



EUROPEAN UNION

Economic and Environmental Implementation Meeting Vienna, 13 November 2023

EU Closing Statement

1. We would like to again thank the Chairpersonship of North Macedonia and the Office of the Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities for organising this meeting today. It was a valuable occasion to take stock of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of environment and security. We would also like to take this opportunity to commend the dedication and efforts of the Austrian Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee in advancing dialogue and cooperation in the Second Dimension throughout this year.
2. We would also like to thank all the panellists for sharing their experience and expertise with us. The shared examples and best practices should not merely remain a subject of this meeting; rather, we hope that our discussions spill over to subsequent dialogues regarding new initiatives.
3. As highlighted by the speakers, advancing work in the field of environment and security is an essential component of the comprehensive approach to security in the OSCE region. In this regard, we welcome further discussion on the environmental and security nexus in the OSCE region.
4. Our discussions also illustrated the importance of fostering good governance and fighting corruption in the sphere of environment, which is an enormous challenge worldwide. In order to reinforce the global fight against corruption, it is paramount to strengthen international cooperation, with a view to enabling States to efficiently prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute corruption, as well as to apply effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions and recover criminal assets, while fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. We express our support for the valuable work of OCEEA in the sphere of anti-corruption.
5. We also reiterate our support for the valuable work done by the OSCE in addressing the devastating impact of Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine's environment and economy, including by strengthening disaster risk management, supporting water resource management, and advancing

Ukraine's transition to sustainable energy infrastructure. We commend the OCEEA's immediate response to support Ukraine in coordination with the Ukrainian authorities, and welcome its engagement, including through the implementation of the project "Assessment of environmental impacts of the war against Ukraine and options for remediation". The EU and its Member States will continue to provide long-term support to Ukraine to address the economic and environmental challenges caused by Russia's brutal war of aggression. The EU will remain unwavering in our support to Ukraine for as long as it takes.

6. The EU reaffirms its strong commitment to continue efforts to promote and advance cooperation on these issues. We believe that the OSCE has a relevant and valuable role to play in assisting participating States' efforts to achieve goals in the field of environment and security, and in implementing our common commitments in the economic and environmental dimension.

7. In conclusion, I would like to quote the UNEP Director Inger Andersen: "The environment is about people". This echoes the motto of the CiO. Indeed, the suffering of people following environmental disasters, goes on long after a conflict has ended.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and the EFTA country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.