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Economic Participation for Strengthening Security

1st Preparatory Meeting for the 25th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum
Vienna, 23-24 January 2017

Zeljka Sulc, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

 Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina – challenges

- 3.5 million inhabitants
- Foreign direct investment decrease 2.6 (2014) to 1.4 % of GDP (2015)
- 80 000 people left BiH in 2016 searching for jobs
- 27.5 % official unemployment rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)
 - 31.2 % women
 - 25.3 % men
- **60% youth unemployment rate in BiH**

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Bosnia and Herzegovina - Opportunities

- **BiH as employment heaven in the neighborhood**
 - IT industry largely outsourced / Balkans as a new Silicon Valley
 - Human resources – best value for money
- **More women interested in business**
 - Significant funds invested in women entrepreneurship projects
 - 27.3 women as company owners – big or small number?
- **60% youth unemployment rate**
- **No new foreign terrorist fighters in 2016**

Security and confidence building measures

A precondition to building genuine and lasting security is to create strong local communities.

Strong local communities are, among other efforts, built by mutual trust, respect and strong business environments.

OSCE – platform for building partnerships

- Supporting municipalities to showcase the best practices in improving economic governance (Beacon scheme – municipalities competing in excellence)
- De-corrupting the country / promoting transparency and accountability
 - Integrity plans / monitoring cases of corruption
- Gender responsive budgeting
- Emphasizing role of local communities in promoting economic development in BiH
- Branding Bosnia and Herzegovina

OSCE – platform for reducing radicalisation

Strengthening capacities of different communities/stakeholders in identifying and combating violent extremism

- Supported BiH in adopting Strategy and Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism
- Religious communities - **trained over 2000 religious leaders** on CVE
- Educators - **trained school teachers** on how to deal with potential signs of radicalization
- Media – **trainings for journalists on CVE** reporting
- Youth - Organized **4 youth summits on CVE** gathering over 2000 young people
- Supported initiatives to **counter financing of terrorism**

Opportunities for 2017

- Not an election year for Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Supporting different economic fora:
 - Prime Ministers' Joint Business Conference in Drvar area
 - Facilitating visits to different areas / investment potential
 - Business Conference/Women in business
 - Business and Economic Fora
- Continued co-operation with local communities at all levels on anti-corruption, CVE, connectivity

Opportunities for 2017

Role of the OSCE Mission to BiH

In accordance with Austrian Chairmanship priorities

Support sustainable peace

- For youth
- For women
- For sustainable economy
- For all citizens of BiH

