordination of OSCE activities by working more closely with OSCE ODIHR and the Office of the HCNM. The OCEEA will explore ways and means of co-operation with partners in addressing demographic trends, migration and integration.

Some specific proposals were also made:

- An enhanced co-operation between OCEEA, the ODIHR-CPRSI, as well as other international organizations, Governments and Roma NGOs, should be pursued in order to facilitate the implementation of relevant provisions of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, adopted the Maastricht Ministerial Council. The OCEEA and ODIHR-CPRSI will explore ways and means to achieve that goal.
- OSCE and its Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation should seek continued co-operation and development of mutual activities in the area of migration and economic development, addressing root causes of migration such as environmental push factors, the fight against poverty etc., based on the discussions at the side event of the Economic Forum. The OCEEA is looking forward to such discussions during the forthcoming OSCE Mediterranean Seminar in Morocco in September and stands ready to provide its contribution and assistance, if required.
- A call was also made for a closer look at the linkages among migration, forced labour and trafficking.

Handbook on effective practices in managing labour migration

The proposal of drafting a Handbook on effective practices and policies in managing labour migration received broad support and the OCEEA was encouraged to follow-up on this recommendation.

The aim of the Handbook would be to facilitate the exchange of information, dialogue and consultation among the OSCE participating States (and Mediterranean and Asian partners) at the national, regional or international level. It could also be a useful source book for policy-makers and public administration officers dealing with labour migration issues in the OSCE participating States. They would be able to consult the Handbook when designing their migration policies and draw on the pragmatic experience offered by ‘real-life’ examples.

The Handbook will be prepared in co-operation with experts, in particular from IOM and ICMPD, and will take into consideration the conclusions reached in various other frameworks. Materials and examples of good practices gathered by the OCEEA during the preparatory process for the Forum will also be utilized. Participating States are encouraged to

share with OCEEA specific examples of effective practices and policies which could be incorporated in the Handbook.

The OCEEA is currently developing the initial structure of the Handbook which will serve as a basis for discussions with partner organizations. A detailed project document will be developed during the summer and made available to the delegations in September.

Expanding existing activities to better incorporate responses to challenges posed by demographic trends, migration and integration of persons belonging to national minorities

Economic activities

- **Economic empowerment** – The OCEEA will continue to develop and implement activities supporting economic development and economic empowerment of various categories of population in countries of emigration and will seek closer co-operation and coordination with other partners. Such activities include the development of economic opportunities for youth, strengthening business support services, start-up support, entrepreneurial and small business training, business mentoring, internships and apprenticeships etc. Education, particularly entrepreneurial education, should also be promoted, as an essential component of empowerment and ideally be incorporated in the secondary school curriculum of transition countries. OCEEA will work with micro-finance institutions and related organizations to better target financial resources and create special programmes for vulnerable population groups. In addition, OCEEA will encourage the private sector and SMEs to hire and train young workers as a means to further encourage business development and employment. Such activities can contribute to the alleviation of poverty and help reduce unemployment, which are the main push factors for migration. Similar activities could also be targeted to the needs of persons belonging to national minorities and implemented in regions where such minorities live.
- **Migrant information centres in countries of emigration** – The OCEEA in co-operation with OSCE Field Presences will continue to promote such projects, modelled on the IOM-OSCE Migration Information Centre in Dushanbe. They provide useful information to potential labour migrants. In this context, the OCEEA will work with other partner organizations and explore ways to render assistance to countries of origin in establishing migrant services/centres and to provide training to national specialists and government officials dealing with migration issues. Similarly, OCEEA will explore opportunities to build the capacity of migrant organizations to encourage domestic savings and investment and thereby help support local economic development.
- **Awareness raising and exchange of information** – The OCEEA could utilize the experience acquired in developing awareness raising activities in other areas and develop similar activities dealing with the informal sector, the benefits of regular migration, risks of irregular migration and opportunities for co-operation in addressing these issues. It was mentioned during the Forum that the OSCE might have an important role to play as a forum for dialogue and exchange of information. The proposed Handbook on effective practices could also be instrumental in this regard.

- **Promoting the implementation of agreements and conventions** - The OCEEA could utilize its relevant experience in promoting co-operation and other international conventions and promote the implementation of existing mutual agreements and international conventions related to migration/integration (e.g. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families – ICMW). The OCEEA could also encourage the development of bilateral and regional agreements on labour migration.

Environmental activities

- **Awareness raising activities** – The OCEEA together with OSCE Field Presences will continue and expand its efforts to raise awareness of environmental risks in vulnerable regions. To that end, it will continue to support the establishment and maintenance of Aarhus Centres, awareness-raising activities on deforestation and the promotion of the Green Pack in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The OCEEA also stands ready to assist Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation in this regard. The OCEEA will also ensure that migration information centres and other government programmes aimed at assisting migrants target environmentally induced migrants. In general, the OCEEA will strive to the greatest extent possible to incorporate an environmental perspective into relevant OSCE projects and to reflect the views of affected communities into project proposals and field work. This principle should also be promoted vis-à-vis the host authorities.
- **Prevention / remediation activities** – The OCEEA will continue to encourage a proactive, preventative approach to man-made and natural environmental risks, as represented by the ENVSEC Initiative. The OCEEA will consider ways to further assist participating States in the implementation of relevant international environmental conventions as well as in the development and enforcement of legislation/regulation aimed at protection of the natural environment. Targeting income generation (SME/YES) projects at environmentally vulnerable groups and promoting environmental education will also be envisaged, with a view to stimulate innovative ways to sustainably exploit the local environment. The OCEEA will promote best practices on prevention of environmentally induced migration through co-operation on ENVSEC and the inclusion of the environment into the OSCE handbook on best practices on managing migration.