



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

30th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Promoting security and stability in the OSCE area through sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic”

**CONCLUDING MEETING
Prague, 8-9 September 2022**

**Concluding remarks of Ambassador Igli Hasani
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

**Deputy Minister Gryban,
Ambassador Halaciński, Dear Adam,
Ambassador Djundev, Dear Igor
Distinguished Delegates and Representatives,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to welcome all of you to this last session that wraps up the proceedings of the concluding meeting of the 30th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

Before we start, I wish to thank the Czech hosts for their gracious hospitality and the excellent cooperation during the preparations and the conduct of this meeting.

I should also like to express my appreciation to all moderators, speakers and delegations for their presentations, statements and remarks.

Your presence in Prague and your active contribution to this meeting confirmed once again the role of the OSCE as a unique platform for dialogue and co-operation to support sustainable economic recovery and green growth in the current difficult political and economic circumstances.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,**

I would like to invite everyone to reflect on a few key themes that emerged during our lively discussions yesterday and today. Themes that affect our common security and deserve the OSCE's utmost attention.

First, fears of a global recession are growing, as supply chain disruptions cause soaring inflation and a cost-of-living crisis.

It is not surprising that in July, the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook Update was entitled “Gloomy and more uncertain”. The report predicts that global economic growth would slow to 3.2% this year from 6.1% in 2021.

According to the same report, the risk of recession is particularly prominent in 2023, when in several economies growth is expected to bottom out, household savings accumulated during the pandemic will have declined, and even small shocks could cause economies to stall.

Second, Europe faces an unprecedented energy crisis, whose real magnitude will likely materialize in fall and winter.

Of course, this crisis did not happen overnight. It is the outcome of the combined effect of growing energy demand following the end of COVID-19 restrictions and the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The economic and social consequences of price hikes and potential power shortages could have security dimensions, and, as such, should be a matter of serious concern.

Third, our pathway towards clean energy has become bumpier. The rising imports and consumption of coal to address the energy crisis mark a clear setback in our ambitious green transition agenda.

At this very juncture, the challenge facing the international community is two-fold. On the one side, we need to ensure that this setback is transitory, and, on the other, we must avoid any rollback of the commitments undertaken in Glasgow.

The forthcoming COP27 meeting in Sharm-El-Sheikh is the first opportunity to reiterate those commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Fourth, under current circumstances, it is more important than ever to amplify the use of innovation, technology and digital solutions to advance our goals regarding climate neutrality and resource efficiency.

Governments have a central role to play, particularly by putting in place public policies that support decarbonisation strategies, remove fossil fuel subsidies, introduce carbon emission pricing schemes, incentivize green transport or fund innovation in low-carbon technologies, to mention just but a few.

As a security organization, the OSCE cannot and should not stand idle in front of these challenges.

We are already doing a lot to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. However, a lot more can be done to support the climate change mitigation plans and the implementation of green and sustainable recovery schemes at the national level.

Our mandate in these areas is solid, not least because of the Stockholm MC decision on Climate change, our expertise is there, and our network with local partners within participating States is extensive.

We just need to make full use of our assets with the support of adequate budgetary and extra-budgetary financial resources.

Finally, yesterday we reflected on the Role of the Economic and Environmental Dimension, including this Forum, in promoting comprehensive, equal and indivisible security in the OSCE area. This reflection assumes particular importance as we approach the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2025.

Many speakers suggested that the Second Dimension takes geopolitics strongly into account, specifically in the current political context marked by the war in Ukraine.

As the same time, participants brought up a number of highly relevant themes such as climate change, energy security, sustainable connectivity and digitalisation worthy of further consideration as we move forward.

The importance of these themes for the Second Dimension was already highlighted during last year's high-level conference marking 30 years of the 1990 Bon Document.

We will read with interest the Chairmanship's paper that summarizes the outcome of the panel discussion, and look forward to continuing our deliberations on the future orientation of the Second Dimension.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me to use this opportunity to echo the words of Ambassador Djundev, and emphasize the importance of a speedy adoption of the Permanent Council Decision on the theme, agenda and modalities of the OSCE's 31st Economic and Environmental Forum.

In this respect, my team and I look forward to closely co-operating with the Chairmanship of North Macedonia in the run-up and during the entire EEF cycle next year. We stand ready to support the implementation of your priorities in the economic and environmental dimension.

Before closing the meeting, allow me to commend, also on your behalf, the Polish Chairmanship for its leadership during this year's Forum cycle, and thank the interpreters, conference services and my office for organizing this event.

I thank you for your attention.