



EUROPEAN UNION

27th Economic and Environmental Forum Prague, 11-13 September 2019

EU Closing Statement

The European Union and its member States would like to thank the Slovak Chairmanship and the OSCE Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities and his staff for organising this meeting. We would also like to thank all speakers for their presentations, the moderators for stimulating our debates and all participants for their contributions.

We believe that the 27th EEF has provided a valuable opportunity to exchange views on important issues such as environmental governance, connectivity, and energy security in the light of digitalization, taking also into account the wider context of sustainable development and environmental protection, while identifying possible areas for future OSCE engagement.

We have listened with interest to the various presentations as well as interventions by participating States. In the past three days, we had ample confirmation that affordable, secure, safe and sustainable energy is indispensable for growth, prosperity and security in the OSCE region. The security and stability of energy supplies have an impact on the overall stability and security, and the EU therefore considers that energy security and efficiency are an integral part of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

Moreover, emerging digital technologies, if well-managed, bear high potential for improving social inclusion and sustainable economic progress, but may also create new challenges with possible security implications.

The presentations and contributions from participants have clearly illustrated that the two topics presented by the Slovak Chairmanship for possible Ministerial Council deliverables in the second dimension, "security implications of the digital transformation" as well as "energy co-operation to increase energy security and sustainability", are relevant and timely. There was also a marked interest for a draft decision on environmental issues, bearing in mind the need for a balance between economic and environmental aspects in the second dimension. We also recall our position that negotiations on combatting transnational organized crime which damages the environment should be pursued.

We look forward to working with all participating States to identify the best way for deepening our commitments in these areas.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm the EU's readiness to continue engaging constructively in discussions on economic and environmental issues that have an impact on the security situation in the OSCE area, as well as in the run-up to the Ministerial Council in Bratislava, which we hope will produce solid and tangible results.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA*, and ALBANIA*, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

*The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Albania, continue to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process.