

**Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic
Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina
H. E. Vilim Primorac**

**Address on the Occasion of the 16th OSCE Economic and
Environmental Forum “Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in
the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment”**

Prague, May 19-21, 2008

On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic relations, it is a special honor to greet all the attendees of this important meeting. The Ministry is in charge of the environmental protection on the international level, and it is a pleasure to be able to represent the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on these issues.

Environmental security represents a great challenge and it is one of the major guidelines in the future sustainable development of all the countries in the OSCE region, including Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By attending this and all the previous meetings, Bosnia and Herzegovina has clearly demonstrated its readiness for cooperation and exchanging information of general interest.

I would wish to thank the OSCE for the support and help offered to our representatives. The participation in the proceedings of the working groups enabled them to attend the meetings, exchange information and experiences with the representatives of other countries, and to take action in order to meet international requirements.

We are fully aware of the fact that regional cooperation in the protection of the environment is an important instrument for strengthening political and economic stability. By involving the whole OSCE region, this kind of cooperation is a good basis for achieving exceptional results in the protection of the environment, and a precondition for a safer and more comfortable living.

The problems of global pollution have been present for a long time. The changes in the living conditions are caused by greenhouse gas emissions, by ever present shortage of drinking water and other important resources. In addition, the rising food prices threaten the stability and peace in underdeveloped countries of the world. We are also facing the disappearance of flora and fauna, and, at the same time, the outburst of invasive species, that is closely connected to water transport.

Due to the problems that we will have to face if we are not ready to prevent them and to act quickly in the case of an accident, we have to act together in finding the answers and solutions. Bosnia and Herzegovina appreciates this initiative and expresses its future commitment to this important process.

I wish to invite us all to an open cooperation. Through it, the countries in the OSCE region would be able to meet the requirements concerning international environmental cooperation, as well as the requirements that would help them integrate more easily into the European Union.

At present, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that still needs international attention and support in defining and answering many questions. In the fields of security and environmental policy, international organizations such as OSCE, are of major importance. Therefore, I invite the OSCE Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina to offer us support similar to that that it has given to other Southeastern European countries.

I wish to say that we expect particular help in drafting the strategic documents, such as strategy development documents and documents that define environmental policy.

In environmental terms, this would create a possibility for Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a partner equal to other countries, and to be prepared for the successful fulfillment of the obligations that arise from acceptance and ratification of international documents, declarations, conventions, protocols, bilateral and multilateral agreements. In this context, we will also count and continue to rely on the support from neighboring countries and countries in the region to assist us in reforming the environmental policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In these terms, Bosnia and Herzegovina shall engage the maximum of all the necessary resources in order to move towards the integrated system of environmental protection, a system which will, hopefully, soon be incorporated into the European environmental structures.

Finally, allow me to express my gratitude to the hosting country for the excellent organization of this significant and demanding forum.

Thank you!