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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and
Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 4 September 2007

To: All OSCE Delegations

Subject: Concept Paper for the First Preparatory Conference to the Sixteenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum - "Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment", Helsinki, 10-11 September 2007

Please find attached a Concept Paper for the First Preparatory Conference to the Sixteenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum - "Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment", Helsinki, 10-11 September 2007.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities**

4 September 2007

First Preparatory Conference to the Sixteenth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

**“Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing
security and protecting the environment”**

Helsinki, 10-11 September 2007

CONCEPT PAPER

Background

The theme of the 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum is “Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment”. The theme stems from the fact that security and environmental challenges are interlinked and salient on the international agenda. Secure and environmentally sustainable maritime, inland waterway and multimodal transportation networks have an important role in enhancing regional security and economic co-operation, and in promoting trade and generating economic development across the OSCE area. The theme also pays special attention to the challenges of landlocked countries.

The theme draws partly from the theme of the 14th EEF under the Belgian Chairmanship, which covered a whole range of transportation issues including waterway transportation, as well as from the 15th EEF under the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship, which concentrates on environmental aspects of security.

The theme is based on and implements the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, which was adopted by the Ministerial Council in Maastricht in 2003 (see excerpts in the Annex). In addition, the Ministerial Council adopted on 5 December 2006 a decision on the Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE (MC.DEC/11/06), which among other things encourages the participating States to implement conventions and agreements aimed at reducing the negative impact on the environment of transport activities. The Spanish OSCE Chairmanship has submitted an OSCE Strategy on Environment and Security for approval in the Ministerial Council in Madrid later this year. The relevant parts of the MC.DEC/11/06 and of the proposed Strategy, pending its approval, will also be reflected in the 16th EEF.

Policy context

As part of its comprehensive approach to security, the OSCE is concerned with economic and environmental matters, recognizing that cooperation in these areas can contribute to peace, prosperity and stability. Economic co-operation and integration contribute to regional stability and security, which are at the core of the OSCE's work.

Transport and logistics are key elements of trade and economic development for the whole OSCE area including its partners. Traffic is increasing in all waterways, which has its cross-border and cross-regional positive impacts on the growth of economic activities, contributing also to regional stability and security. It can also have various direct and indirect consequences and implications, which are not always desired. Growth in traffic entails growing risks of accidents and environmental damage, unless effective counter-measures are taken.

Projected shipped tonnages in the Baltic Sea indicate the trend quite clearly. Maritime transport in the Baltic Sea was 571 million tonnes in 2003, and according to some estimates it will grow by 64% to 931 million tonnes by year 2020, resulting to a great extent from the increase of transport of oil and oil products. On the other hand the Baltic Sea provides an example of various cooperation mechanisms, which aim at increasing security and reducing environmental risks.

It is evident that there is a need to pay more attention to environmental challenges as emphasized during the ongoing Spanish Chairmanship. This is also true in the context of maritime and inland waterways co-operation. In this field the trend is also towards increased inter-dependency and co-operation on issues such as environmental protection, environmental aspects of security, and environmental governance. Perceiving positive aspects of inter-dependency and creating structures to enhance security may also help avoid unnecessary and accordingly economically end environmentally wasteful investments.

Effective cooperation between participating States, international organisations and other stakeholders is needed in order to tackle various challenges emerging as a result of the increase in maritime and inland waterway traffic. The role of the OSCE is to raise awareness of these issues, encourage participating States to become party to the relevant international conventions and agreements, and to facilitate co-operation and building networks at regional and subregional levels.

The scope for the Helsinki Preparatory Conference

The main aim of the First Preparatory Conference to the 16th EEF, to be held in Helsinki on 10-11 September 2007, is to enhance co-operation in the OSCE area by bringing together participating States, international and regional organisations and other stakeholders dealing with security and environmental aspects of maritime and inland waterways cooperation in the OSCE area. Conference participants represent different maritime regions (e.g. the Baltic Sea, Barents Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Mediterranean Sea), regions that have inland waterways as well as land-locked countries in the OSCE region.

The Helsinki Conference will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss and exchange views on best practices, know-how, collection of data and sharing of information. The OSCE would act as a facilitator of dialogue and by doing so it would enhance awareness of the participating States on relevant environmental and security related issues for maritime and inland waterways and multimodal corridors in the OSCE area.

The objectives of the First Preparatory Conference are to:

- ⇒ address various security aspects of maritime and inland waterways. The discussion will also deal with current environmental concerns and various co-operation frameworks, as security and environment are to a great extent inter-linked;
- ⇒ consider the links between security, environmental and economic aspects of the theme;
- ⇒ discuss and identify current and future security and environmental challenges in this field;
- ⇒ enhance participating States' capacities to halt environmental degradation, improve preparedness for environmental disasters, and contribute to sharing information about existing environmental enhancement policies and emergency response systems;
- ⇒ help experts and decision-makers to develop better ways to understand, forecast and prevent possible risks and accidents;
- ⇒ address various existing co-operation structures in the OSCE area, promote transparency by sharing information and look into possibilities of enhancing co-operation;
- ⇒ identify possible recommendations for further work.

The Helsinki Conference will proceed from the fact that security and environment are inter-linked and that it is necessary to adopt a wider perspective on the pressures that impact the governance of maritime and inland waterways. In addition economic aspects are linked to security and the environment. Various economic actors play, or should play, a crucial role in contributing to better security and cleaner environment. In the same way, improved security and healthier environment lay ground for enhanced economic activity and make it easier for more actors to participate in the global trade. For that reason it is vital that security, environmental and economic factors are all taken into account when considering possible long-term and sustainable solutions.

Furthermore, the role of the OSCE itself is not to provide instant solutions, but to deal with the challenges in a longer-term perspective, and to raise awareness of its participating States on the importance of efficient co-operation mechanisms. By analyzing the current status and the way ahead regarding various co-operation initiatives, the Conference will try to stimulate synergies between various regional/subregional co-operation mechanisms, and to identify the way in which the OSCE, through its political leverage, could support such processes.

In order to reduce risks and accidents, a comprehensive understanding of the situation and its requirements is needed. The first step is to encourage cooperation between different administrative authorities in a country, but because the challenges are of a transboundary nature, co-operation between countries, as well as between and with international organisations and non-governmental organisations is needed to achieve sustainable solutions.

The OSCE places great importance to good cooperation with other international organizations. Finland, as the in-coming Chairmanship of the OSCE, will do its best to fully utilize the potential of this cooperation. To this end, relevant international organisations, such as IMO, UNECE, UNDP, EBRD, HELCOM, BSC and others have been invited to attend the Forum and also the Preparatory Conferences, and to contribute to the discussions as appropriate. In addition, the Forum process and the Helsinki Conference will benefit from the experience of the European Commission in this field.

It should be noted that the intention is neither to engage OSCE in activities that are already taken care of or regulated by other international organisations, nor to duplicate their work. The OSCE deals with these issues at a different level and in a different format. The main aim of the 16th EEF is to use the network that the OSCE already has in order to promote dialogue and build bridges between policy-makers and experts of the participating States as well as between various other stakeholders, such as private enterprises and NGO's. Therefore, the 16th EEF, including the Preparatory Conference in

Helsinki, aims at looking into opportunities to further develop cooperation and also explore ways how the OSCE could lend political support to the work that is being conducted in other fora.

The conduct of the Helsinki Preparatory Conference

The Preparatory Conference in Helsinki will be conducted over two days. The first day will start with a scene-setting opening plenary session, which will be addressed by H.E. Ilkka Kanerva, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Ambassador José Ángel López Jorrín, Head of the Task Force of the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE as well as Mr. Bernard Snoy, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

The opening session will be followed by seven plenary sessions. The first session will explore general maritime and inland waterways co-operation frameworks and relevant norms and standards, on which IMO and UNECE are expected to provide their expert views. During the second session the focus will be geographically on the Northern European experience, the current status and possible ways forward in this region. The two remaining sessions of the first day will address cooperation issues related to transport security, as well as to environmental protection. These deliberations will include issues such as oil-spills, ballast water, and pollution prevention providing ideas on possible ways to tackle these risks and challenges.

The second day will highlight regional experiences from the Black Sea area and the cooperation experiences in transboundary water courses and rivers. Security and environmental aspects are central in these deliberations. Existing activities such as the OSCE/UNECE's Dnestr project and UNDP's project in Amu-Darya would be presented and discussed with a view to streamline the way forward. Also, the requirement for co-operation between different actors - government agencies, private sector, international financial institutions and non-governmental organisations - will be discussed.

The Preparatory Conference will close with a remark from Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, OSCE Secretary General. A commentary from a representative of an OSCE Field Presence will refer to the possibilities of field operations to contribute to the theme. The closing statements by the incoming Finnish Chairmanship and the CoEEA will present the main conclusions of the discussions and indicate the way ahead, including the conduct of the Vienna Segment of the Economic and Environmental Forum in January 2008.

The 16th Economic and Environmental Forum

The 16th Economic and Environmental Forum will take place in two segments: from 28 to 29 January 2008 in Vienna and from 19 to 21 May 2008 in Prague. The Forum will benefit from the input of the two Preparatory Conferences, the first of which will be held in Helsinki, on 10 and 11 September 2007, and the second in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan, on 6-7 March 2008.

The first segment of the Forum, in Vienna, will build upon the discussions and recommendations of the Helsinki Preparatory Conference. The second segment of the Forum, in Prague, will integrate the conclusions of the Second Preparatory Conference, to take place in Ashgabad, 6-7 March 2008. The second Preparatory Conference will among other things address questions related to environmental co-operation among participating States concerning maritime and other waterway corridors and relevant multimodal corridors.

For landlocked countries the need for cooperation and partnerships to improve transit potential and access to markets is also evident, and these issues, including connection to relevant maritime outlets and inland waterways in the OSCE area will be dealt with during the Second Preparatory Conference and the second segment of the Forum in the spring of 2008.

OSCE's Asian and Mediterranean Partners are also expected to participate in the whole Forum process.

Taking into account its tasks, the Economic and Environmental Forum will review the implementation of OSCE commitments in the economic and environmental dimension. The review, to be integrated in the Prague segment of the Economic and Environmental Forum, will address relevant OSCE commitments and in particular commitments related to governance and transport issues, with a special focus on environmental governance and transport security, including relevant international conventions and international co-operation initiatives.

OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension (MC.DOC/1/03, II)

... Our **common response to economic and environmental challenges and threats to security** will include **further development of co-operation among the participating States** in various areas, action and policies aiming at strengthening **good governance at all levels**, ensuring sustainable development in all its aspects and **protecting the environment**.

... We will encourage energy dialogue and efforts to diversify energy supply, **ensure the safety of energy routes**, and make more efficient use of energy resources.

... We encourage the development of **transport networks** in the OSCE region which are efficient and integrated, **free of avoidable safety and security risks** and **sensitive to the environment**.

... We will co-operate in the development of our strategies for **good governance** and will **share experience regarding best practices**.

... We will make our governments more transparent by further developing processes and institutions for **providing timely information**, including **reliable statistics**, about issues of public interest in the economic and environmental fields to the media, the business community, civil society and citizens, with a view to **promoting a well-informed and responsive dialogue**. This is essential for decision-making which is responsive to changing conditions and to the needs and wishes of the population.

... We are agreed that **the protection of the environment is a high priority for all our States**. In the light of the growing impact of environmental factors on the prosperity, stability and security of our States and the health of our populations, we **encourage dialogue and the exchange of information, *inter alia*, on best practices, on a voluntary basis, on environmental issues of importance for participating States, including on environmentally sound technology**.

... We will strengthen our co-operation to address jointly **key environmental issues such as pollution**, particularly when it has external effects, and the unsustainable use of natural resources, with a view to **preventing ecological risks and their irreversible effects on environment and health**.

... In adopting this Strategy document for the economic and environmental dimension, which complements our previous commitments, we are taking an important step forward in developing our efforts to **intensify economic and environmental co-operation among the participating States** and thus to **ensure comprehensive security and stability in the OSCE region**. We are determined to achieve the objectives and priorities on which we have agreed. **We will regularly review the progress achieved in implementing this Strategy and the commitments it contains**.