

The Security Implications of Climate Change in the OSCE Region

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Kazakhstan Statement at closing session

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I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Greek Chairmanship, Romanian Government and Office of Coordinator for organizing this very important conference.

I want to refer to the concept of the climate change to be a threat multiplier. Yesterday Mr. Tultabaev from Kazakhstan Environment protection Ministry and Head of the OSCE Center in Bishkek Ambassador Tesoriere outlined problems countries of CA region are facing today from negative consequences of climate change. Among them are scarcity of fresh and irrigation water, desertification, decrease of pastures and arable lands, glassier melting, Aral Sea shrinking, environment induced migration, other social and economic shortcomings. Potentially negative impact can go further to tension and conflict situation within and among states.

I brought examples of only Central Asia. But indeed the problem is much wider. The issue of climate change does not pertain to any particular country. We all are vulnerable. Only joint approach of both – countries involved and international organizations with leading role of the United Nations can give us a chance to overcome the challenge.

It is not so important how we call it, the important part is what are the consequences of any environmental change on the security of our citizens.

There is a clear link between, water, energy and food security, and climate change will have an effect on all of them.

Either too little water or too much water will disrupt our economies, affect our security and impact our biodiversity. In Central Asia, this can exacerbate the disappearance of the Aral Sea on the long term, and one of our priorities during next year's chairmanship us going to focus on this issue.

As this year's Chair of the Mediterranean Partners for co-operation, Kazakhstan is already looking into the priorities of these countries, and recently, water scarcity has been pointed out as the main problem the region is facing, and climate change will exacerbate the situation.

The incoming Kazakh Chairmanship is already looking into concrete proposals to tackle water scarcity and will work with the Mediterranean partners and the Office of the Co-ordinator in the coming weeks to define them before the end of the year.

We have heard already that a scenario-based project is underway. We shall consider how we can support such project, either by providing expertise on the environmental challenges in Central Asia, or by hosting some of the meetings that are envisaged in the project during 2010.

We shall pay close consideration to the Secretary General's proposal on organizing an annual conference on climate change. This is also linked to the outcome of the draft decision on Abrupt Environmental Change that the Greek presidency is going to introduce.

Finally I would like to reiterate to our Romanian host our profound gratitude for the hospitality rendered to us these days. I also would like to thank Office of economic coordinator and Greek chairmanship for the excellent preparation this conference and for the results we got as the outcomes of the conference. I wish the participants all the best and safe trip home.

Thank you.