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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
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22nd Economic and Environmental Forum
First Preparatory Meeting
Opening Session
(Vienna, 27-28 January 2014)**

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

At the outset allow me to join the previous speakers in thanking the Swiss Chairmanship, the Secretary General and the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities for putting this meeting together. We hope that this year's Forum cycle will advance the role of our Organization in promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE region by way of responding to environmental challenges. This is clearly an area of growing common security concern for each and all of us. We will all be pleased to see the discussions and proposals we will be listening today and tomorrow transformed into concrete deliverables. This morning's thought-provoking presentations will serve as a scene setter and I take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to the distinguished speakers. Such an outcome will not only bolster our second dimension activities in a significant manner; it will also improve the OSCE's profile in this sphere which incessantly gains preponderance in the international agenda.

Based on the organization's core values, wide geographic platform for dialogue, field presences, unique body of political commitments relating to the concept of comprehensive security and a functional tool box, the OSCE is uniquely equipped to provide an impetus for launching new projects and initiatives in responding to the environmental challenges, as well as in such areas as crisis management, humanitarian assistance and disaster rehabilitation. OSCE's guidance in this field can facilitate international progress in addressing existing hardships and shed light for further action not only in the OSCE area but in neighboring regions and even beyond as well.

Needless to say, all the collective efforts to be made within this context will also constitute confidence building measures that will help us in preventing crisis and settling conflicts. As such, they will help us prepare the ground to facilitate the creation of an environment for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Madam Chairperson,

Situated in a disaster-prone geography, Turkey has a strong tradition of responding to those in need. Drawing from its own painful experiences, Turkey is an ardent advocate of international solidarity and partnership with a view to building a safer world, saving human lives and protecting the environment. Turkey further believes that the achievement of significant progress in this area hinges upon the development of a sustainable and collective strategy. An emerging donor country, Turkey is a reliable partner for many international organizations including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNDP, World Food Programme and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. An official from our Disaster and Emergency Management Agency will take part in the panel tomorrow on cooperation in natural disaster management and prevention. On that occasion he will also brief you on Turkey's efforts and cooperation activities in this field.

Madam Chairperson,

A final word regarding the Helsinki+40 process. We believe that the ongoing discussions and exchange of views within "Helsinki+40" must also contribute to the goal of enhancing the role of our organization in environmentally focused cooperation on security. 2003 OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension lays a solid ground for cooperation in this regard. We need to make full use of this opportunity.

By way of conclusion, let me express my wish to see this forum's deliberations ultimately contribute to the adoption of a document at the Ministerial level in Basel. My delegation is ready to engage in a constructive and substantive dialogue on how best to improve our collective ability to deepen the cooperation on this issue, with a view to enhancing security from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Thank you.