



United States Mission to the OSCE

Closing Statement at the 27th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum Preparatory Meeting in Bratislava

As delivered by Dustin DeGrande, Political Officer
May 27, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the organizers and speakers.

Throughout today's very busy schedule, we have touched on a wide range of issues. Our task is now to collect central themes that might form the basis of a food-for-thought paper, our discussions at the Concluding Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) in Prague in September, perhaps one or more drafts for consideration at the Ministerial Council in Bratislava in December, and the OSCE's programs on the ground.

As we have heard today, energy security issues across the OSCE region are diverse and can be contentious. But ensuring that our people have access to adequate, affordable, safe, and secure energy supplies—that is to say “energy security”—is a nearly universal security concern across the OSCE's 57 participating States.

We discussed today some of the threats we face in energy security. Now, looking ahead to Prague, we should consider common solutions. At least six common themes have emerged today and in earlier conversations regarding ways to address those threats, which we believe show merit for all participating States. 1) Energy diversification is in everyone's interest. It strengthens energy security by reducing reliance on limited resources and by breaking monopolies that can be exploited by politics, corruption, and criminals. 2) Incorporating new technologies enhances the resilience and reliability of supply – particularly electricity – to reach more people, including in rural areas, at affordable rates. 3) Good governance can be just as powerful as new technology as a way to achieve efficiency, conservation, resilience, and reliability. 4) Smart cities and effective planning to manage growth can help achieve sustainability, with the health and prosperity of the people in mind. 5) Supporting an enabling business investment environment that ensures predictability, reliability, and transparency not only helps economic progress, it boosts energy security, as well. And finally, 6) although we already have a Ministerial Council decision on

protecting critical energy infrastructure, we should continue to include it in these broader energy security conversations.

I look forward to our conversations over the coming months, and to coming together on ideas that benefit our entire region.

Thank you.