



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

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

**CONCLUDING MEETING**

**“Strengthening stability and security through co-operation on good governance”**

*Welcoming Remarks*

**Secretary General Lamberto Zannier**

**Prague, 14 - 16 September 2016**

Minister Zaoralek,  
Special Representative Erler,  
Ambassador Pohl,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This landmark document recognizes not only that peace and security are prerequisites for achieving sustainable development, but that sustainable development provides the pathway to peaceful societies. This new peace-centered agenda is inclusive and ambitious and could usher in a new spirit of global solidarity.

Because poor economic opportunities, a lack of future prospects and low confidence in state authorities are powerful drivers of insecurity and destabilization, good governance is crucial to the success of sustainable development. This is underscored by Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and the creation of effective and accountable institutions at all levels.

In my address to the UN Sustainable Development Summit last September, I highlighted the role that regional organizations can and should be encouraged to play in promoting and implementing the 2030 Agenda. Not only do we need to build broad, flexible and strategic partnerships that increase co-operation among international and regional organizations, but we also need to learn to engage in

new ways, moving beyond purely inter-governmental dynamics and creating inclusive coalitions that engage civil society, business, women and young people, media, academia and philanthropy.

Good governance in particular requires this kind of participatory approach to foster trust among citizens and to build social consensus against tolerance for corruption. So the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum's inclusive process offers an ideal platform for addressing this critical issue.

Good governance requires governments to be transparent and accountable towards their citizens, adopting comprehensive, long-term development strategies, effective economic policies, transparent budget and procurement processes, and streamlined international trade and customs regulations to create an environment in which business can thrive and investor confidence can grow.

The OSCE already provides targeted support for preventing and combating corruption to some of our participating States. But there is more that we could do, both through the Secretariat and our Field Operations, to carry out anti-corruption activities that produce tangible, measurable and sustainable results. We are also exploring how the OSCE could strengthen public-private partnerships to help combat money laundering, terrorist financing and corruption to enhance security and economic stability throughout the OSCE region.

And let me add that, as migration is becoming a game changer in European and international politics, the Forum process should continue examining ways to improve good governance in labour migration.

Migration does not need to be a 'risk'; it can offer opportunities, provided that states agree to step up their efforts to introduce more comprehensive migration governance and to enhance policy cohesion between migration management, economic development and environmental policies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Environmental considerations need not be an obstacle to sustainable development, but instead can be a catalyst for innovation, increased productivity and jobs creation. Good environmental governance not only contributes to a sound investment climate, but also helps to address the concerns and interests of all stakeholders, which can help prevent tensions and conflicts. Stable regulatory frameworks, an appropriate institutional architecture and effective implementation of environmental legislation, including multilateral environmental agreements, are the keys to good environmental governance.

The OSCE strives to transform environmental security risks into opportunities for co-operation that can enhance security and stability and contribute to sustainable development. The OSCE supports our participating States in their efforts to strengthen environmental good governance through awareness-raising and the exchange of best practices, capacity-building, and numerous projects in the field of environment and security. We have many tools and partnerships we can leverage, including the Environment and Security Initiative. This year the OSCE leads this successful collaboration, and I am happy to see that many of our ENVSEC partners are represented here today.

The OSCE also actively supports efforts by participating States to enhance transparency and increase stakeholder participation in environmental decision-making, above all through a network of 60 Aarhus Centers in 14 countries that facilitate public participation, access to information, and access to justice in environmental matters. The Centers are particularly active in the fields of water governance, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. By engaging citizens, government and business in a dialogue on environmental challenges, the Aarhus Centers promote principles of good environmental governance, helping to build trust and confidence in public processes and reducing social and political tensions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am convinced that the Second Dimension offers great potential for building confidence and trust, which in today's tense security situation we need more than ever. As we look toward Hamburg, we should seek ways to devote greater political attention and operational efforts to strengthening good governance in both the economic and environmental sectors.

Closer co-ordination and co-operation between national and local governments, but also between international and regional organizations, civil society, the business community and other key stakeholders is essential to building good governance and achieving sustainable development. Only by working together will we succeed in bringing peace and prosperity to people in every corner of our planet.

Thank you, and I wish you fruitful discussions.