

**Welcoming Remarks by Vice Minister Egidijus Meilūnas
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania**

19TH OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

“Promotion of common actions and co-operation in the OSCE area in the fields of development of sustainable energy and transport”

SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING

(DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT)

4-5 April 2011, Druskininkai, Lithuania,

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear OSCE Secretary General Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut,
Dear Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities Mr. Goran Svilanovič,
Dear Minister of Transport and Communications Mr. Eligijus Masiulis,
The Mayor of Druskininkai Mr. Ričardas Malinauskas,
Excellencies,

It is an honor to address all of you in the famous Lithuanian Spa resort DRUSKININKAI. In 1794, Stanisław August Poniatowski, the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the King of Poland, issued a decree declaring Druskininkai to be a health resort. For more than two hundred years the resort has been developing using its own natural resource – mineral waters, which have a medical treatment characteristic that should be explored during the stay in town.

I am delighted to welcome all the participants to the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 19th OSCE Economical and Environmental Forum under the Chairmanship of Lithuania.

Please allow me to reiterate that last February in Vienna the First Preparatory Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum was oriented towards promoting energy dialog among the OSCE participating States and shaping the OSCE’s role in energy security and sustainability.

The main theme of today’s meeting – development of sustainable transport in the OSCE area, is not new on the OSCE agenda. In 2006, under the Belgian Chairmanship, the OSCE Economic Forum focused on transport development and co-operation, including transit transport and border-crossing facilitation. The 2008 Finnish Chairmanship looked into ways to further promote maritime and

inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area. Transport was also a priority and an important part of the OSCE activities during the Kazakh Chairmanship last year. Kazakhstan and Lithuania actively and effectively co-operated in this field trying to solve long term regional and global transport challenges. The Kazakh Chairmanship appointed Lithuanian Ambassador Vytautas Naudužas as Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for transport issues. Ambassador Naudužas will have an opportunity to present activities from the last year in the following session, therefore further continuing the dialog on this subject in the OSCE framework.

If one compares the Chairmanships' priorities from last and this year, one can see that Lithuania continues the transport dialog among the OSCE participating States especially focusing on the development of sustainable transport. This aspect is very relevant to today's transport policy and global environmental challenges in every country. The EU estimates that greenhouse gas emissions from transport constituted 19.3 percent of total emission amount in the EU-27 – scoring a third place among sectors after energy industries and the industry itself.

How we respond to this global challenge? How we accommodate our transport policies? How we elaborate guidelines to decarbonizes transport sector and simultaneously achieve sustainable development, economic growth and prosperity? It is a difficult and complex issue, demanding political will. The Lithuanian Chairmanship is inviting the OSCE participating States, international organizations, experts and civil society representatives to express their views, ideas and suggestions on how to promote sustainable transport and implement its principals in legislation and business practices of the participating States.

We are planning to discuss the following main topics during the meeting: (1) promotion of sustainable transport in the OSCE area; (2) environmentally friendly transportation choices: the role of policies, innovation and technologies; (3) facilitation of international land transport; (4) co-ordination and simplification of border crossing and customs clearance procedures; and (5) integration of transport networks in the OSCE area.

We hope that discussions in the framework of the OSCE will facilitate identifying sustainable transport solutions. The exchange of best practices and innovations will help to adjust the transport sector to the needs of a sustainable society in the OSCE area and beyond.

I am pleased that the format of the OSCE Meetings provides a rich, creative and diverse working atmosphere, which I can also see today with the presence of so many honorable guests. Please allow me to recognize the Secretary General of the OSCE Ambassador Brichambaut, the Secretary General of the Black Sea

Economic Cooperation Ambassador Chrysanthopoulos, the Director General of International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA) Mr. Sangaletti. I also welcome representatives from the European Commission, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), International Road Federation, International Energy Agency, UNCTAD, EurAsEC, official delegates of the OSCE participating States as well as representatives of business associations and NGOs.

Dear Distinguished Guests,

In closing my welcoming remarks, I would like to wish you successful discussions and mutually beneficial work, and invite you and your colleagues to actively exchange views regarding the development of sustainable transport here, in Druskininkai. I look forward to seeing you again and continuing the dialog in the concluding meeting of the 19th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum which will take place in Prague next September.

Thank you.