

TURKISH DELEGATION TO THE OSCE

OPENING SESSION

OVERVIEW OF TURKEY'S OUTLOOK ON THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Strengthening the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension:

Turkey has been a consistent advocate of the strengthening of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension. We believe that this dimension needs to be further strengthened, both institutionally, i.e. through upgrading the Office of the Economic and Environmental Coordinator to that of a fully fledged OSCE Institution, as well as financially, through a more generous allocation of resources from the core budget. In brief, more than just the "role" of the EED needs to be strengthened.

Increasing the capacity of the OSCE to contribute substantively to the economic development of participating States in transition, beyond the organizing of conferences and in a way which addresses their requests for assistance, will both enhance the credibility of the OSCE as a true security provider across the three dimensions, as well as increase the sense of ownership among participating States. The OSCE's field missions have an important role to play in developing projects which are responsive to the needs of the host country, as recently exemplified at the Permanent Council during the report of the Head of Mission in Tajikistan.

Implementation of Sofia Ministerial Council Decision 10/04:

Turkey welcomes the efforts of the Belgian Chairmanship towards strengthening the Economic Forum as stipulated in Ministerial Council Decision 10/04 adopted in Sofia, by re-adjusting the format of the Forum. Further efforts are required to address the second and broader part of the Sofia remit which calls for strengthening the Economic and Environmental Dimension.

The Format:

The new format of the Economic Forum this year, of two inter-linked meetings preceded by two conferences has generated greater interest and broader participation. We are of the opinion that the theme has also contributed to this increased interest. While we are prepared to support this format with the same competences for the 15th Economic Forum, nevertheless it would be premature at this stage to consider its permanent institutionalization.

The OSCE and its value added:

The absence of an international legal framework in the economic and environmental dimension, similar to that in the human dimension of security, necessitates a broader approach to economic and environmental issues. The concept of "monitoring of commitments" can only provide limited value added. Of greater impact will be the strengthening of the OSCE's capacity and resources to address the substantive requests for assistance by participating States. The "Melange" project is an excellent example of the OSCE's substantive contribution which has a direct positive impact on the well-being and security of people.

The OSCE's contribution and possible assistance to the implementation of commitments of participating States undertaken in other fora, while worthy of consideration on a case by case basis and within well defined parameters, however, should not become the "raison d'être" of the Economic and Environmental dimension in the future and should neither thwart efforts for developing and strengthening the OSCE's own capacity nor supplant its own potential for bringing value added in this dimension. The element of "case by case consideration" excludes any automaticity in such a monitoring role. A case for the worthiness of monitoring should be made independently in each of those instances, following meticulous consideration. In brief, the OSCE should not become a "monitoring" or "implementing" agency for the commitments undertaken by participating States in third Organizations.

Turkey welcomes concrete recommendations by participants at the Economic Forum which will be a valuable input for future policy formulation in the competent decision making bodies of our Organization.

Implementing Commitments in the Area of Transport:

Turkey welcomes the co-operation between the OSCE and the UNECE. We are willing to consider the request of the UNECE for the OSCE's assistance in the implementation of its legally binding commitments on transport on a case by case basis within well defined parameters as to the competences and responsibilities of both Organizations, as well as the merits of conducting such an exercise. Assistance to be provided within this framework to OSCE participating States, including capacity building needs to be demand driven. In this vein, participation in the pilot project regarding the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods of 21 October 1982 will be on a voluntary basis as stipulated in the UNECE decision to this end.

Supporting Regional Dialogue and Initiatives:

Turkey welcomes a supportive role for the OSCE in the realization of the Eurasian transport links and the UNECE TEM and TER initiatives. Provided that a long term and sustainable action/work plan for the OSCE's role in this regard could be agreed upon, Turkey would be ready to consider ways and means to continue dialogue on the issue of transportation in the longer term, including at periodic intervals. Naturally, should there be consensus for a concept of regular stock taking, its base would have to be broadened to cover the themes of other previous Economic Forum meetings. We look forward to further discussing this issue at the EED Sub-Committee.

Addressing the Needs of Landlocked and Developing Countries and Transit Issues:

We concur with the assessment in the Chairmanship's "Background Paper" that any OSCE activity in this regard has to be consistent with and integrated in the framework of the Almaty Program of Action. Nevertheless, further dialogue will be necessary with regard to agreements regarding the liberalization of trade flows and open borders for trade development. Furthermore, the possible elements of a political OSCE document referring to the Almaty Program of Action implementation in its region will require careful consideration by the relevant OSCE bodies before any conclusions as to the usefulness of such a document can be reached. Likewise the suggestion of setting up an "expert group" under the aegis of the

OSCE in order to study the UN's assessment will require careful consideration as to its mandate, composition, competences and working methods.

We support the idea of a "food for thought" paper by the Coordinator's Office on how to assist participating States to fulfill their commitments under the Almaty Program of Action. Such a paper must be generic in nature, underlining possible forms of OSCE assistance and must not focus on specific cases. This paper would also provide valuable input for a discussion on the possible establishment of an "expert group".

Turkey supports the request by Tajikistan for holding an international conference on transit transport in Central Asia.

Promoting Good Governance:

Turkey supports efforts at liberalization of transport and in this vein promoting good governance. We believe promoting good governance is best done through a methodology espousing explicit encouragement and assistance.

In line with our earlier remarks, the OSCE needs to be wary of seeing its role in the EED as a "watchdog" regarding the commitments of participating States in third Organizations. We can support close co-operation between the OSCE and the World Customs Organization, nevertheless commitments and activities aimed at awareness raising and capacity building with regard to the WCO Framework will require further consideration and elaboration in the respective OSCE bodies.

Transport and Conflict Resolution:

During the preparatory Conferences and at the Vienna Forum, Turkey has voiced misgivings about the concept of transport as a facilitator of dialogue in conflict resolution, particularly in conflicts involving core interests of national sovereignty and territorial integrity. The economic impact and negative regional consequences of frozen conflicts is only too well known and indeed felt by Turkey. However, also well known to us is the difficulty of quantifying and analyzing the multitudinous elements involved in this complex process - where much data and analysis already exists - with a view to overcoming the obstacles, at the heart of which lie deep seated political issues. In this light, we remain to be convinced of the usefulness of further analysis which can only duplicate existing work and the establishment of expert groups, whose work might on the contrary result in further exacerbating tensions. Notwithstanding the above, should there be conviction for such efforts on behalf of the OSCE, these would need to be demand driven involving a common request from all parties concerned.