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PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

## **30<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum**

**8 – 9 September 2022, Prague**

### **Written Statement by Romania**

Mr. Chair,

While Romania fully subscribes to the statements made by the European Union, I would like to make the following comments in national capacity.

We agree with many of the speakers that we are marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Economic and Environmental Forum in a very challenging environment. Sustainable economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic in the OSCE area has been further affected by Russia's premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and brutal aggression against Ukraine, which has a major impact on our societies and economies. Our discussions these days couldn't be, therefore, more opportune and we welcome the planned panel discussions with the aim of identifying the best ways of addressing the current complex security challenges.

Russia's war of aggression has multiple ripple effects: the impact on the economy and the natural environment in Ukraine, but also beyond, on the global food and energy security. Let me stress again Romania's strong condemnation of the Russian military aggression and its appeal to the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally stop this aggression and withdraw all Russian military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders.

The economic and environmental damage afflicted by Russia on Ukraine is horrendous. Russian troops have entered, or conducted military operations in more than one-third of Ukraine's protected natural areas, making their ecosystems vulnerable. Moreover, we are concerned about pollution of groundwater and surface waters caused by the infrastructure damage in the country. We also witnessed alarming reports regarding high risk environmental disaster in the Black Sea. It is therefore crucial that the OSCE addresses and alleviates the devastating impact of this war on the environment and the Ukrainian economy, and we therefore welcome the efforts of the OCEEA in developing projects to address these pressing challenges.

Another dramatic consequence of Russia's war of aggression has been the imperilment of food security for millions of people across the world. Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports,

targeting Ukrainian infrastructure and deliberate burning of Ukraine's harvest, have exacerbated the global food crisis. We welcome the agreements, brokered in Istanbul by the United Nations and Turkey, which have allowed for the resumption of the export of Ukrainian grain and we hope for their full implementation. Romania, for its part, will continue to facilitate the export of Ukrainian grains through its territory. Almost 4 million tons of grains have been exported via Romania since February, following measures taken by the Romanian authorities to facilitate the export on naval, road and railway routes. We also believe that the OSCE must play a role and we welcome the OCEEA work on developing a project on improving grain exports to the world markets. Cooperation with other international and regional organizations, as well as with neighbouring states, is vital.

The dramatic rise in global energy prices following Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has highlighted the importance of stepping up our efforts towards reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and ensuring energy diversity, sustainable energy consumption and strengthening the resilience of critical energy networks. It also underlined the need to take measures and reduce the dependence on the Russian energy sources, which are used as a tool, as we see today, to promote political objectives.

By adoption of the Ministerial Council Decision on "Strengthening Co-operation to Address the Challenges Caused by Climate Change" in 2021 in Stockholm, we all acknowledged the link between climate and security and need to mitigate its effects. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has speeded our efforts to accelerate the energy transition necessary to stave off climate change. At a time of economic uncertainty, it can be daunting to transform our economies - but it is possible to both achieve our climate objectives and deliver growth. Romania's example bears this out – in the last 32 years we have managed to significantly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, while substantially growing our economy.

Let me conclude by thanking the Polish Chairpersonship and all OSCE staff involved for all the effort they have put in to organize this Forum, as well as the Czech Republic for kindly hosting us.

Thank you.