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PC.EEDIM.DEL/5/26
17 November 2026

ENGLISH only

EUROPEAN UNION

Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting Vienna, 16 & 17 November 2026

Taking stock of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of connectivity

EU Opening Statement

1. The European Union places great value on the Economic and Environmental Dimension as an integral part of the comprehensive approach to security of the OSCE. The EU is therefore pleased to take part in the 2026 Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting and thanks the Swiss Chairpersonship and the team of the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities for the organisation of the meeting. We welcome the keynote speakers and thank them for their valuable and insightful contributions.

2. Connectivity - the topic of this year's EEDIM, is not merely an economic objective; it can contribute to confidence-building, regional cooperation and lasting security. The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security provides a valuable framework for addressing the political, economic, environmental and human dimensions of connectivity.

3. This topic is also of crucial importance in light of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which has had a profound environmental and economic impact in Ukraine and beyond. The deliberate targeting and destruction in Ukraine of energy and water infrastructure, railway infrastructure and port facilities, as well as communications infrastructure blatantly violate international humanitarian law, have immense impact on the daily life of the population and on the Ukrainian economy. Reliable communication networks enable also emergency services to coordinate, citizens to access essential public services and vital information,

children to continue their education and communities to remain connected, even under the most difficult circumstances.

4. The EU and its Member States continue to call on Russia to stop its aggression and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. Urgent action is already needed. As Russia continues to escalate its aggression against Ukraine, the OSCE must continue contributing to addressing and alleviating the consequences of the war. In this context, the EU supports the OSCE's ongoing engagement, including through the SPU. Innovation and new technologies can support Ukraine, notably in terms of recovery and reconstruction, resilience of energy infrastructure, environmental monitoring, transboundary water resources and the climate-security nexus.

5. We will continue to support Ukraine, throughout the war, during negotiations until a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is achieved and afterwards, including with political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support.

6. The OSCE's commitments on connectivity provide a valuable framework for strengthening economic cooperation, trust and stability across the OSCE area. By advancing transport and trade facilitation, promoting good governance and fostering public-private dialogue, the Organization can help create the enabling conditions in which sustainable connectivity investments deliver tangible results.

7. Moreover, greater coordination between the OSCE, the EU and other partners can help ensure that connectivity is not only developed, but is also sustainable, transparent, secure and mutually beneficial. EU's Global Gateway strategy, including its 360-degree approach, combines infrastructure investment with institutional strengthening, sound regulatory frameworks and respect for fundamental values. In this regard, the EU recalls the importance of integration of horizontal priorities, namely, climate and environmental sustainability, poverty reduction, agriculture and nutrition, gender equality, health, human rights, education, skills development and decent work, digital inclusion and the protection of cultural heritage across design, implementation and monitoring.

8. The EU also encourages and promotes the OSCE engagement in Central Asia and the South Caucasus regarding the different sectors of sustainable connectivity, as also identified in the EU's Global Gateway strategy. We welcome the activities by the different OSCE field missions in the region aimed at promoting cross-border connectivity, improving trade, transport facilitation, and regional economic cooperation.

9. During last year's first EU-Central Asia Summit held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, efforts towards strengthening economic ties and sustainable transport connectivity, through initiatives under the Global Gateway Strategy and progress on the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor, were highlighted. In this regard, the EU launched a €12 billion investment package aimed at strengthening transport links and deepening cooperation on critical raw materials, digital connectivity, water, and energy.

10. The European Union looks forward to building upon the outcomes of EEDIM through continued constructive engagement in the OSCE's economic and environmental dimension. We are determined to advance the work of the Second Dimension, with a view to building more resilient and inclusive economies and societies, and, ultimately, achieving comprehensive security for the benefit of all.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.