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STATEMENT BY THE TURKISH DELEGATION
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Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

Let me begin by thanking the Swiss Chairmanship and the Secretariat for the organization of this concluding meeting, and expressing our deep appreciation to the Czech authorities for graciously hosting us. A special thank you to our distinguished keynote speakers whose statements were both informative and alarming.

We believe that this year's Economic and Environmental Forum cycle, which comes to a close with this meeting, will prove to be very beneficial in advancing our Organization's role in promoting cooperation and security vis-à-vis environmental challenges. The security implications of climate change and natural disasters make it clear that we should view them in an increasing manner from a security concern perspective. This also entails the need for developing policies with such international components as strategic cooperation as well as interconnectivity and inter-operability. Our own painful experiences in the area of natural disasters have taught us only too well the need for a sustainable collective strategy.

Mr. Chairperson,

We all have a stake in seeing the discussions and proposals to be voiced these 3 days transformed into concrete deliverables in the period ahead. Such an outcome will not only provide a significant boost to our second dimension activities, it will also bolster the OSCE's profile in this sphere which consistently gains added preponderance on the international agenda. We will continue to lend our support to all efforts in this direction, as we believe that the OSCE is uniquely equipped to provide platform for launching new projects and initiatives in responding to the environmental challenges, including crisis management, humanitarian assistance and disaster rehabilitation through economic, social and psychological support.

Needless to say, the collective efforts to be made within this context will also constitute confidence building measures for crisis avoidance and containment, as well conflict settlement and resolution. As such, they will help us facilitate the creation of a sound and secure environment conducive for further mutually beneficial cooperation.

Dear Participants,

Situated in a disaster-prone geography, Turkey has a strong tradition of responding to those in need. Our humanitarian assistance has been diversified and significantly increased in recent years. In this vein, let me state that Turkey's humanitarian assistance that was US \$ 31 million in 2008 rose to US \$ 1.6 billion in 2013. Turkey became a member of the OCHA Donor Support Group as of 1 July 2014. We have also been among the contributors to the "UN

Schubertring 14/4, 1010 Vienna, Tel. : +43-1-523 38 05, Fax : +43-1-523 38 07, E-mail : tr-delegation.osce@mfa.gov.tr

Central Emergency Response Fund". The 2014 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report indicates that Turkey was the third largest government donor in 2013. In addition to government assistance, the last decade witnessed a proliferation in Turkish humanitarian NGO's, with the international humanitarian support made by the private sector also rising in a staggering manner. According to some estimates, the humanitarian assistance they provide worldwide surpasses even that made by the government.

Humanitarian assistance will continue to remain a priority of the Turkish foreign policy. Turkey's hosting of the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 is a clear demonstration of this understanding.

Mr. Chairperson,

The May floods in the Western Balkans were the most recent large-scale natural disaster in the OSCE region. They demonstrated once again the growing need for OSCE's greater engagement in disaster risk reduction. Turkey responded immediately to this calamity, providing humanitarian assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia to help cater to the victims' the most urgent needs, and initiating a nation-wide aid campaign. We remain ready to support any OSCE initiative that would help reducing damages to be caused by such disasters, and that would pave the way to a collective disaster management strategy for our region.

On a final note, let me also briefly refer to Turkey's active support to OSCE activities on wildfire management. The first regional seminar brought together experts on this field from the South Caucasus and the Western Balkans in 2010 in Antalya. We will be more than pleased to host the second regional seminar in this area next month again in Antalya.

In conclusion, I wish to re-emphasize Turkey's strong support for and eagerness to contribute to the OSCE's Second Dimension activities, and express our wish to see this Forum's deliberations crowned with success.

Thank you.