



**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
INTERVENTION AT THE OSCE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC FORUM  
PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC  
MAY 22, 2007**

Canada joins others in welcoming our distinguished participants this morning to the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Forum. We have listened with great interest to your sometimes provocative presentations on the challenging issues we face, and on your vision on the OSCE's role in enhancing environmental security.

We would also like to thank the Secretariat for its excellent organisation of this event, the Government of the Czech Republic for its generosity hospitality in hosting the Economic and Environmental Forum, and the Spanish Chairmanship for its continued efforts in promoting environmental security in our Organisation through the selection of this theme.

The OSCE's comprehensive and three-dimensional approach to security, supported by all participating States since the organisation's inception, has always had a strong vision for environmental security.

This has been defined through consensus documents from the Helsinki Final Act to the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension signed in Maastricht in 2003.

This rich tradition of promoting environmental security will hopefully be advanced at this year's Ministerial Council through focused Spanish initiatives, that should build on previous OSCE documents, by consolidating and prioritising the work we do in this area.

Canada believes that concrete and focused OSCE action on enhancing environmental security has already begun through the Environmental Security Initiative (ENVSEC).

Canada strongly supports the ENVSEC Initiative. From 2004-2006 we provided 2.75 million dollars to this Initiative and we are hoping to continue our collaboration with this unique Environment and Security partnership in the future.

Canada has learned a great deal from the past project and from an independent follow-up evaluation. Increasingly, Canadians are joining with people of other nations in seeking to find solutions to the problems revolving around the complex relationship between the environment and security.

We note with satisfaction that the OSCE, through the dedicated efforts of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities and his Office, has collaborated and coordinated with other international organisations to avoid duplication and ensure maximised effectiveness.

Knowing in which areas the OSCE should act is key to maintaining a high standard of work.

The OSCE is a comprehensive regional organisation that is mandated to contribute to security through early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The use of environmental aspects of international relations have had and could continue to have a positive role in helping the OSCE fulfill this mandate, but to do this well we have to ensure that our activities in the Second Dimension are within this mandate.

There are fifty-six participating States in the OSCE and finding common ground in this diversity can be challenging. The answer is not to increase the number of activities in all areas of environmental action.

Rather, our Organisation should work to find focused, limited and useful programmes to which all states can agree.

A significant strength of the OSCE is its network of field missions enabling it to have a presence on the ground. With the support it receives from experts in the OSCE Secretariat, this presence is invaluable for implementing ENVSEC's ambitious programming.

We are pleased with the existing level of cooperation within the OSCE and encourage the continuation of this fruitful collaboration.

In closing, Canada is convinced the OSCE has a role to play in enhancing environmental security but we recognise that our Organisation cannot be all things to all people. We must avoid undertaking initiatives which repeat or duplicate existing work by partner organizations' initiatives, whether it be the Arctic Council or IOM.

We must continue to seek activities that contribute significantly to the Organisation's value added in the area of environmental security; activities that ensure the OSCE's programming is unique, within its comprehensive security mandate, focused for maximum efficacy and internally consistent and united within the organisation. We have to be realistic about what the OSCE can accomplish.

In short, we should focus, prioritise and seek agreement at fifty-six.