



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1305 Vienna, 11 March 2021

EU Statement in response to the report by the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities Amb. Vuk Žugić

The European Union warmly welcomes the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Ambassador Vuk Žugić, to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his report. We assure you of our continued support for strong OSCE engagement on Economic and Environmental Dimension topics.

We remain fully committed to advancing the agenda of the second dimension and to engage in economic and environmental co-operation as a tool for confidence building and conflict prevention, in line with OSCE values and international commitments. We also welcome your efforts to further align OSCE activities with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We look favourably on your work plan for 2021 and your intention to work on a wide range of topics. We support your work on anti-corruption, its linkage to organised crime, as well as the focus on youth in this regard. We appreciate your work on connectivity and the particular attention you pay to sustainability and to the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation. We welcome your work towards building resilient and inclusive societies, also through focusing on women's empowerment.

We equally appreciate your focus on addressing the security implications of environmental and climate challenges. In this context, we welcome your office's activities to promote good environmental governance, inter alia by supporting the multi-stakeholder approach of Aarhus Centres as well as the SMM's awareness building on environmental risks. We are pleased to see topics such as water-cooperation, disaster

risk reduction and sustainable energy incorporated in your plans for 2021.

We welcome your commitment to fully and comprehensively mainstream gender across the activities and topics you are covering. We are convinced that the incorporation of a gender perspective in all OSCE activities is an essential component of a comprehensive approach to security.

Similarly, we would like to highlight the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach in the OSCE's work. We would be interested in hearing more about your work with civil society in particular.

Joining efforts and coordinating activities among OSCE structures and with other international organisations, as well as close cooperation with the field operations, is crucial. We thank you for focusing on building synergies and avoiding duplications.

We appreciate the efficient utilisation of digital means in your activities and organisation of online events, including in project work. We also welcome your efforts to make information about your office's work and resources more easily available to the participating States and the public as well as your work on enhanced visibility of all OCEEA's projects.

In conclusion, we thank the Office of the Coordinator of the Economic and Environmental Activities for the valuable work. We are looking forward to continuing our good cooperation. We also want to express our appreciation to Ambassador Vuk Žugić personally for all his work, which has always been carried out in a responsive and efficient manner and has certainly contributed to enhancing the profile of the second dimension.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.