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Talking points on the role of the OSCE in building the capacity of civil society and the public sector at national and local levels

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- The development of an institutionally strong second dimension shall be further advanced *to provide the participating States with assistance and expertise in responding to the new economic and environmental challenges*. Such assistance should be directed towards strengthening the capacity of civil society and the public sector as the main building blocks of free, democratic, common and indivisible Security Community.

- Environmental dimension of the EEF possesses all necessary prerequisites for being converted into the *main combining link between economic dimension and security dimension as a whole*. Issue of providing environmental security through good governance will stipulate the EEF thematic focus to be attached to the *environmental impact of energy-related activities*.

- It seems reasonable *to broaden the scope of recently started “second track” initiatives* – OSCE Security Days, Parallel Civil Society Conferences, IDEAS, etc. Holding such events in extended format will facilitate to laying of the groundwork for changing new ideas and approaches, including those to be further implemented in economic and environmental dimension. The existing initiatives and new approaches combined with the talents of civil society will substantially apply for Security Community foundation based on the provisions of the Astana Commemorative Declaration.

- Supporting constructive participation of civil sector within the margins of *economic and environmental activities of the OSCE field operations also considered to be a critical item* giving new impetus to the field activities itself. Existing modalities of the OSCE field missions sometimes complicate public participation in project development and implementation without prior consent of governmental bodies.

- *Raising awareness about successful national experience and capable action of Chairmanship on civil sector involvement* in defining and implementing Chairmanship's priorities and initiatives in the second dimension should be broadly advocated. Active

engagement of civil sector, as one of the working methods of the OSCE functioning, will facilitate fruitful discussion on future development of the second dimension and provide a forum for open debate, encouraging valuable intellectual input to be incorporated in the Helsinki+40 process. In that regard, it is increasingly apparent to *support and broaden the idea for establishing the Helsinki+40 Co-ordination Group* headed by the Chairman-in-Office and having among its members coming OSCE Chairmanship, OSCE Troika, Secretary General and leading representatives of civil society, NGOs and academia.

- *NGO impartial participation will facilitate the recently launched discussions* to determine if the Maastricht Strategy Document for the economic and environmental dimension needs to be adapted to the evolving economic and environmental situation.

- *Further promoting the implementation of the Aarhus Convention* through continued support to the Aarhus Centres remains essential element for strengthening OSCE efforts on encouraging dialogue among NGOs, the public and state officials, raising public awareness, providing easy access to environmental information and necessary legal advice to find co-ordinated solutions for environmental problems. This activity should be performed in close co-operation with the ENVSEC Initiative to address climate change and security-related challenges as well.

- *The lack of opportunities for meaningful participation of civil society in the Rio process will give additional impetus to the OSCE in enabling all members of civil society to be actively engaged in sustainable development.* Seeking to capitalize on the outcome of the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the OSCE in close cooperation with respective UN bodies should support *active involvement of civil society, private sector and academia in setting Sustainable Development Goals*. The basis activity should be concentrated on improved access to information and communication technology facilitating the flow of information between the governments and the public.

- *New revision of the National Security Strategy of Ukraine - "Ukraine in the changing world", promulgated by the Presidential Law on June 8, 2012, №389/2012, declared certain provisions that might be considered as an example of national approach towards building civil society capacity.* Increasing competition for access to natural resources and extensive anthropogenic environmental impact are recognized in the Strategy among those threatening international security. The document also provides possibility for active involvement of civil society institutions both in the National Security Strategy development and implementation process and in the assessment of its effectiveness. These provisions could serve as additional point to broaden the OSCE engagement in strengthening civil society in Ukraine.

- Another possible step to gain a stronger foothold on practical cooperation at national level – *to enlist OSCE support in the development of updated Ukrainian Energy Strategy for 2030*. The OSCE participation in this challenging task, combined with effort of national experts, representatives of civil society, academia, private and public sectors, could provide not only capable solutions but also firm guarantee of impartiality and keeping balance between private and corporative interests of the parties involved.

- In essence, the OSCE has some way to go and looks set to evolve further on civil society and public sector capacity building in promoting good governance, integrity and transparency. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities supported by other OSCE Institutions with patience and perseverance should take on much of this work.