

**24th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum** ENGLISH only  
**Prague, 14-16 September 2016**  
**Welcoming Remarks by H.E. Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister, MFA CZ**

Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies, distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to have all of you here in Prague on the occasion of the 24th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. I would like to welcome most sincerely the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany, the OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, the Representatives of the 57 participating States of the OSCE, members of the OSCE Secretariat, as well as the representatives of Partners for Co-operation and of international organizations in this meeting.

The 24th Forum is dedicated to “Strengthening stability and security through co-operation on good governance”. This topic is extremely important and timely for a great number of reasons, and I salute the German Chairmanship for its wise choice, and efforts made during the First and the Second Preparatory Meetings to ensure that this year’s Forum is a success.

Impartiality, accountability, transparency, efficiency, competence, integrity and equality. These are key principles that constitute good governance at all levels. For these principles to be put into practice, active participation of the general public and engagement of the civil society in matters related to public administration are vital. Where people can actively and without discrimination help shape the development and future of their communities, public service is likely to enjoy popular support, leading to stability and sustainability.

Good governance is a foundation that stability, security and prosperity rest upon. It gives us strength to deal with the challenges that arise in our complex and interconnected world. Enhancing it nationally – and sharing good practices internationally – makes good sense to me.

At global level, the United Nations recognized this by dedicating a number of Targets that fall under one of the Sustainable Development Goals – SDG 16 – to good governance. Let me highlight two of them: Target 16.6 and Target 16a. Target 16.6 reads as follows “Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels”, and Target 16a as follows “Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime”. The commitment could hardly be any clearer.

For its own part, the Czech Republic is resolved to contribute to the global good governance effort through its membership of the Bureau of the UN Economic and Social Council. If we take over the ECOSOC Presidency in July 2017, we intend to focus on aspects of good governance in choosing the annual ECOSOC topic.

Acting at global level is necessary but it is not sufficient. A lot can and must be done at regional level as well. And the OSCE, as a regional arrangement in accordance with Chapter Eight of the UN Charter, and its Economic and Environmental Forum can set a good example.

Over the next three days, we will discuss various aspects of good governance in the OSCE region, including its role in the enhancement of security and stability, economic and social prosperity, and environmental sustainability. It is my view that in the course of these discussions, we should also touch upon the contribution that the OSCE can make to the implementation of the groundbreaking 2030 Agenda through the strengthening of the resilience of its Members.

And just like the 2030 Agenda is aimed at balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development, this Forum could set us on the right path towards finding a balance among the three dimensions of the OSCE. Only by doing so will the OSCE be able to better understand and deal with threats in a horizontal manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to thank the German Chairmanship for its efforts to achieve progress in all three dimensions in a year when Europe faces serious security problems. Against the backdrop of the crisis in and around Ukraine, the most serious security crisis in European security in decades, let me express my wish that we will be able to restore mutual respect and adherence to the fundamental OSCE principles and commitments. I also wish every success to the incoming Austrian Chairmanship.

Hoping that the 24<sup>th</sup> Economic and Environmental Forum will give rise to a productive and enriching debate, I wish you a pleasant stay in Prague.

Thank you for your attention.