



EUROPEAN UNION

Economic and Environmental Implementation Meeting Vienna, 18 - 19 October 2021

EU Closing Statement

1. We would like to again thank the Swedish Chairpersonship and the Office of the Coordinator for organising this meeting over the past two days. It was a valuable occasion to take stock of the implementation of the OSCE commitments in the field of anti-corruption and good governance.
2. We would 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, corruption creates uncertainty, slowing processes and potentially imposing additional costs on the business environment. This makes an economy less attractive for doing business and, therefore, reduces private investment and competitiveness and prevents the economy from fulfilling its potential. Over time, corruption does not only nurture and deepen social inequalities in the society but also erodes trust in the state and confidence in institutions and governments.
4. Our discussions also illustrated that corruption is an enormous challenge worldwide, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. 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.
5. We also reiterate our support for the valuable work done by the OSCE's autonomous institutions and field missions, as well as the Secretariat. In this regard, we would like to mention the close cooperation of the EU, the Council of Europe, the OECD and the OSCE on anti-trafficking efforts and initiatives. Furthermore, we would like to highlight the continuous support of

many EU Member States to the OSCE's anti-corruption projects through extensive additional financial contributions, as well as through their expertise.

6. The EU reaffirms its strong commitment to continue efforts to prevent and combat corruption, and to promote effective measures against corruption in all forms, including corruption affecting the environment, or enabling trafficking in natural resources and wildlife. We believe that the OSCE has a relevant and valuable role to play in assisting participating States' efforts in combatting corruption.

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

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