



EUROPEAN UNION

24th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum Second Preparatory Meeting Berlin, 19-20 May 2016

EU Opening Statement

Mr. Chairperson, the European Union and its member states are pleased to participate in the Second Preparatory Meeting of the 24th Economic and Environmental Forum, and would like to thank the German Chairmanship and Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden, OSCE Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, and his staff for organising this meeting.

Let me express our support for the theme of this meeting "Strengthening stability and security through co-operation on good governance". Good governance entails ensuring that governments are transparent, accountable, efficient, and responsive to the present and future needs of their societies. This, in turn, is a critical component of ensuring the stability and transparency of the economic and regulatory environment, which is key for private sector activity and economic development. Conversely, lack of good governance fuels corruption, erodes trust in public institutions, hampers foreign investment, undermines economic development and exposes states to greater insecurity.

Advancing good governance is a high priority for the European Union, both within the European Union and internationally. Good governance is a central component of the European Union's development assistance, including to countries in the OSCE area, and good governance is at the core of our political dialogue with third countries.

Let me particularly emphasise the importance the European Union attaches to combatting corruption. Corruption remains among the greatest challenges for a number of participating States. Corruption is often linked to transnational crimes and can hence best be addressed through international cooperation. We therefore appreciate that corruption is among the focus areas for our

deliberations. We also look forward to the discussions on the link between good governance, a positive investment climate, economic growth, stability and security as well as on good migration governance.

We see great value in discussing how we can enhance cooperation and dialogue in the OSCE area and among participating States on good governance and its security implications. Being a regional security organisation and a forum for political dialogue, we regard the OSCE as well placed for encouraging political support for initiatives promoting good governance. The Organization can also facilitate exchanges of best practices and stimulate further compliance of participating States with international commitments.

The inclusion of relevant stakeholders is key to advancing good governance. We therefore welcome the participation of private sector and civil society representatives in this meeting.

With these remarks, we look forward to interesting and hopefully fruitful discussions in the days ahead and encourage the distinguished speakers to identify concrete proposals for an enhanced OSCE engagement in promoting good governance.

Finally, once again, we would like to thank the German Chairmanship for hosting this meeting in Berlin.

The Candidate Countries MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.