



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

THE 19th OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

2nd Preparatory Meeting
4-5 APRIL 2011, DRUSKININKAI

Opening Remarks by Goran Svilanović
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we initiate the second and last Preparatory Meeting of the 19th Economic and Environmental Forum. I would like to express my gratitude to the Lithuanian Chairmanship for hosting the meeting in this beautiful city and for its close and very productive co-operation in the organisation of this event.

Just a couple of months ago the First Preparatory Meeting on the Development of Sustainable Energy took place in Vienna. The event was a success and I am sure that, together with the Druskininkai Meeting, it will contribute to better prepare us for the Concluding Meeting in Prague.

It is time now to cover the second important topic included in the theme of this year's Forum: the Development of Sustainable Transport.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Transport is intrinsically linked to environment, economy, energy, infrastructures, to livability in cities and to connection between countries. It brings us closer, enhances co-

operation among regions and activates business. In this regard, it is in our interest to make the OSCE area sustainably connected.

However, sustainability in transport is also a challenge. Nowadays, 750 million cars and trucks are in circulation in the world. Globally, transport consumes more than half of all oil produced and generates 24% of the CO₂ emissions resulting from human activities. Moreover, according to forecasts the number of cars and trucks will triple by 2050. This will have a tremendous impact on the economy but also on the environment. An increase of transport activities will doubtless generate social and economic wealth, but it can also entail energy scarcity, increase greenhouse gases' emissions, accelerate environment degradation, and lead to traffic congestion. Therefore, it is in our interest to discuss and work on the right policies, enhance our co-operation, focus on new technologies and change our behaviour as users. We cannot question the necessity of moving, but we have to learn how to do it in a sustainable way.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The OSCE involvement in transport matters is already mentioned in Second Dimension's basic documents such as the Helsinki Final Act, the Bonn Document and the Maastricht Strategy Document. However, it was just five years ago, under the Belgian Chairmanship, when transport was for the first time included as a core theme in the agenda of the Forum. Since then, the Forum has been a platform for discussions on transport in three more occasions, including this one. The interest attached by participating States to this subject is therefore more than evident. I am pleased to witness that the continuity in the Second Dimension's work is promoted and productive.

From the OCEEA's side, we are committed to develop OSCE's expertise in this field. With this aim, last year we organised, in co-operation with some participating States and other international organizations, activities related to transport in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The development and implementation of these activities would not have been possible without the political will of the hosting States and in most cases, help from the Economic and Environmental Officers of the OSCE field presences. I

would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank participating States for their close co-operation and the Economic and Environmental Officers for their remarkable work.

Also in connection with the OCEEA's involvement in transport activities, allow me to inform you that we are currently finalizing the preparation of a *Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings*, to be published in English and Russian. The handbook is being developed in co-operation with one of our principal partners, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and with the support of other OSCE relevant units. I am convinced of the important role this publication will play in the management of participating States' border crossing procedures.

Ladies and gentlemen,

During this Second Preparatory Meeting we will have the opportunity to listen to experts in transport that perceive this sector from different points of view. We will have the chance to learn from representatives of international organizations, regional NGOs, national governments and private sector, as well as from researchers and analysts. I am convinced of the importance of their input for the generation of productive discussions and practical recommendations. I would like to warmly welcome all of them and thank them for accepting to join us in this event.

In order to inspire our discussions, we will open the Meeting with a Panel Debate. It will be followed by Sessions devoted to environmental transportation choices, the facilitation of international transport, and the integration of transport networks in the OSCE area. I am confident that the ideas and proposals that will arise throughout these sessions will help us to better discuss during the Concluding Panel Debate on *the OSCE role in promoting sustainable transport solutions* scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to finish my remarks by encouraging all participants to undertake dynamic and productive discussions. I am sure that by putting together our efforts we will find solutions to keep moving in a more sustainable way.

Thank you very much for your attention.