



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

**27<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**

**“Promoting economic progress and security in the OSCE area through energy co-operation, new technologies, good governance and connectivity in the digital era”**

**CONCLUDING MEETING**

**Prague, 11-13 September 2019**

Venue: Czernin Palace, Loretánské nám 5, 118 00 Prague

**Concluding remarks**

**Ambassador Vuk Žugić**

**Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

Ambassador Kirnág,

Ambassador Hasani,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me thank all distinguished representatives of participating States, speakers from academia, the private sector, the moderators and our international partner organizations as well as colleagues of the OSCE Field Operations for participating and contributing to this Concluding Meeting of the 27<sup>th</sup> Economic and Environmental Forum.

In particular, let me thank the Slovak Chairmanship for the fruitful cooperation my Office is enjoying, and for giving us the opportunity to reflect on the developments in such intertwined areas as sustainable development, energy security, digital transformation and good governance.

You have offered us valuable food for thought on how current challenges could be translated into new opportunities for cooperation with the ultimate goal to promote peace and security in our region.

In the last three days we have discussed on the need for a good mix of different energy resources, including renewables and energy efficiency, to promote energy security.

Clear and predictable national policies governing the energy sector are fundamental to guarantee stable and reliable energy supplies. But they may not be enough.

Viable partnerships, including public-private partnerships, involvement of the civil society as well of the youth are key for success. In particular, one important message emerged during the Sessions: the need for a continued and reinforced energy dialogue among participating States on how to join efforts to overcome the security challenges brought about by the energy transition.

Energy security cannot be pursued at the detriment of the environment. In this regard, fulfilling the SDGs should be a priority for all pS. And again this cannot be done solely by the governments. I cannot but repeat the key role played by the private sector

Dear colleagues,

Our discussions have shown the great potential of digitalization to promote cooperation, security and growth in the OSCE region.

Lifelong learning is a crucial element when it comes to digitalization. Hence, increasing the digital literacy is necessary. Digitalization is a cross-cutting issue, which should make economies and societies more sustainable.

Therefore, best practices and lessons learned are very much welcomed. I look forward to your suggestions on how the OSCE could further contribute in these areas.

Before concluding allow me to stress how much digitalization, connectivity, including in the energy sector, are key for promoting peace and security, strengthening co-operation and ultimately stimulating inclusive economic growth.

I am sure that the Forum has provided us with additional insights for our further efforts in these areas as well as in preparation to the discussions that we will have in the next months, ahead of the Ministerial Council in Slovakia. The conversation had in the framework of the Session “The way to Slovakia” has helped in identifying some of the areas around which possible MC deliverables can be achieved. My Office stands ready to support the Chairmanship, the EEC Chair and all delegations in view of a successful MC meeting.

We welcome the efforts expressed by OSCE participating States to constructively engage in that discussion and I would like to reiterate the OSCE’s willingness to adapt promptly to new circumstances and challenges. By seeking common responses, we can help seize opportunities for good economic

and environmental governance to strengthen our common security. In that regard, needless to say that we from the Secretariat are as well ready to support any initiative within the environmental activities.

In conclusion, let me once again thank the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its traditional warm hospitality, the Slovak Chairmanship, our colleagues from Conference Services and the Documentation Center in Prague for their invaluable support, and our interpreters for having facilitated our deliberations. We also look forward to work closely with the incoming Albanian OSCE Chairmanship.

I wish you all of you a safe trip back.

Thank you.