



1st Preparatory Meeting of the 20th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism, 6-7 February 2012, in Vienna

We highly appreciate that the first preparatory meeting of this forum is focusing on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing. Crimes – such as corruption, fraud or the trafficking of drugs, arms and human beings – and the laundering of illicit funds are two sides of the same coin. Success in fighting crimes depends essentially on the progress in countering financial criminality.

As one of the top 10 financial markets in the world – one that is very much globally oriented – Switzerland has a particular interest in a strong and effective global Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing regime. To prevent the abuse of the financial system has been very high on the agenda of our government, already for a long time.

In order to protect its financial centre against criminal abuse, Switzerland has in place a comprehensive and effective set of anti-money laundering measures, a fact that has been confirmed by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). To address new challenges, our legal framework in the area of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing is continuously being strengthened. Switzerland is a founding member of the FATF and has since been very active in contributing to strengthening the FATF standards and their implementation. As you know, the FATF is in the process of finalizing the revision of the FATF standards. Once the standards are in place, it will be important to focus on their implementation by the individual countries.

However, to ensure that adequate Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing measures are taken throughout the globe, capacity building in specific countries is crucial. Switzerland has taken a pro-active role in assisting individual countries to comply with international standards through capacity building measures and technical assistance programs, some of which benefit also OSCE countries. For one, we are the main donor to the IMF Topical Trust Fund on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Terrorist Financing, which is also open to OSCE countries. Further, Switzerland has decided to support the Global Program on Money Laundering of the UNODC. Finally, Switzerland provided bilateral support to individual OSCE countries in need to strengthen their Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing regime.

To conclude, we would like to thank the OSCE for its contribution to the fight against financial criminality and we encourage member countries to continue to enhance their efforts to promote the integrity of the global financial market.