

Statement by Mr. Vyacheslav GALAS,

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ENGLISH only

State Department of Maritime and River Transport

Ministry of Transport and Communications of Ukraine

Part 2, 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

Concluding debate

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Mr. Chairman,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After the fruitful and thought-provoking discussions that we had during the three days of the Forum about the possible role of the OSCE in improving the security and protection of the environment on maritime and inland waterways in the OSCE area, allow me to briefly present to your attention a specific follow-up project at a regional scale. As was already mentioned by several speakers, the Government of Ukraine and the Finnish Chairmanship are preparing an international expert conference on the safety of navigation and environmental security in the transboundary context in the Black Sea basin.

As many of you probably remember, this initiative was first outlined at the First Preparatory Conference to the 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum in September 2007 in Helsinki, and presented in details at the Vienna part of the Forum. Now that we are coming closer to the event which will take place on 24-26 June in the city of Odesa, allow me to draw your attention to the topics that will be discussed during the conference.

Up to 150 representatives of the national authorities, NGOs, business community and scientific institutions of the Black Sea littoral and Danube river riparian states, as well as the relevant international organizations are invited to exchange views on

further sustainable development and integration of water transport infrastructure, improvement of co-operation in the sphere of navigation safety, prevention of emergency situations and mitigation of their consequences, preserving the existing ecosystems in the Black Sea basin and adjacent water basins. It is also proposed to review the existing commitments in the frames of relevant international documents, inter alia, on vessel traffic organization, ballast waters, search and rescue activities and waste management.

The agenda of the event is divided into plenary sessions which will outline the challenges in the safety of navigation and environmental security in the Black Sea basin and perspectives for enhancing cooperation between countries and organizations involved. At the same time, it is envisaged to discuss specific issues that require closer attention of the participating states in the frames of the dedicated Working Groups, which would be tasked with developing recommendations and guidelines for the future cooperation, possibly in the form of regional Action Plans.

Three field trips to the Ukrainian navigation centers in Vylkove and Ochakiv and to the training centre for maritime specialists in the city of Mykolayiv will further enhance the practical experience of the participants, providing the possibility to examine cost-effective, yet technologically advanced facilities used by the Ukrainian maritime authorities.

Furthermore, the participants will be encouraged to share their views and comment on the results of the plenary sessions and working groups in order to transform the ideas and suggestions into concrete projects. It is expected that the results and conclusions of the conference will be summarized in the Statement of the Chairmanship-in-Office and could be further followed-up with the support of the OSCE.

Dear colleagues, in conclusion we would like to express our high appreciation to the Finnish Chairmanship and to the Office of the Co-ordinator of the OSCE economic

and environmental activities for their dedicated work and excellent co-operation we enjoy in the preparation of the event.

I also would like to invite the distinguished delegates to make full use of this opportunity and contribute to the success of the conference by active participation of their national authorities and international organizations in this event. The beauty of the city of Odesa will be an encouraging reward for their commitment.

Thank you for your attention.