

**24<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**  
**“Strengthening stability and security through co-operation on good  
governance”**

**SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Berlin, 19 – 20 May 2016**

**Opening Session Thursday, 19 May 2016, 09:00 – 10:30**

**Keynote Mr. Gernot Erler**

**Special Representative of the Federal Government of Germany  
for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2016**

Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Coordinator Yigitgüden,  
Dear Professor Eigen and Mr Simmoneau,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of the German OSCE Chairmanship, to this second meeting in preparation of the OSCE`s 24<sup>th</sup> Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague this September.

*‘Renewing dialogue, rebuilding trust, restoring security’* – this triad contains the priorities of the German OSCE Chairmanship this year.

And when we discuss today and tomorrow at this EEF meeting how to strengthen “stability and security through co-operation on good governance” this is a direct contribution to these goals.

The concept of “good governance” covers many different aspects, but for me they are all connected by one common denominator, which is central for the OSCE`s work in general – trust. We need new commitment to the principles of security and cooperation we all agreed on in Helsinki and Paris and confirmed them in Astana and at several other occasions.

And we need measures to rebuild trust through dialogue, transparency and concrete cooperation in fields of common interest. Good Governance is maybe the most important measure for states to build trust with their citizens, with domestic and foreign business, but also with their respective neighbouring states.

\*) re-distribution due to change of distribution status, text remains unchanged

The OSCE is supporting the building of trust through Good Governance in many different areas and the work of the OSCE's field missions in assisting the promotion of Good Governance practices is of crucial importance here.

The field missions provide expertise and advice to government agencies of all levels via international expert seminars, visits to other Participating States or the joint development of strategies and action plans.

The topics addressed here reach from anti-corruption via combatting money laundering to training in professional police work in accordance with the rule of law.

And when members of financial intelligence units from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia meet this year upon initiative of the OSCE to exchange experiences and best practices regarding counter terrorism financing – to name just one example – this is not only necessary cooperation to tackle one of the major security challenges of our time. It is a major contribution to rebuilding trust via cooperation to overcome the divisions of longtime conflict as well.

Today and tomorrow we want to concentrate on economic Good Governance and, as mandated by the Permanent Council, on labour migration governance.

During the last day, during the Chairmanship's conference on "Connectivity for Commerce and Investment", we could hear first-hand from industry and the business community, what their expectations are in relation to commercial exchange, to investment, to infrastructure and to many more conditions for flourishing businesses throughout the OSCE-area.

We could hear from participants that they are willing to contribute their share in overcoming remaining barriers and avoiding dividing lines, in connecting markets and people and thus fostering peace and stability on our continent.

For businesses in global value chains, reducing existing barriers to trade and investment in the OSCE region is not just a political slogan. It is a hard condition for stimulating economic growth and promoting sustainable development in a globalised world.

But such a common, interconnected and integrated economic space cannot exist in a void. It needs to rely on a solid foundation of politics, laws and regulation, it needs predictability, efficiency and impartiality – in other words, it needs trust in the respective government and its institutions. And I am happy that the topic of Good Governance is one that enjoys consensus in the OSCE because it is in the interest of all our countries.

Here is where today's topic comes into play. Good Governance is a key, maybe *the* key, to improved economic relations in our common space.

And economic cooperation is not only a goal in itself, but also an essential contribution to the prevention of conflicts between and within Participating States and thereby to security and stability in the whole OSCE area.

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

economic cooperation is part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security since the Helsinki Final Act and the mandate of the OSCE to serve as a regional forum for dialogue

about economic issues has been confirmed by the Participating States at many occasions. Previous chairmanships have done invaluable work here on which we can build.

One of the ways how we believe we can strengthen the Economic Dimension of the OSCE further according to these decisions is to make its formats more interactive and to involve the private sector more closely.

Our Business Conference with more than 700 participants from 70 countries seems to confirm this approach from which also our EEF meetings can benefit.

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

the strong interest of the Participating States in strengthening the Second Dimension of the OSCE in general and promoting Good Governance in particular is reflected in the various thematic proposals we received and we reflected the wishes of your delegations in the agenda of this year`s EEF.

We have dealt with one aspect of Good Governance – environmental governance – already in January.

Now we want to take a more detailed look at various aspects of economic Good Governance in the OSCE region, as well as at the very topical issues of labour migration governance.

Also trade facilitation and supply chain issues are essential topics high on the international agenda for further improving the conditions for economic exchange.

Work against corruption and money-laundering is a central element of an agenda on Good Governance as well, perhaps the aspect of Good Governance where the OSCE has done the most work in the past years. Building up on these efforts we are planning a joint session of the EEC and the OSCE`s Security Committee on „Countering the financing of terrorism” in July this year.

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ideally with the EEF meeting in Prague in September we will have an idea as to which policy fields exactly we can move forward by consensus at the Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg in December.

But we do the work here not only with a view to preparing new mandates from the next Ministerial Council. We believe that the exchange during the next two days here will also feed in ideas for the work of policy-makers in your capitals, and for the project work of the OSCE field missions.

Therefore I am particularly pleased to have so many renowned speakers on the agenda and I want to use this opportunity to welcome

Prof. Dr. Peter Eigen, founder of Transparency International – whom I do not need to introduce further to anyone in this room I think, since he can be called “Mr Anti-Corruption” and “Mr Good Governance”.

And

Mr Denis Simmoneau, Director of European and International Relations of a leading French Energy Company, ENGIE, and Chair of the ICC [International Chamber of Commerce] Commission on Corporate Responsibility and Anti-corruption.

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

let me conclude by thanking you and also those who have taken part in the connectivity conference in the new format the previous days for your commitment and your openness to elaborate together how we can best use the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE for fostering Good Governance and thereby rebuilding trust – domestically and internationally – as an essential contribution to the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security.

I wish you all an inspiring and open exchange today and tomorrow.

Thank you very much.