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## REPORT

### FOR THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### *Advancing Sustainable Development to Promote Security: The Role of Parliaments*

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**Introduction**

It is the unique role of national parliaments to develop legislative proposals with the aim of advancing sustainable development and security and implementing OSCE commitments in the economic and environmental dimension. In particular, parliaments have an essential role in preventing and combating corruption, money laundering, and financing of terrorism; developing effective approaches to migration and environmental governance; promoting human capital development; improving water management; promoting disaster risk reduction; and addressing climate change, energy security and sustainable energy.

The OSCE PA fully supports the Slovak Chairmanship of the OSCE's goal-oriented programme for 2019. We wish Slovakia a successful year working towards a more secure and peaceful world for our citizens with more measurable achievements in good governance, energy co-operation, new technologies, artificial intelligence and digitalization and its support for environmental policies and connectivity.

We appreciate the 2019 Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities' (OCEEA) work plan of the second dimension, especially the assistance offered to participating States in implementing economic and environmental policies contributing to security and stability in the OSCE region.

**The Economic and Environmental Dimension**

In the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, participating States expressed their conviction "that their efforts to develop co-operation in the fields of trade, industry, science and technology, the environment and other areas of economic activity contribute to the reinforcement of peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole".

The OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 5/18 on Human Capital Development in the Digital Area adopted at the 25th OSCE Ministerial Council called upon participating States to further examine opportunities and challenges associated with new forms of employment arising from the digital transformation of the economy and with a view to ensuring adequate social protection.

The rapid digitalization process taking place across the OSCE area is generating substantial changes in all spheres of life and carries many security implications, including in the economic and environmental dimension. National parliaments must keep abreast of developments in this field and respond appropriately with relevant legislation. Human beings should remain at the center of the digitalization process, and legal protection of personal data must be duly addressed.

We welcome the OCEEA plans to assist the incoming 2020 Albanian Chairmanship of the OSCE in the preparation of the 28<sup>th</sup> Economic and Environmental Forum.

## **Economic and Good Governance**

Among other commitments, Ministerial Council Decision 4/16 recognizes corruption and lack of good governance as issues that can undermine the stability and security of participating States, while connectivity through transport and trade facilitation is recognized as a contributor to confidence-building and trust. The OSCE PA will therefore strengthen its activities aimed at building capacity and fostering regional co-operation with regard to good governance, sound business climate, anticorruption and anti-money laundering, trade facilitation, and transport co-operation.

Among other commitments contained in Ministerial Council Decision 5/09, this decision acknowledges the benefits of effective migration management for security and stability, and the OSCE PA will continue its engagement activities in support of migration management through more effective mobility of labour force, skills and talents. In this vein, as outlined in Ministerial Council Decision 5/18, the potentially disruptive impact of digitalization and innovation on the labour market calls for increased engagement in promoting human capital development through quality education and the development of skills. To this end, the OSCE PA plans to provide support through policy and operational measures as well as through enhanced co-operation and dialogue among participating States and the Partners for Co-operation.

## **The Fight Against Corruption and Financing of Terrorism**

OSCE Ministerial Council Decision no. 5/14 on Prevention of Corruption recognizes that corruption at all levels is a potential source of political tension that undermines the stability and security of participating States, threatens the OSCE's shared values, and facilitates criminal activity.

The importance of promotion of good governance and reducing corruption for the OSCE was acknowledged in the OSCE PA 2018 Berlin Declaration, which recognized the destructive effects of corruption and organized crime that undermine good governance, lead to the mismanagement of public funds, distort competitive markets, and endanger international security. The 2017 Minsk Declaration called on OSCE participating States to enhance the level of co-operation among law enforcement agencies and other relevant institutions in combating corruption, money laundering, the production and trafficking of narcotics, the financing of terrorism, and other financial crimes.

Priority should be given to the "Preventing and fighting corruption through digitalization" topic of the 27th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum on "Promoting economic progress and security in the OSCE area through energy co-operation, new technologies, good governance and connectivity in the digital era".

The OSCE PA President addressed the opening of the conference on "Developing anti-corruption strategies for the digital age: recent trends and best practices in the OSCE area" in November 2018, highlighting that Development Goals are unreachable without a strong commitment to fighting corruption, and increased transparency and accountability should be at the very top of the political agenda, especially in times when digital access has considerably raised the expectations of our citizens.

OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation should strengthen co-ordination on the subnational, national and international levels, including through enhanced co-operation with institutions such as INTERPOL and EUROPOL in combating corruption, money laundering, financing of terrorism, and drug trafficking.

### **Connectivity (Trade, Transport and Customs)**

The OSCE PA supports OSCE activities in assisting participating States to enhance their capabilities across the region in successfully engaging in international trade and transport and in improving mechanisms for trade facilitation. This is vital to improve co-ordination of national and international efforts to tackle transport security challenges, as well as to support facilitating dialogue on sustainable transport to promote more effective natural policies for cleaner and more energy efficient transportation.

### **Migration Management**

In 2016, when the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants was adopted by the UN General Assembly, there were roughly 65 million forcibly displaced persons, including over 21 million refugees, three million asylum seekers, and over 40 million internally displaced persons.

An estimated 144,166 migrants, including asylum seekers, arrived in Europe via different sea and land routes between January and December 2018. This is 23 per cent less than in 2017 and 63 per cent less than in 2016. In 2018, an estimated 81 per cent of the overall arrivals crossed the Mediterranean Sea, mainly using the Western Mediterranean route.

The OSCE PA supports efforts towards an effective and gender-sensitive approach towards migration management that supports legal migration and reduces irregular migration by facilitating regional dialogue, co-operation, capacity-building activities, and the exchange of good practices.

As Ministerial Council Decision 5/09 acknowledges the benefits of effective migration management for security and stability, the OSCE PA supports OCEEA engagements in support of migration management through more effective mobility of labor, force, skills and talents.

As emphasized in Ministerial Council Decision 5/18, there is a need for increased engagement to promote human capital development through quality education and the development of skills.

### **Food and Water Security**

Over the coming decades, changing climate, growing global populations, rising food prices, and environmental stressors will have a significant yet highly uncertain impact on food security.

Together with food security, water security is a growing issue for the OSCE area, with certain regions in particular more seriously prone to a water crisis. Central Asia, unfortunately, has been affected by two massive environmental disasters in recent years: the pollution of the Caspian Sea and the by now irreversible drying up of the Aral Sea.

Food and nutrition security exist when all individuals have reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food to lead a healthy life. Food and nutrition security have four dimensions that encompass both chronic and transitory (acute) situations: availability, access, utilization and stability.

In 2015, countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 2.4, which states “by 2030 to ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality”.

The 2018 Sustainable Development Goals Report<sup>1</sup> found that conflict and climate change were major contributing factors leading to growing numbers of people facing hunger and forced displacement, as well as curtailing progress towards universal access to basic water and sanitation services.

After a prolonged decline, world hunger appears to be on the rise again. Conflict, drought and disasters linked to climate change are among the key factors causing this reversal in progress. The proportion of undernourished people worldwide increased from 10.6 per cent in 2015 to 11.0 per cent in 2016. This translates to 815 million people worldwide in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015.

In 2017, 151 million children under the age of five suffered from stunting (low height for their age), 51 million suffered from wasting (low weight for height), and 38 million were overweight.

Aid to agriculture in developing countries totaled \$12.5 billion in 2016, falling to six per cent of all donors’ sector-allocable aid from nearly 20 per cent in the mid-1980s.

Progress has been made in reducing market-distorting agricultural subsidies, which were more than halved in five years, from \$491 million in 2010 to less than \$200 million in 2015.

## **Energy Security and Renewable Energy**

Energy security is a precondition for economic growth and stability. Without predictable, reliable and economically sound energy supplies, regional economies cannot prosper. This is why energy security forms an important part of the OSCE’s concept of comprehensive security.

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. According to the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda, there are approximately three billion people who lack access to clean-cooking solutions and are exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution. Additionally, slightly less than one billion people are functioning without electricity and 50 per cent of them are found in Sub-Saharan Africa alone. Fortunately, progress has been made in the past decade regarding the use of renewable

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<sup>1</sup><https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg2>

Source: Report of the Secretary-General, The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018

electricity from water, solar and wind power and the ratio of energy used per unit of GDP is also declining.

The Berlin Declaration stressed the importance of energy security as a crucial factor for economic growth and stability and lent its support to regional efforts to interconnect energy networks and other infrastructure projects enhancing energy security. The Berlin Declaration also called on OSCE participating States to place renewed attention on the development and expansion of renewable and sustainable energy with the ultimate aim of reaching energy efficiency through clean energy sources.

According to the Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) Energy Outlook, \$11.5 trillion will be invested globally in new power generation capacity between 2018 and 2050, with \$8.4 trillion of that going to wind and solar power and a further \$1.5 trillion to other zero-carbon technologies such as hydro and nuclear power.

At the Davos World Economic Forum in January, it was noted that despite significant achievements in sustainable energy innovation and market scaling of technologies such as solar, wind energy storage and others, the rate of change is not fast enough. Considering that two-thirds of greenhouse gas emissions are from energy and that this demand will continue to grow up to 35 per cent by 2040, a wider spread of technologies and solutions needs to be matured for commercial deployment, at a much faster pace.

## **Climate Change**

At the COP 21 Paris Climate Conference held between 30 November and 12 December 2015, solemn promises were made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions sufficient to contain global warming to within 2 °C of temperatures prior to the industrial age. All nations undertook to commit themselves to drawing up policies that comply with these goals.

The Berlin Declaration stressed that the climate crisis represents an immediate threat to the security of the OSCE area and needs to be addressed with extreme urgency in line with the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. It called on parliaments of OSCE participating States to promote universal ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change and to boost the implementation of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to strengthen the global response to climate change aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and keeping the increase of global average temperature below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels.

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report issued in October 2018 has warned that governments have just 12 years to take bold action on climate change before the most devastating impacts take hold. It also stressed that the target should be 1.5 °C rather than 2 °C in order to avoid the worst effects on ecosystems, weather, and rising sea levels.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 13, acknowledges that climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly today and will cost even more tomorrow. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, weather events are becoming more extreme, and greenhouse gas emissions are now at their highest levels in history. Without action, the world's average surface temperature is likely to surpass 3 °C in this century. The effects of

this level of warming will likely be severe, with the poorest and most vulnerable people being the most affected.

The Draft Work Plan for 2019 of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities focuses on, among other things, increasing awareness and capacity to assess potential security risks stemming from climate change at national and regional levels.

On 25 January 2019 the World Meteorological Organization for the first time addressed the UN Security Council on the risks to international peace and security posed by climate change and climate-related disasters. WMO Chief Scientist and Research Director, Pavel Kabat, told the Security Council that “climate change has a multitude of security impacts – rolling back the gains in nutrition and access to food; heightening the risk of wildfires and exacerbating air quality challenges; increasing the potential for conflict over water; leading to more internal displacement and migration”.

Speaking at the Davos World Economic Forum, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres stated that “climate change is running faster than we are. And we have this paradox: the reality is proving to be worse than scientists had foreseen, and all the last indicators show that. We are moving dramatically into a runaway climate change if we are not able to stop it, and at the same time, I see the political will slowing down”.

The OSCE PA welcomes the convening in New York of the UN 2019 Climate Summit on 23 September with the aim of supporting efforts to implement the Paris Agreement. Greater action is needed from all countries to meet this dire threat.

### **Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Technical and scientific innovations provide excellent prospects for environmental protection. Industrial society is a knowledge-based society. It is vital that growing knowledge and capabilities are used responsibly and that they are used in the interest of environmentally appropriate development. Science must play an important role in the pursuit of sustainable development, for example, in energy use. The key technologies of sustainable development include new energy and propulsion technologies that will help reduce emissions of climate-damaging greenhouse gases.

### **Conclusion**

According to the Global Risk Report 2018<sup>2</sup>, these are the five top concerns the world must address:

1. Weapons of mass destruction
2. Extreme weather events
3. Natural disasters
4. Failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation
5. Water crisis

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<sup>2</sup> Global Risk Report 2018 <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/these-are-the-biggest-risks-the-world-faces-in-2018/>

Four of these concerns are directly related to the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE. Therefore, the joint efforts of the parliaments, participating States, and Partners for Co-operation on national and international levels are of the utmost importance in promoting sustainable development and security in order to address the challenges the OSCE region is facing, including those challenges related to the second dimension, in particular climate change, environmental degradation, preventing and combating corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism, migration, water management, disaster risk reduction, energy security and sustainable energy.