



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

**Co-ordinator of OSCE  
Economic and Environmental Activities**

**CASE Co-ordination Meeting  
9-10 November 2010, Hofburg, Room 525, Vienna**

### **Statement by Goran Svilanovic**

It is an honor for me and my Office to host you today at this CASE Co-ordination Meeting.

CASE- the small grants programme for NGOs- was launched by the OSCE in 2009 in close co-operation with the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Tajikistan joined the initiative recently. Today, we are gathered to share our experiences in CASE implementation and to develop together ideas for the way forward.

I welcome to this meeting the government and NGO representatives from Armenia and Azerbaijan and representatives of our OSCE Field Operations from the three countries. We also have with us a representative of the UNDP Office in Azerbaijan.

Let me also extend a warm welcome to the representatives of interested OSCE participating States, some of them having been instrumental in financing the launching of CASE.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last month, we have had the OSCE Review Conference Sessions on the Second Dimension here at the Hofburg. At the conference, we engaged in a lively discussion and we heard numerous proposals for the way forward. Participating States affirmed the commitments they had made in Bonn, Maastricht, and Madrid.

Importantly, in their statements participating States left no doubt that they view the Economic and Environmental Dimension as an integral part of the OSCE 's concept of comprehensive security.

The linkages between environment and security were underlined once again by several delegations who have also emphasized the added value of the OSCE in this field. As one delegation put it: "The OSCE has certain unique strengths that place it in a prime position to lead on environmental security issues".

At the review conference, Environment and Security – the ENVSEC - Initiative was referred to as a comprehensive example of international partnership that enables quick responses to emerging challenges.

Together with our field colleagues we continue to be actively involved in the ENVSEC Initiative. Six organizations – the OSCE, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP, REC and NATO - each bring their own special attributes to the ENVSEC partnership.

ENVSEC derives its strength also from its National Focal Points in each country representing the ministries of environment and ministries of foreign affairs.

Canada, Austria, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland who have been ENVSEC's leading donors have been joined by the Government of Finland which contributed major funds for the period of 2009-2012 and thus facilitated the establishment of an ENVSEC Co-ordination Unit at UNEP's Regional Office for Europe in Geneva.

I am particularly happy that at the Review Conference, participating States expressed their satisfaction with the OSCE's involvement in the ENVSEC Initiative and reiterated their pledge made at Maastricht to develop ENVSEC further.

Be assured that in 2011, when the OSCE will be chairing ENVSEC, my Office will make significant effort to develop further this important initiative. Strengthening the security dimension of the ENVSEC projects will be my priority next year. Ensuring effective representation of the Initiative at the regional and global forums will be another one. We will make sure that ENVSEC is well represented and promoted at the 2011 Environment for Europe Conference in Astana and Rio + 20 preparatory conferences. Enhanced national ownership and improved communication among all ENVSEC stakeholders will also be among our immediate priorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Environmental security is a function of good environmental governance. National Governments need to allow for the participation of civil society in the making of environmental decisions and the implementation of environmental policies. Civil society participation is a key prerequisite for government accountability, sound economic and environmental management and sustainable and transparent use of natural resources.

The commitment of the OSCE to civil society promotion in the field of the environment and sustainable development is long-standing.

My Office specifically has been supporting the role of civil society in environmental decision-making through the Aarhus Centres Initiative that we pursue under the umbrella of ENVSEC. The broad network of Aarhus Centres also referred to as Public Environmental Information Centres has supported civil society involvement in environmental affairs in 9 OSCE participating States and has developed strong relations with civil society on the ground.

CASE both benefits from and reinforces the work of the Aarhus Centres. CASE is developed to strengthen further the capacity of civil society organizations to cooperate with their governments in tackling the environmental security challenges that are facing their countries.

Underlying CASE, is a belief that the capacity of civil society organizations built will allow them to actively participate in environmental decision-making, which yields benefits for their societies in the long run.

To that end, CASE supports directly projects implemented by civil society organizations with small grants. In a way we are learning by doing. In doing, CASE partners are supported by our OSCE Field Operations and supervised by their governments, their peers, and other international organizations.

This assures that your doing is a contribution to improved environmental security for your country - as perceived by local stakeholders.

In implementing CASE, the OSCE seeks to forge strong linkages with ENVSEC, and cooperates closely with our ENVSEC partners, especially UNDP. This broad and inclusive approach makes for strong local ownership and avoids duplication of efforts.

The governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan have indeed assumed ownership of the CASE Initiative. Without their crucial support the remarkable expansion of CASE would not have been possible.

Let me also express once again our thanks to the representatives of participating States that have contributed funds for CASE: the government of Austria, the government of Canada and the government of Luxembourg have made it possible for us to pilot CASE programme in these three countries. I would also particularly like to convey our appreciation to Statoil for their partnership and contribution to the CASE implementation in Azerbaijan.

The CASE grantee NGOs also deserve special commend as with little resources they have been able to achieve big results and offered their expertise and know-how to making CASE happen.

We do not, however, intend to stop there and we are looking to expand CASE further in the South Caucasus and Central Asia and will also add additional capacity-building measures for civil society organizations.

In order to sustain CASE activities and the momentum we have achieved, we need additional financial resources and the support and good-will of interested participating States. Austria, Canada, and Luxembourg have led the way in financing CASE. I hope that many of the interested participating States that are attending this CASE Co-ordination Meeting today will follow.

Thank you.