

## UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

### STATEMENT BY THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

**Esra Buttanri**  
**Head of Environmental Co-operation Unit**  
**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

#### **Agenda item 5- Connecting the Dots: Sustainable Resource Management and Lifestyles in the Region**

The OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe- with its **comprehensive approach to security** offers effective tools to its **57 participating States** to promote sustainable development in the OSCE region.

The 2030 Agenda reinforces the **close relationship between peace and sustainable development**. As a regional security organization under **Chapter VIII of the UN Charter**, the OSCE's major contribution to the implementation of this Agenda is its support for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation.

I am representing the **OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension**, namely the 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension, together with our field operations, we are actively engaged in most of the **SDGs that are being reviewed this year**:

In relation to **SDG 6**, let me refer to our efforts towards promoting good water governance, and facilitating co-operation among riparian states with shared water resources. In doing so, we make use of the potential offered by water diplomacy to increase security and stability, and the UNECE Water Convention continues to be the main framework for our activities.

In relation to **SDG 7**, we continue to provide a platform among major energy producing, transit and consuming countries to exchange information and best practices on sustainable and renewable energy and energy efficiency.

In relation to **SDG 11**, our activities mainly aim for increasing disaster resilience through co-operative approaches within and across borders. We strengthen national and regional capacities. We support policy development and promote community based disaster risk reduction.

Strengthening resilience also constitutes a major component of our work for **climate change**. Together with our partners in the Environment and Security Initiative, we have just recently concluded a comprehensive project, which **assessed security implications of climate change** in three regions – **Central Asia, the South Caucasus and Eastern**

**Europe.** Over **500 national stakeholders** from **11 countries** contributed to the outcomes of this project. It identified over **30 geographical hotspots** at national and transboundary levels where climate and security issues converge and it suggested **recommendations for adaptation measures.**

Turning to the **SDG 12**, let me commend the two roundtables of yesterday. Last year during the **Austrian OSCE Chairmanship**, the OSCE had a major focus on **Green Economy**. This allowed us to have a thorough discussion on how the transition to green economy and circular economy could benefit security and stability in our region and what OSCE could do to maximize this potential. Yesterday, we also heard a lot about the importance of innovation for sustainable development. This year, under the **Italian Chairmanship**, the OSCE participating States are discussing the security benefits of innovation, including **digitalization**. We believe these discussions will generate additional momentum in support of the 2030 Agenda.

Let me also refer to **civil society**. In this forum, once again, it became evident that peaceful and inclusive societies, as well as transparency and accountability are prerequisites for sustainable development. The **UNECE Aarhus Convention** provides an excellent framework in this respect. The OSCE has been supporting the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, mainly through its network of **Aarhus Centres** which now includes 60 Centres in 14 countries. These Centres offer the platforms to reach out to communities and raise awareness on SDGs and mobilize local action for their implementation.

Last but not least, let me emphasize that we are not alone in these efforts. In all these activities, we are joining efforts first and foremost with the UN, but also with many other partner organizations. The **Environment and Security – ENVSEC Initiative**- as a partnership between the OSCE, UNECE, UNEP, UNDP and REC since 2003 is a concrete example of this approach. Our lasting **partnerships**, including within the ENVSEC Initiative, will continue to enable joint and co-ordinated action in support of the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you.