

**Concluding Meeting of the
20th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**

Closing Remark

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Dear Ambassador O'Leary,
Your Excellencies,

I would like to join the Irish Chairmanship in thanking you all for the outstanding work done during this Concluding Meeting. I am also very pleased to note that the two preparatory meetings organized in Vienna and Dublin have fulfilled their task and firmly guided us in preparing this week's discussions.

The theme proposed by the Chairmanship has proved to be of great interest to participants from different countries, fields of expertise and backgrounds. The presence of numerous government delegates, representatives of key partner organizations, civil society and the private sector confirms the pertinence and relevance of the approach we have undertaken. Throughout this last part of the Forum process, we have examined different aspects of good governance, identified our strengths and our weaknesses both as states and the OSCE and we have managed to better understand where we stand and the direction we would like to take going forward. I am pleased to have noted a general consensus throughout the Forum process that efforts to promote good governance and fight corruption in the OSCE area can be successful only through close co-operation among the various stakeholders, that our efforts in concert are greater than our efforts in isolation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this last Session of the Forum I would like to share with you some of the recommendations that have arisen from our debates.

I would like to start by stressing the importance participants have attached to **co-operation with relevant key partner organizations**. Their importance was constantly emphasised during the both the preparatory meetings and this concluding meeting. The Report on the Review of commitments has deepened our understanding of the different international instruments the OSCE participating States are party to or can join, including the many benefits the adoption and implementation of such initiatives can bring. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank the representatives of these key partner organizations for having accepted our invitation, for have shared their expertise with us and for expressing their support during our discussions. From our side, the OCEEA will continue to support participating States in their efforts to join international commitments and incorporate them into their national legislation, especially with regard to the UNCAC provisions and the FATF recommendations.

Our debates have also confirmed that another key element for the successful promotion of good governance and the effective fight against corruption is **strengthening the role of and**

partnerships with civil society and the private sector. It is indeed in the interest of participating States to have a well informed and dynamic civil society which is capable and empowered to contribute to discussions undertaken in legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks. In this regard, the OSCE stands ready to support activities aiming at promoting public private dialogue and co-operation.

At the same time, **integrity and accountability** must also be promoted, not only in our societies, but in our governments. While talking about our government structures, participants have noted the necessity to further engage in promoting a reliable and upright **public procurement system.** We have seen the magnitude public procurement's vulnerability to abuse, and we have heard the advantages of promoting the integrity of those involved in the public procurement process. We have also heard about the benefits of harmonizing public procurement systems and regulatory approaches. Indeed, this is a field where the OSCE can continue to facilitate the exchange of best practices and support relevant international initiatives.

I would like now to turn to a relatively new area of engagement for my Office, which is asset recovery. During the Forum Process we have reconfirmed the value the OSCE's regional nature adds to successful co-operation among participating States. This was made especially clear during the discussions on **asset recovery** – which built upon the expert conclusions of last week's asset recovery seminar in Vienna. It was noted that the OSCE could provide a platform for the exchange of best practices, organize capacity building and training activities, and foster further co-operation and networking among key stakeholders in the participating States.

We have devoted a great deal of attention to **anti money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.** Although the relevant international standards are quite comprehensive, significant work remains in implementing them. We have heard several concrete proposals of ways to foster closer partnerships with the private sector to increase the effectiveness of our AML/CFT efforts. For example, governments can provide financial institutions with feedback and information on emerging trends in organized crime. In terms of how the OSCE can support the participating States on AML/CFT, we heard suggestions to continue building the capacity of the participating States to implement those portions of the international standards that have thus far been largely overlooked. We also heard suggestions that the OSCE broker meetings between public and private AML/CFT stakeholders to help facilitate public-private partnership. A number of OSCE participating States have begun the process of conducting a National Risk Assessment, and the OSCE could continue to support interested participating States in this regard.

In the final session we have looked at **good governance from a cross-dimensional perspective.** Indeed, the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance are very much transversal issues. Properly managed customs and border services for instance allow for more effective trade and transport. Well governed societies also take away many of the root causes of extremism, terrorism and organized criminality. The need for more international cooperation was highlighted.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year's Forum process has provided us in the OCEEA with a great opportunity to consolidate our knowledge and better prioritize and streamline our good governance-related activities. It was for us a useful learning exercise and I hope you share this perception.

As announced at the special event on Wednesday, we are finalizing two new tools: the updated edition of the **Handbook of Best Practices in Combating Corruption and the OSCE Handbook on Data Collection in support of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism National Risk Assessments**. I am convinced that these publications will contain practical tools the participating States can use to further their efforts to prevent and fight corruption and money laundering. I would like to reassure you of my Office's readiness to assist participating States in putting in practice the recommendations and guidelines included in these forthcoming publications.

Your Excellencies,

These are just some of the recommendations the 20th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process has generated. In the upcoming weeks my Office will prepare a Consolidated Summary of our deliberations based in the work carried out by our excellent rapporteurs.

However, our discussions on this topical theme do not end here. I would like to encourage delegations to duly reflect on all the ideas and recommendations stemming from the Forum, and to contribute to shaping our follow-up engagements and activities. Delegations will have the opportunity to continue discussing these issues in the framework of the Economic and Environmental Committee and during the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting due to take place in October in Vienna. The EEDIM meeting provides an opportunity to further confirm the participating States' focus on the field of good governance and on concrete outcomes of the debates we have carried out during the Forum process.

I would like to encourage the participating States once again to make the most of what has been discussed here and be ready to translate the Forum's conclusions and recommendations into political engagements and a reinforcement of our commitments in this field. Let me conclude by reiterating our support for the Irish Chairmanship to build consensus for a Ministerial Council Decision on Good Governance to be adopted by the Ministerial Council in Dublin in December.

Thank you