



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat**

**TENTH OSCE ECONOMIC FORUM ON “THE CO-OPERATION FOR THE
SUSTAINABLE USE AND THE PROTECTION OF QUALITY OF WATER IN THE
CONTEXT OF THE OSCE”**

FIRST PREPARATORY SEMINAR

Belgrade, 5 and 6 November 2001

CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY

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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST PREPARATORY SEMINAR FOR THE TENTH OSCE ECONOMIC FORUM ON “CO-OPERATION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE AND THE PROTECTION OF QUALITY OF WATER IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OSCE”, BELGRADE, 5 -6 NOVEMBER 2001

1. INTRODUCTION

On 5 and 6 November 2001, the OSCE, in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yugoslavia, hosted the *First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum*. This was the first of a series of preparatory seminars for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum, to be held in Prague from 28 to 31 May 2002, on the theme of “Co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE”. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on behalf of the incoming Portuguese Chair- in-Office, with the support of the OSCE Missions in South Eastern Europe (SEE), prepared the seminar jointly.

2. PARTICIPANTS

The First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum gathered more than 200 participants from OSCE participating States, numerous representatives of OSCE Field Missions, several international organizations such as UN/ECE, UNEP, the Council of Europe, UNDP, the European Agency for Reconstruction, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the Regional Environment Center, non-governmental organizations, as well as numerous experts from specialized institutes, local authorities, civil society and the business and academic communities from SEE.

Their Excellencies Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Minister of Foreign Affairs from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Prof. Slobodan Petković, Vice-Minister for Water Management of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (FRY), Mr. Dragoljub Markovic, Deputy Minister of the Ministry for Environmental Protection and Urbanism, Montenegro (FRY), Mr. Boris Britvar, Deputy Minister of the Federal Ministry for Physical Planning and Environment, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Mr. Nedjo Đuric, Minister of Urbanism, Construction, Communal Issues and Ecology of Republika Srpska, (BiH) participated at the meeting.

3. OPENING STATEMENTS

His Excellency Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia welcomed in his opening address the participants and stressed that the development of regional co-operation at the level of environmental protection and the creation of a formal framework to establish security implications of water pollution in border rivers and water reservoirs can enhance the stability in the Balkans. He

underlined that it is in areas like the environmental protection where it is easiest to identify common denominators for the entire region and thus the process of confidence-building and co-operation in areas most affected by the recent past.

Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, stated, that international waters are among the most sensitive issues of regional co-operation, which is illustrated by the number of tensions associated to the use of water. The signing of the Sava river agreement demonstrates that challenges related to the management of international rivers can be turned into an opportunity. The first keynote speaker, *Ms. Andjelka Mihajlov, Director for Environmental Protection, Ministry for Health and Environmental Protection, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* stated that although the renewed transition in FRY was currently taking place under extremely difficult economic and social conditions, the commitment of the Government of Serbia is the driving force for inclusion of environmental (and resources) protection (and management) as high priority in the Reform Agenda of Serbia. A Law on the System of Environmental Protection is currently elaborated and the process of privatization urges the updating of environmental legislation and procedures, which is seen a prerequisite for investments. *Ms. Cristina Afonso West, Deputy Director of the Office for International Relations, Ministry for the Environment and Land Use Planning, Portugal representing the incoming Portuguese Chairmanship* recalled that closer working assistance on shared water resources leads to intensified co-operation between states and quoted the Spanish-Portuguese agreement on the Guadiana river as a successful example of transboundary co-operation on a shared water resources. *Mr. Marc Baltes, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities a.i.*, underscored that it was of utmost importance for an Organization aiming at promoting comprehensive security – such as the OSCE – to tackle issues related to co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of water. *Mr. Sorin Tănăsescu, representative of the Romanian OSCE Chairmanship* pointed at the fact that the relation between the protection of water and security is a two-way phenomenon: while the improved quality of water can contribute to heightened security, conflicts can impact on the quality of water.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ACCESSION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE SAVA RIVER PROJECT AND SIGNING OF A LETTER OF INTENT.

During the opening session, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia announced its accession to the international program for the protection of the Sava River. This project – a "Quick Start Project" of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Program (Stability Pact) – of which Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have already been part, aims at facilitating a co-operative regional approach to environmental protection. The main goal of the project is to reduce water pollution and improve the protection of the water quality of the River Sava through an assessment of existing strategies and policies in water management.

Under the auspices of the OSCE, representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed a Letter of Intent committing themselves to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of the Sava River Project (Annex 2).

5. STRUCTURE OF THE SEMINAR

The goals of the seminar were the exchange of information and stimulation of discussions on the operational level on water-related case studies in order to encourage greater local ownership and promote regional co-operation in the environmental sector in

SEE. During the seminar, participants discussed the use of water resources, management of international waterways and the effects on water quality by social and economic factors such as urban development, industry and agriculture. At the heart of the discussion was a review of the existing mechanisms and the achievements and shortcomings of implementing activities designed to promote the protection of the Sava River and international lakes. In addition, the seminar underscored the need for greater public awareness and information dissemination, including media involvement, as to the risks and implications of water pollution. The importance of public ownership, environmental education, and capacity building of civil society as a means to promote sustainable development and solutions to water concerns was highlighted.

Working Group A evaluated *the security risks related to the pollution of the international rivers*, specifically focussing on the case of the Sava River. Furthermore, achievements and shortcomings of bilateral and multilateral co-operation on the protection and use of international watercourses and implementation of relevant international conventions were analyzed. **Working Group B** focused on *environmental issues, existing co-operation and new opportunities related to international lakes*, specifically discussing the cases of Lake Dorjan Lake Ohrid, Lake Prespa and Lake Skadar. In a **Plenary Session** close attention was given to *the role of civil society and business community in the protection of water resources* with the perspective of launching a regional environmental awareness campaign. The role of the media and need for public environmental education to enhance local responsibility in environmental protection was highlighted.

6. CLOSING PLENARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Closing Plenary, the rapporteurs presented a great number of recommendations resulting from the discussion in the working groups and the plenary session, among which participants called upon the OSCE to *increase its facilitating function* by fostering transboundary co-operation on the local and central levels as a tool for confidence building. OSCE should act as a *catalyst* for the assessment of the needs connected with the use of water and its ecological impact. In this respect the OSCE should also use its contacts with partner organizations to *help find the necessary funding* for the implementation of possible alternative environmental solutions; and *encourage community networks*, municipalities and other local groups to participate in initiatives and projects on water management, such as the Sava River project. The parties of the Sava River project invited Slovenia to join and actively participate in the river initiative. Closer working *co-operation on shared water resources* between countries and sustainable water management may also provide opportunities for intensifying regional co-operation and contributing to *confidence-building* measures within, between and among states and civil society. A number of experts, delegates and representatives of partner organizations, expressed their appreciation for the initiative of hosting this seminar, and recognised the important role that the OSCE can play in facilitating the process of environmental legislation and institutional structuring in the Balkans. The role of the OSCE in the creation of the Ministry of Environment in Albania and its ongoing efforts on the same in FRY were cited as successful examples. The Director of the Croatian State Water Institute offered to host a follow-up meeting to the Belgrade Preparatory Seminar in Croatia.

In his concluding remarks, *His Excellency Mr, Nedjo Djuric*, Federal Minister for *Physical Planning and Environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, underlined the need for an integral governance of the Sava River Basin and called upon the active participation of the riparian states for immediate formulation of implementing programs. He pointed out the great

need for financial assistance from international partners to support existing local expertise and initiatives.

Ambassador Sannino, Head of the OSCE Mission to Federal Republic of Yugoslavia pointed out that history had shown that potential conflict could be turned into co-operation. He recalled the historical conflict between European countries and the foundations of the European Communities which was based on agreements with regard to natural resources. Transborder co-operation was essential in this respect. He pointed out how crucial the role of civil society was for achieving successful co-operation programs and appealed for a stronger commitment of civil society, including NGOs and the business community, in this effort.

Mr. Paulo Rufino, the Representative of the incoming Chair in Office (Deputy Head of the Permanent Delegation of Portugal) thanked the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for hosting the seminar and applauded it as a substantial event having met the goals of identifying and discussing problems, deliberating remedies and generating greater public awareness among the region's stakeholders. He announced that the second preparatory seminar will be held in February of 2002 and welcomed the assembly to the Tenth Economic Forum in Prague in May 2002.

His Excellency Professor Slobodan Petković, Vice-Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia recalled the political sensitivity of the region compared to the qualitative cooperation with other neighbourhood states such as Hungary and Bulgaria. He hoped that closer co-operation on shared water resources and sustainable water management would arise from this seminar and called on the OSCE to continue assisting in this process. Environmental issues should be seen as opportunities for intensifying co-operation and contributing to confidence-building within, between and among states of the region. He cited hot spots such as the town of Bor which warrant immediate action.

Dr. Engin Koncagul from the Turkish Delegation stated that the OSCE, as a political organization should be careful in interpreting its economic and environmental dimension too broadly, and that it was the view of the Turkish Delegation that the management of transboundary courses and lakes must be resolved among the riparian countries only, without the interference of any international organization or any other third parties.

Mr. Sorin Tănăsescu, the representative of the Romanian Chairman in Office pointed that the participation of numerous states confirmed the importance of the theme of "Water" chosen for next year's Economic Forum. He suggested that the cooperation project for the Sava River could be used as model for other regions and underscored the great importance of the OSCE's economic dimension in contributing to conflict prevention and supporting national and regional stability. The OSCE, in co-operation with local and national actors as well as with specialized international agencies, should play the role of moderator, facilitator and/or catalyst regarding transboundary water issues.

Ms. Katherine Brucker, Delegation of the United States Mission to the OSCE stressed that the OSCE as a multilateral organization takes a comprehensive approach towards security. Economic and environmental issues and their effect on security are inherently intertwined with political-military and human dimension issues. She recalled that this fundamental fact was recognized by the OSCE founders.

Mr. Joachim Bendow, Executive Director, ICPDR pointed out that regional co-operation was a good tool for implementing international conventions, which provide the necessary framework for transboundary co-operation, including the means for monitoring, reporting, assessing environmental issues as well as supporting dialogue and negotiation on conflict prevention and resolution efforts among the signatory states.

Ms. Andjelka Mihajlov, Director for Environmental Protection at the Ministry for Health and Environmental Protection Federal Republic of Yugoslavia confirmed that the seminar and specifically the focus on and initiative of the Sava River was a valuable contribution to the security of the region of SEE.

Mr. Marc Baltes, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities a.i. thanked all participants for their active contribution and involvement in the debates of the Seminar. On one hand, the recommendations will on the one hand be taken into account in order to structure the agenda of the upcoming Tenth OSCE Economic Forum and, on the other hand, those specific recommendations to the South East European Region will be analyzed for immediate and appropriate follow up through projects and activities in co-operation with field presences and partner organizations.

Please note that all background documents from the First Preparatory Seminar can be found on the OSCE Web Site under www.osce.org/eea.

**FIRST PREPARATORY SEMINAR FOR THE TENTH OSCE ECONOMIC FORUM
Belgrade, 5 November 2001**

Opening Statement

**by H.E. Mr. Goran Svilanovic
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs**

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,

It gives me great pleasure indeed that after a long period Belgrade is hosting again a meeting as a part of the follow-up activities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. It contributes further to Yugoslavia's activities aimed at implementing better the Organizations' goals, to which our country attaches great importance.

A comprehensive process of reforms is currently under way in Yugoslavia at all levels,- local, regional and national, and in all spheres of life – from education to restoration of civil society and promotion of civilian sector, restructuring of the economy, including foreign policy.

The successful implementation of reforms at the domestic level is closely linked to the development and promotion of comprehensive international co-operation, primarily of regional co-operation – with Yugoslavia's neighbors.

Perhaps, it is exactly areas like the environmental protection where it is easiest to identify common denominators which demonstrate an interest of the entire region and then by establishing the links at all levels to seek to contribute to the initiation and further strengthening of the process of confidence-building and co-operation in areas most affected by the recent past in these territories.

Peace and stability in the Balkans, economic and social development are a shared interest of all countries in the region, for which it will be necessary to invest efforts in all segments of life and at all levels.

That is exactly the goal of the First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth Economic Forum in Belgrade - enhancement of stability in the Balkans through the development of co-operation at the level of environmental protection; strengthening of the reconciliation process through joint efforts to resolve common problems; facilitating the creation of a formal framework to establish security implications of water pollution in border rivers and water reservoirs; discussing possible options to address the identified problems; promoting the implementation of co-operation agreements at the local, regional, national levels and among nations.

In doing so, we shall enable the coming generations to live in a friendlier and improved environment and to make our contribution to the normalization and rehabilitation of relations among the nations from these territories, combined with the efforts that the countries of our region invest along the way of getting closer to the European standards and embracing European values.

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I would like to thank, in particular, the OSCE Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for their assistance in organizing this meeting.

To all participants, I wish a successful and constructive work, in the hope that the results from this meeting will greatly contribute to the theme of the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum, i.e. contribute to the further improvement and promotion of co-operation within the OSCE economic dimension and thus to what this organization stands for – strengthening of security and stability, in this part of the world and beyond.

First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on “The co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE”

Belgrade, 5-6 November 2001

Opening Plenary

**Statement by Mr. Marc Baltes
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities a.i.**

Mr. Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege to welcome all of you today at the Sava Congress Centre here in Belgrade for the First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water. I would like to thank the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for hosting this event and I am particularly grateful that Minister Svilanovic is honoring us with his presence and support. I would also like to thank Ambassador Sannino, the Head of the OSCE Mission, as well as the incoming Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE, represented by Ms. Afonso West. My thanks also go to Ms. Mihajlov, who I am sure is going to set the framework in her keynote speech for our deliberations over the next two days.

The OSCE Mission in Belgrade has been established for about 7 months now and I do believe that this important event which will pave the way to the next Economic Forum in Prague next year in May, is another sign of the excellent co-operation between the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the OSCE.

I will give you some more background information on the seminar in a moment, but before doing so, I will hand over the floor to Minister Svilanovic and Ambassador Sannino for the welcoming remarks, followed by our distinguished keynote speakers, Ms. Cristina Afonso West, Deputy Director of the Office for International Relations Department, Ministry for the Environment and Land Use Planning, Portugal and Ms. Andjelka Mihajlov, Director for Environmental Protection, Ministry for Health and Environmental Protection, FRY.

If you allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to say a few words with regard to our discussions over the next two days. Since 1950, the renewable supply of water per person has decreased 58% as the world population has swelled from 2.5 billion to 6 billion. According to the findings released at a symposium of the International Water Management Institute of Stockholm in August this year, nearly a third of the world's expected population will live in regions facing severe water scarcity by 2025. The main reason for global scarcity of water is increased demand.

The UN's Global Environmental Outlook of last year also reported that the world water cycle seems unlikely to be able to cope with demands that will be made of it in the coming decades. Increases in pollution are also taking a toll. In many parts of the world, rivers and lakes are so polluted that their water is unfit even for industrial use.

Moreover, unlike oil and most other strategic resources, fresh water has no substitute in most of its uses. It is essential for growing food, manufacturing goods and safeguarding human health.

Increasing water scarcity can easily translate into heightened competition for water between cities and farms, between neighboring states and provinces, and at times between nations, with potentially negative repercussions on stability.

In the past 20 years the number of river basins shared by more than one country has increased from 214 to 261. To this figure we can add that one fourth of water related interactions during the last 50 years were hostile. Water disputes between countries, though typically not leading to war directly, have fuelled regional tensions, thwarted economic development, and risked provoking larger conflicts before eventually giving way to co-operation.

It is therefore of utmost importance for an organization as the OSCE, that aims at promoting comprehensive security, to tackle issues related to co-operation for the sustainable use and protection of quality of water.

Therefore this first preparatory seminar to the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum aims to achieve the following:

- Contributing to confidence building and therefore stability in the Balkans through the promotion of regional environmental co-operation;
- Assisting the reconciliation process through joint efforts in solving common environmental problems;
- Supporting existing mechanisms and frameworks aimed at assessing the security implications of pollution and water management in the border rivers and water reservoirs, and considering solutions to solve identified problems, and fostering the implementation of co-operation agreements at local, regional, national and international level.

The signing by BiH, Croatia and FRY of a “letter of intent” for the implementation of the Sava River Programme is a clear example of the positive repercussions that a project aiming at facilitating a co-operative regional approach to environmental reconstruction, fostering sound environmental management and promoting long term sustainable development, can have on regional stability.

Now Ladies and Gentlemen, let me say a few words on the seminar itself. The format of this seminar is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues and existing mechanisms developed to encourage local ownership and sub-regional co-operation in addressing the utilisation and management of international bodies of water.

The seminar also intends to underscore the need for greater public awareness and information dissemination, including media involvement, as to the risks and implications of water pollution, and highlight the importance of public ownership, environmental education, and capacity building of civil society as a means to promote sustainable development and water concerns.

In the two working groups, respectively on protection and use of watercourses and on protection and use of international lakes, we expect you to analyse and discuss the issues, the

existing mechanisms and the achievements as well as shortcomings in implementing those mechanisms designed to promote water protection in the region.

In consultation with the moderators and based upon the discussions, the rapporteurs will draft reports in form of recommendations for follow up, to be presented in the closing plenary and to serve as input for setting the agenda of the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before ending the opening session, I would like to ask whether any delegation would like to take the floor at this point.

Once again, Mister Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you all for being with us today and I am confident that participants to this seminar will have two days of fruitful discussions.

Working Group A - Protection and use of watercourses

Report

by Mr. Alexander Carius, Adelphi Research, Germany

In preparation of the tenth economic forum on the sustainable use and the protection of the quality of water in the context of the OSCE, participants discussed three major topics: a) watercourse pollution and security implications: the case of the Sava river, b) bilateral and multilateral co-operation on the protection and use of international watercourses and implementation of relevant international conventions: achievements and shortcomings, and c) the role of civil society and business community in the protection of water resources: need for a regional environmental awareness campaigns.

Transboundary co-operation – improving water quality

At present, 51 out of 55 OSCE participating states share international rivers. With the break-up of Yugoslavia, the Sava River became an international river. The unsustainable use and the inefficient protection of the quality of water can have significant economic and social impacts that constitute potential sources of conflict in the context of the OSCE. However, closer co-operation on shared water resources between countries and sustainable water management may also provide opportunities for intensified co-operation and contribute to confidence-building within, between and among states and civil society. The Spanish-Portuguese agreement on the Guadiana river was mentioned as a successful example of transboundary co-operation on shared water resources. Beyond attaining water quality, several procedural agreements such as the exchange of information on planned projects and mutual assistance in emergency cases as well as the evaluation of plans, programmes and project have contributed to a closer co-operation between the neighbouring countries.

Delegates from Bosnia-Herzegovina, FRY and Croatia have signed a Letter of Intent on the Sava River Project, that provides for greater co-operation in this river basin and demonstrates the willingness of these three countries for closer co-operation on water quality management issues. The Sava River, as one of the three sub-river basins of the Danube River, covers almost 20% of the hot spots identified in this river basin. Declining water quality poses significant threats to the Danube river basin as a source of drinking water and a basis for economic development. Utilizing transboundary watercourses for economic purposes (such as transport and energy) is an important factor for sustainable development in the region. Opportunities for closer regional co-operation exist in reinforcing environmental co-operation, including establishing transboundary agreements, conducting pilot projects (such as the Sava river management plan) and organizing systematic assessments of the impacts of bodies of water that may impact the stability of the region.

The combined use of data from earth observation technologies, in situ data and computing has been mentioned as an appropriate instrument for monitoring water quality and identification of hot spots, as was demonstrated in a joint ECPP/OSCE pilot project.

Given the dependency of Belgrade on the Sava river for drinking water purposes, the strengthening of existing local capacities for water management (water management plan) and economic purposes (e.g. shipping on watercourses) have been identified as key challenges.

Multilateral and bilateral agreements on water management

The International Convention on the Protection of the Danube River and the multilateral UN/ECE agreements on water management and its various protocols have been mentioned as success cases that may serve as examples for other initiatives and institutional benchmarking. They provide the necessary means and the framework for transboundary co-operation, including a means of monitoring, reporting, assessing conditions as well for dialogue and negotiation in conflict prevention and resolution efforts among signatory states. But even existing bilateral or multilateral agreements on water management (such as between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) lack implementation. Multilateral agreements need to be fully implemented and OSCE participating states encouraged to sign and ratify respective conventions. Successful implementation in the OSCE participating states depends, in part, on technical and financial assistance as well as capacity building in the broadest sense in order to help countries to cope with the requirements built into these conventions.

Involvement of civil society, local stakeholders and the business sector

Transboundary co-operation in water management turned out to be a significant tool for confidence-building at the local level (among municipalities), where the OSCE has facilitated contacts among authorities and fostered co-operation. In this respect, activities can include the exchange of information, the development of joint activities and projects and the sharing of experiences in implementing multilateral and bilateral agreements. Public awareness and participation in the area of water management is a crucial element of sustainable water management. Here, municipalities play a significant role in implementing co-operative national and international efforts at the local level in a region.

Suggested key recommendations

Against the background of the three panel discussions of Working Group A, the following recommendations emerged. OSCE should:

- take a facilitator role in fostering transboundary water co-operation, providing information on ongoing initiatives and projects and illustrating success stories on transboundary co-operation in this area;
- give increased attention to transboundary co-operation on water management and further develop its activities in this field, inviting OSCE Participating States to initiate and support (pilot) projects and allocate sufficient resources;
- foster the adaptation of strategies for pollution reduction, improvement of water quality and sustainable use of ecosystems (through integrated water management) while supporting economic development through appropriate institutions;
- assist participating states to harmonise standards for assessment, classification, measurement and monitoring of water quality as well as the harmonization of legislation;
- benefit from existing co-operation and (informal) networks of experts from water research centres and academic institutions;
- build on the multitude of and intensify co-operation between the OSCE and other international and regional institutions on environmental policy and law; foster inter-institutional co-operation among international institutions such as UN-ECE, EU, World Bank, EBRD, etc.;

- foster implementation of existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and provide necessary technical and financial resources through OSCE participating states and other international financial institutions;
- assist the UN-ECE to foster implementation of conventions on transboundary water management as well as help to encourage OSCE Participating States to sign and ratify UN-ECE environmental conventions;
- develop future initiatives and projects on sustainable water management and transboundary water co-operation along the EU Water Framework Directive;
- suggest ideas for an international convention on transboundary water courses in the Adriatic union region;
- intensify transboundary co-operation at the local level as a means of confidence building and encourage community networks and municipalities and other local groups to participate in initiatives and projects on water management, such as the Sava River project;
- encourage and find the means for Slovenia to take part in the Sava River project;
- help to maximise the use of existing technical and institutional capacities for water management by providing information, education and training to relevant stakeholder groups; and build the necessary administrative structures for sustainable water management at a regional, national and local level through capacity building activities;
- support awareness, public information and education campaigns for environmental concerns and public participation in order to strengthen civil society (namely NGOs) and contribute to sustainable water management and in particular promote the Aarhus Convention;
- promote the role of OSCE missions and institutions in contributing to transboundary water management in shared river basins and encourage regional and local co-operation between governmental and non-governmental institutions by providing necessary training and information;
- concentrate on concrete examples of successful transboundary water management by illustrating the issues discussed in Belgrade, including success case studies and best practices for similar initiatives and projects that may be adopted in other OSCE regions.

The Croatian State Water Director offered to host a follow-up meeting to the Belgrade Seminar and in support of the Tenth Economic Forum in Croatia.

Working Group B - Protection and Use of International Lakes

Report

by Mr. Claus Neukirch CORE Centre for OSCE Research, Hamburg

Participants of WG B discussed environmental and economic issues, international agreements, existing bilateral co-operation and new opportunities related to Lake Dorjan, Lake Skadar/Shkoder, Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa. Speakers included governmental and non-governmental representatives of the concerned countries. Participants learnt, *inter alia*, about:

- the successes and the remaining shortcomings of the Lake Ohrid Conservation Project;
- the limits of local cross-border co-operation due to the lack of co-operation between the central governments, as in the case of Lake Dorjan;
- the co-operation between the Universities of Podgorica and Shkoder in the framework of an 'Integrated Monitoring Project' dedicated to Lake Skadar/Shkoder;
- the bio-diversity and characteristics of Lake Skadar/Shkoder and the negative impact of human activities on this lake, connected with the wish to declare the whole lake a international National Park;
- the negative impacts that the construction of the hydro power plant Bushat may have on the water system of Lake Skadar/Shkoder;
- the different interests of different stakeholders with regard to the use and protection of water;
- the co-operation activities between the Governments of Albania and Montenegro with regards to environmental issues in the last 15 months;
- the existing bilateral and multilateral co-operation efforts with regard to the international lakes and the need to establish joint bodies for their management;
- the activities of the Council of Europe and the European Union in the area of transfrontier co-operation and the protection and use of international lakes in the region.

From the presentations and discussions a series of recommendations for OSCE follow-up activities intend to foster stability in the Balkans emerged with a focus on the promotion of regional environmental co-operation and assistance in the reconciliation process through joint efforts in solving common problems associated with the management of water resources:

- The OSCE should facilitate the strengthening of institutions and building of capacities with regard to the protection and management of international lakes.
- The OSCE should play, in co-operation with local and national actors as well as with specialized international agencies, the role of moderator, facilitator and/or catalyst in transboundary water issues, but not the role of lead-agency in this regard.
- The OSCE should be engaged in order to help parties find "win-win-solutions" in the complex realm of sustainable development, environment and security.
- In case of disputes or disagreements over the use of transboundary water, the OSCE should facilitate cross-border co-operation on the local and central levels and act as a catalyst for the assessment of the needs connected with the use of water resources and its ecological impact. In this respect, the OSCE should also use its contacts with partner organizations to help find the necessary funding for the implementation of possible alternative environmental solutions.
- The OSCE should encourage Participating States to implement international conventions and instruments that concern general principles and rules to be applied to transboundary

water management. In this regard, it should make use of its negotiating bodies, the OCEEA and of its field operations.

- OSCE field missions, in co-operation with the OCEEA, could identify and address factors which might hamper the implementation of such conventions.
- OSCE field missions, in co-operation with the OCEEA, could play an important role in promoting transparency and good governance, public awareness and public participation with regard to international lakes. Projects designed around the management of international lakes could be used to implement some of the recommendations of the 9th Economic Forum in a clearly defined sector.
- OSCE field missions should continue to facilitate working level contacts, dialogue and co-operation between central and local governments on a regional as well as on the national level. They could also facilitate cross border science networks for the monitoring of the lakes and the development of integrated water management strategies.
- Using its field operations and the OCEEA, the OSCE could help its international partners, like the Council of Europe, in identifying local actors engaged in water protection and water management issues for possible projects. At the same time, the OSCE could help to identify international experts to be included in local and regional projects on water protection and water management with regard to the international lakes.
- The OSCE should promote a cross-sectoral, multiple-stakeholder approach in order to address the diverse socio-economic and environmental interests surrounding the protection and management of transboundary water systems.
- The OSCE should use the positive lessons learned from the Lake Ohrid Conservation Project to promote a similar approach with regards to Lake Skadar/Shkoder.

Plenary session:

The role of civil society and business community in the protection of water resources: need for a regional environmental awareness campaign

Report

by Ms. Isabel Wolte, World Wild Life Fund, Austria

This plenary session was seen to be the initiation of a discussion process on this topic. The recommendation for the OCEEA is to continue the discussion, in specialised workshops and expert groups.

The main points covered were:

- There was general agreement and understanding amongst the speakers, as had already been shown in the presentations in WG A and B, that there is a need for strong involvement of the civil society and public participation. Two main legal instruments exist for this purpose, the Aarhus Convention and the EU-Water Framework Directive.
- Public participation is necessary to support and drive the complex process of sustainable development which requires, as a basis, motivation and knowledge to lead to a change in thinking, attitude and action.
- Public participation supports the democratisation of society, which is a precondition for security and co-operation.
- Strategies for awareness raising and media campaigns need to be developed that are adaptable to various situations, i.e. might take the form of a set of tools and instruments. REC presented its strategy for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.
- Special attention was given to the situation of NGOs in the region. In Serbia, there is an increase in the number of NGOs but there is severe lack of funding, infrastructure and experience, particularly in working with media.
- The question whether it is possible for NGOs to be independent of government – which is seen by WWF as essential for the work of NGOs - in the countries of transition in the region was discussed. A prerequisite for this would need to be an independent and effective judicial system which currently has not been strongly established.
- For a regional environmental awareness campaign, a definition of the ‚region‘ is necessary: WWF suggests to base such campaigns on „ecoregions“.
- The need for economic instruments, e.g. fines and incentives, to encourage businesses to use sustainable development practices was mentioned.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
TENTH OSCE ECONOMIC FORUM
ON THE CO-OPERATION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE AND THE
PROTECTION OF THE QUALITY OF WATER IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OSCE
FIRST PREPARATORY SEMINAR
Belgrade 5-6 November 2001

PROGRAMME

Monday, 5 November 2001

08:00 Registration *Sava Centar – Registration Desk*

09:15 Opening Plenary *Sava Centar – Hall B*

Welcome remarks by: **H.E. Mr. Goran Svilanovic**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)

Ambassador Stefano Sannino, Head of OSCE Mission to the FRY

Keynote speech by: **Ms. Cristina Afonso West**, Deputy Director, Department of International Relations, Ministry for the Environment and Land Use Planning, Portugal

Ms. Andjelka Mihajlov, Director for Environmental Protection, Ministry for Health and Environmental Protection, FRY

Chair: **Mr. Marc Baltes**, Acting Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

10:15 Ceremony for the accession of FRY to the Sava River Project *Sava Centar – Hall B*

10:30 Coffee break *Sava Centar – Registration Desk*

Press Conference *Sava Centar – Hall B*

Background briefing for journalists *Sava Centar – Administration Office*

Working Group (WG) A

Protection and use of watercourses

Working Group (WG) B

Protection and use of international lakes

11:00 Working Groups A and B meet in parallel

WG A session 1 – *Sava Centar – Hall A* Watercourse pollution and security implications: the case of the Sava River

Moderators: **Mr. Jose Maria Troncoso**, OSCE Mission to Croatia

Mr. Dusan Vasiljevic, OSCE Mission to FRY

Rapporteur: **Mr. Alexander Carius**, Adelphi Research, Berlin

Speakers: **Mr. Joachim Bendow**, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

Prof. Mario Scaramella, Environmental Crime Prevention Program (ECPP), Italy

Respondents: **Mr. Ivan Andjelkovic**, Belgrade Community Waterwork, FRY

Mr. Radivoje Bratic, Water Management Institute, the Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

Mr. Zeljko Makvic, Croatian Water Pollution Control Society,
Croatia

Dr. Sinisa Sirac, Hrvatske Vode (Croatian Waters), Croatia

- *In this session participants will evaluate and discuss the security risks related to the pollution of international rivers and specifically focus on the case of the Sava River*

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Environmental and socio-economic problems/concerns resulting from the current and projected future state of the Sava River, including regional implications thereof;*
- *Availability of local resources and methodologies to assess problems and conditions and in turn promote public awareness;*
- *Institutional impediment.*

WG B session 1 – Sava Centar – Hall B Environmental issues, existing co-operation and new opportunities related to international lakes: the cases of Lake Dorjan, Lake Ohrid, Lake Prespa and Lake Skadar

Moderators: **Ms. Petra Andersson**, OSCE Spillover Monitor
Mission to Skopje

Ms. Doris Pollet-Kammerlander OSCE/ODIHR
Office in Podgorica

Rapporteur: **Mr. Claus Neukirch**, CORE Center for OSCE
Research, Hamburg

Speakers: **Mr. Dr. Adem Bektashi**, University of Shkodra, Department of
Chemistry, Albania

Ms. Ana Misurovic, Eco-toxicological Centre for researches in
Montenegro - (FRY)

Ms. Trajci Naumovski, Hydro-Biological Institute, the former
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Mr. Ondrej Vizi, Natural History Museum of Montenegro - (FRY)

Respondents: **Mr. Franz Streissl**, OSCE Field Station Shkodra, Albania

- *Panellists and participants will analyse and discuss issues related to contamination, bio-diversity protection, hydroelectric energy production and other problems with regional security repercussions*

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Environmental, industrial, political and socio-economic problems/concerns related to the Lakes;*
- *Availability of local resources and methodologies to accurately assess problems and conditions and in turn promote public awareness;*
- *Environment Impact of the recent conflicts in Kosovo (FRY) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.*

12:30 Lunch break *Hotel Intercontinental Beograd – Atlantic Room*

14:00 **Session 2 – Working Groups A and B meet together - Sava Centar – Hall B** Overview of bilateral and multilateral co-operation on the protection and use of international watercourses and implementation of relevant international conventions: achievements and shortcomings

Moderators: **Mr. Jose Maria Troncoso**, OSCE Mission to Croatia

Mr. Dusan Vasiljevic, OSCE Mission to FRY

Rapporteur: **Mr. Alexander Carius**, Adelphi Research, Berlin

Speakers: **Mr. Joachim Bendow**, International Commission for the
protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

Mr. Branko Bosnjakovic, UN/ECE

Respondents: **Dr. Slavko Bogdanovic**, the Yugoslav Association for Water Law, Novi Sad, FRY
Mr. Mehmed Cero, Federal Ministry for Environment and Planning (BiH)
Mr. Roland Gajsak, Ministry of Environment Protection and Physical Planning, Croatia
Captain Zeljko Majer, Assistant Minister for River Traffic Serbian Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications (FRY)

- *The provisions of the UN/ECE Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes*
- *The International Convention on the Protection of the Danube River and within its framework, the Sava River Project, are going to be illustrated, analysed and discussed*

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Evaluating and assessing regional co-operation in the context of its legal, formal/informal framework; successes and difficulties (shortcomings, obstacles, contradictions) and scope for improvement;*
- *Monitoring mechanisms for Agreements/Conventions and implications for non-compliance.*

15:30 Coffee break Sava Centar – Registration Desk

16:00 **Continuation session 2 – Working Groups A and B meet together - Sava Centar – Hall B** Overview of bilateral and multilateral co-operation on the protection and use of international lakes and implementation of relevant agreements: achievements and shortcomings

Moderators: **Ms. Petra Andersson**, OSCE Spillover Monitor
Mission to Skopje

Ms. Doris Pollet-Kammerlander OSCE/ODIHR
Office in Podgorica

Rapporteur: **Mr. Claus Neukirch**, CORE Center for OSCE
Research, Hamburg

Speakers: **Mr. Branko Bosnjakovic**, UN/ECE

Respondents: **Mr. Vasilije Buskovic**, Ministry of Urban Planning
& Environment, Montenegro - (FRY)

Mr. Dejan Panovski, Ohrid Management Group, the former
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- The working group will discuss existing bilateral and multilateral agreements

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Evaluating and assessing regional co-operation in the context of its legal, formal/informal framework; successes and difficulties (shortcomings, obstacles, contradictions) and scope for improvement;*
- *Institutional framework and political will for management of the Lakes.*

19:00 Reception hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
Federation Palace – Fountain Entrance

Tuesday, 6 November 2001

10:00 Working groups A and B meet in parallel

WG A session 3 – Sava Centar – Hall A

Moderators: **Mr. Jose Maria Troncoso**, OSCE Mission to Croatia
Mr. Dusan Vasiljevic, OSCE Mission to FRY

Rapporteur: **Mr. Alexander Carius**, Adelphi Research, Berlin

Speakers: **Mr. Mihajlo Gavric**, Federal Hydrometeorological Institute, FRY
Mr. Veljko Jovanovic, Mayor, Municipality Bosanska Gradiska, Republika Srpska (BiH)

Respondents: **Mr. Paul Covenden**, EBRD Business Group

- Local and central authorities from BiH, Croatia and FRY will discuss successes and difficulties in implementing international agreements such as the Sava River Project

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Status of the Sava River Master Plan proposed in the Quick Start Project submitted to the REReP program, including development plans and policies;*
- *Partnerships involved in the implementation of activities;*
- *Discussion of the “Polluter Pays Principle”.*

WG B session 3 – Sava Centar – Hall B

Moderators: **Ms. Petra Andersson**, OSCE Spillover Monitor
Mission to Skopje
Ms. Doris Pollet-Kammerlander OSCE/ODIHR
Office in Podgorica

Rapporteur: **Mr. Claus Neukirch**, CORE Center for OSCE
Research, Hamburg

Speakers: **Mr. Nikola Ajcev**, Mayor of Dojran, the former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia
Mr. Mitar Jaukovic, Director of Lake Skadar National
Park, Montenegro - (FRY)
Ms. Margarita Lutaj, water expert, Ministry of
Environment, Albania
H.E. Mr. Dragoljub Markovic, Deputy Minister, Ministry of
Urban Planning & Environment, Montenegro - (FRY)
Representative from the Ministry for Environment, Greece, the

Respondents: **Mr. Patrice Herrmann**, Council of Europe

- *Local and central authorities from Albania, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will discuss implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements*

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Partnerships involved in the implementation of activities; institutional capacity to implement agreements;*
- *Status of commitments (funding and technical assistance);*
- *Sustainable economic/environmental opportunities associated with the Lakes;*
- *Discussion of the “Polluter Pays Principle”;*
- *Alternative methods for hydroelectric power.*

11:30 Coffee break Sava Centar – Registration Desk

12:00 **Plenary Session – Sava Centar – Hall B** The role of the civil society and business community in the protection of water resources: need for a regional environmental awareness campaign

Moderator: **Mr. Andrej Steiner**, UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, Bratislava
Rapporteur: **Ms. Isabel Wolte**, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Austria
Speakers: **Mr. John Bennett**, UNEP – Balkan Unit
Mr. Zoran Markovic, Center for Development of Non Profit Sector (FRY).
Mr. Toni Popovski, Regional Environment Centre Budapest

Speakers in this session are suggested to include the following points in their presentation:

- *Access to and capacity of the media to report on environmental conditions and implications*
- *Public education and responsibility in environmental protection*
- *Discussion on the “Polluter Pays Principle”*
- *Added-value of a regional environmental awareness campaign*

13:00 Lunch break *Hotel Intercontinental Beograd – Atlantic Room*

15:00 Closing Plenary with Rapporteurs’ reports and recommendations for follow up Sava Centar – Hall B

Closing Remarks: **H.E. Mr. Nedjo Djuric**, Minister, Ministry of Urbanism, Construction, communal Issues and Ecology of Republika Srpska, (BiH)

Closing Statement: **Ambassador Stefano Sannino**, Head of OSCE Mission to the FRY

Mr. Paulo Rufino, Deputy Head of Mission, Permanent Delegation of Portugal to the OSCE.

Chair: **Mr. Marc Baltes**, Acting Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

17:00 End of the seminar



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

T h e S e c r e t a r i a t

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Vienna, 2 October 2001

Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on “The co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE”

First Preparatory Seminar
Belgrade, 5-6 November 2001

Introductory note

Social and economic activities, in particular urban development, industry, power generation and agriculture require availability of sufficient quantity and good quality water.

Unregulated human activities can exert pressures on water resources that translate into:

- A significant reduction in the total volume of surface and groundwater resources;
- The alteration of the natural surface water and groundwater resources, which in turn leads to the aggravation of droughts and water scarcity and to the occurrence of floods;
- The alteration of the quality of water, which generally results in changes in the levels of dissolved oxygen and increased nitrate concentrations, as well as in the presence of other synthetic substances that pose an hazard for human health and for water ecosystem given their persistent toxic and bio-accumulation characteristics;
- The modification of the sedimentation regime, through the reduction or the interruption of sediment flows, causing hydrological and morphological changes in the water bodies;
- Ultimately, economic and political pressures due to scarcity of water resources.

These pressures have a significant impact on human health and on aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, resulting in loss of biodiversity and in environmental degradation. The availability and the quality of water are affected over large areas, and may have significant regional repercussions on the environment and the social and economic development as a whole. Therefore, the regulation of the use of water and responsibilities for its qualitative and quantitative conservation, represent an important element in OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security.

The first preparatory seminar to the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum aims at:

- Fostering stability in the Balkans through the promotion of regional environmental co-operation;
- Assisting the reconciliation process through joint efforts in solving common problems;

- Supporting existing mechanisms and frameworks aimed at assessing the security implications of pollution and water management in the border rivers and water reservoirs, considering solutions to solve identified problems, and fostering the implementation of co-operation agreements at local, regional, national and international level.

The format of the seminar is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues and existing mechanisms developed to encourage local ownership and sub-regional co-operation in addressing the utilisation and management of international bodies of water.

In the two working groups, respectively on protection and use of watercourses and on protection and use of international lakes, experts, international organizations, local and central authorities from countries of the region are going to analyse and discuss the issues, the existing mechanisms and the achievements and shortcomings in implementing those mechanisms designed to promote water protection.

In addition, the seminar intends to underscore the need for greater public awareness and information dissemination, including media involvement, as to the risks and implications of water pollution. The importance of public ownership, environmental education, and capacity building of civil society as a means to promote sustainable development and solutions to water concerns will be highlighted.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on “The co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE”

**First Preparatory Seminar
Belgrade, 5-6 November 2001**

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPATING DELEGATIONS

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Lutaj, Ms. Margarita	Water expert, Directory of control and prevention of pollution ,Ministry of Environment
Bekteshi, Mr. Adem	Dr.,University of Shkrodra, Department of Chemistry

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Neitzel, Mr. Harald	Deputy Director, International Cooperation Federal Ministry for the Environment
Carius, Mr. Alexander	Managing Director, Adelphi Research
Geppert, Ms. Meike	Project Manager, International Department, German Rector's Conference
Neukirch, Mr. Claus	Research Fellow, Centre for OSCE Research (CORE)

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Brucker,Ms. Katherine	Political Officer, Delegation of the United States Mission to the OSCE

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Vogel, Ms. Birgit	Technical University of Vienna, Institute for Water Quality and Waste Management
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Maddens, Mr. Peter	Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of Belgium to the OSCE
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Miloradov, Mr.	Prof., Novi Sad University
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Obrovski, Mr. Aleksandar	President ,”Vrelo” Association for Healthy Nutrition and Environmental Protection
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Andersson, Ms. Petra	Economic and Environmental Officer, OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje
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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

LETTER OF INTENT

WE, THE SIGNATORY PARTIES HEREBY AGREE TO COOPERATE IN THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL PROJECT ENTITLED: "ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE SAVA-SUBBASIN OF THE DANUBE RIVER".

THE PROJECT IS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY ALL SIGNATORY PARTIES IN A COOPERATIVE MANNER AND WITH EACH PARTY COMPLYING TO ITS RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS AS DEFINED IN THE PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Belgrade, November 5th, 2001.

Mr. Mihajlo Gavrić,
Federal Hydrometeorological Institute,
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

[FRY]

Mr. Radivoje Bratić,
Water Management Institute, the Republika Srpska,
Bosnia and Herzegovina

[BiH]

Dr. Siniša Sirac,
Croatian Waters,
Croatia

[Cr]

Mr. Mehmed Cero,
Federal Ministry for
Environment and Planning

[BiH]

Republic of Serbia
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia, referring the ECPP/ OSCE (Environmental Crime Prevention Program & Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) joint project for the monitoring of the Danube basin water security, wants to underline the great importance of this kind of activities for the Government and the people of Serbia and very much stress the needs of international founding from financial institutions and donors countries.


The project is focused on the use of integrated and advanced technologies (high resolution satellites, Computer Aided Engineering, multi-physic simulation tools, telecommunications and more), for the environmental security and the protection of critical infrastructures.

The Ministry and some Serb institutions (e.g. the Institute J. Cerni) will support and participate at the investigations and monitoring.

The Ministry thanks in advance for any possible contribution to this unique initiative co-ordinated by the Secretariat of the ECPP in compliance of a M.O.U. defined with the Government of Serbia.

Signed this day October 11, 2001 in Belgrade

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management
The v. Minister for Water Management



Professor Slobodan Petkovic

**First Preparatory Seminar for the Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on
“The co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the
context of the OSCE”, Belgrade, 5-6 November 2001**

**Statement made by the Turkish Representative
Dr. Engin Koncagul**

**TURKISH VIEW REGARDING THE ROLE OF OSCE IN ECONOMIC AND
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION**

OSCE should be careful in interpreting its Economic and Environmental Dimension too broadly. OSCE is a political organization and therefore its strength lies in the field of politics. Although some economic and environmental problems could have a security dimension, this should not necessarily mean that the Organization has to become active in all those issues in an operational way (taking into account the limitations of OSCE such as limited staff / limited funds / limited experience / limited know-how etc.)

OSCE does not have the necessary expertise to deal with the transboundary water issues and therefore OSCE should not have the ambition to play a leading role in this subject. Management of transboundary watercourses and lakes are often sensitive issues and they must be resolved among the riparian countries only, without the interference of any international organizations or any other 3rd parties.

None of the Conventions (Helsinki Convention, Aarhus Convention, Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Non-navigational uses of International Watercourses) to which references were made during the seminar have gained world-wide/global acceptance. Some of those conventions have not entered into force yet. Furthermore, not all members of OSCE are parties to those conventions.

For this reason, it should not be one of the priorities of OSCE to promote those conventions. It is the right of each country to consider those conventions and then to decide whether to implement or not to implement them in accordance with their national plans and priorities.

We kindly ask from the rapporteur and the Secretariat to reflect these points in the final report.

Tenth OSCE Economic Forum on “The co-operation for the sustainable use and the protection of quality of water in the context of the OSCE”

**First Preparatory Seminar
Belgrade, 5-6 November 2001**

Statement made by the US Representative
Ms. Katherine Brucker

The OSCE is a multilateral organization that takes a comprehensive approach to security. Economic and environmental issues and their effect on security are inherently intertwined with political-military and human dimension issues. This fundamental fact was recognized by the OSCE founders.

As an organization that promotes dialogue, the OSCE can help bridge the gap between political and technical aspects of issues.

Bilateral donors as well as field missions can provide the funds, staff and know-how to help member states deal with Economic and Environmental issues.