



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

**26<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**

**“Promoting economic progress and security in the OSCE area  
through innovation, human capital development, and good public  
and corporate governance”**

**FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 22-23 January 2018**

OSCE Congress Centre, Hofburg, Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna

**Closing remarks**

**Ambassador Vuk Žugić**

Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Ambassador Azzoni,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The past one and a half days of discussion have offered a considerable food-for-thought to all of us. I wish to express my gratitude to all those who shared their knowledge, opinions, experiences. The Forum process offers indeed a great opportunity to collect information, share best practices, take stock of ongoing actions, and look at both the opportunities and challenges in the economic environmental dimension. But, most importantly, the Forum is a tool at the disposal of all participating States to reflect on future engagements to keep the role of the OSCE relevant vis-à-vis its core business: strengthening security and stability.

What we have heard confirms that digitalization is already deeply transforming our society and our way of living, including the way we do business, our governance models, our policy and political agendas. Digitalization is already part of the activities implemented by the OSCE, particularly at field level. And this is because there is a wide recognition that the ongoing fast transformation of our societies needs to be governed.

As the final outcome of this transformation cannot be given for granted, it is in our common interest to understand the challenges and opportunities that such transformation can bring. And it is in our common responsibility to influence this process, so that the benefits can be accessible to all citizens.

As the world largest security organization, we are well aware of the many challenges faced by transition processes. And the transition to the Fourth Industrial Revolution can bring either

progress for all or setbacks. This is the reason why it is important that the OSCE joins and contributes to the ongoing global discussion on how to manage and integrate technological innovation in our daily lives in a way that is beneficial to all and, ultimately, contributes to the promotion of stability, security and prosperity.

The OSCE – as a community of values – has to play its role. Throughout its history, the OSCE has proved to be a living organization able to address and respond to current and new challenges. This is why the choice of such a relevant topic like “digitalization”, so high on today’s political agenda, shows the ability of the OSCE to adapt to new circumstances and seek common responses to boost opportunities for inclusive economic growth and common security.

Allow me to conclude by drawing your attention on two parallel events that have marked these days of discussion:

1. The issuance of the annual Oxfam report on inequalities;
2. The World Economic Forum in Davos.

The first - the Oxfam report - urges to tackle growing inequalities as a major threat to global security and safety. By proposing the theme “Creating a shared future in a fractured world”, the second - the Davos meeting - draws the attention on the many “political, economic and societal fractures” and the urgent need to join forces to heal them.

I therefore wish to renew my thanks to the Italian Chairmanship for putting the overall topic of “bridging the inequality gap” high on the agenda of the second dimension. Indeed, it is our hope that the discussions on these topics, within the second dimension, will contribute to renew the dialogue and mutual understanding based on our shared values and common engagements.

I look forward to the continuation of our discussion in May, possibly paving the way to concrete deliverables of our Organization that can complement, support and inspire further actions at regional and global level.

Thank you.