

Review of SDG implementation and interrelations among goals

Discussion on SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions

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The **nexus between peace, security and development** which underlies the 2030 Agenda is at the core of the **OSCE's concept of comprehensive security**, which relates the maintenance of peace not only to hard security matters but also to human rights and democracy, and to economy and the environment.

Achieving SDG 16 requires action not only at national but also at **regional** level, in order to bridge national and global level efforts. **Regional co-operation** can facilitate integration, policy coherence, data and information exchange, and peer-learning for sustainable development; and it can be a catalyser for sustainable peace.

In line with the comprehensive spirit of SDG 16 and its interaction with all other SDGs, efforts should be put in place to support regional co-operation on a broad range of issues.

Based on such an approach, the OSCE, as the world's largest regional security organization, is contributing to the following **five major areas** in support of the **peace pillar of the 2030 Agenda**:

First, conflict prevention and confidence building: The OSCE has a long history of preventing conflict and promoting stability through a well-equipped **toolbox** for **early warning, conflict prevention, crises management** and **post-conflict rehabilitation**. Through its network of field operations in more than a dozen countries and the activities of its Secretariat and other executive structures, the OSCE fosters security at multiple levels. The OSCE action for **combatting trafficking in human beings** and for **countering terrorism** also directly contribute to the respective SDG 16 targets. The 2019 OSCE Slovak Chairmanship brought Security Sector Governance/Reform in front lines of our discussion for structural prevention and sustainable peacebuilding.

Second, good governance and corruption prevention: The OSCE's support for strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the rule of law and protecting fundamental freedoms and human rights help to nurture sustainable development. Transparency, accountability, and participation are among our key guiding principles. In addition, combating corruption, anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, particularly through strengthening the capacities of law enforcement agencies also represent our contribution to delivery of multiple SDGs. In the environmental sphere, the UNECE Aarhus Convention provides an effective tool for us in promoting access to information, public participation and access to justice.

Third, inclusiveness and reducing inequalities: the OSCE helps governments to address the root causes of intolerance and discrimination. Achieving gender equality and empowering women and youth form a cornerstone of our security approach.

Fourth, promoting economic growth and prosperity: We work to **strengthen connectivity** by assisting participating States in reducing costs and burdens on trade transactions, enhancing information exchange, and promoting international standards. Facilitating trade and strengthening connectivity can contribute to increased predictability and trust in the OSCE area. This is at the core of the *2016 Hamburg OSCE Ministerial Council Decision “Strengthening Good Governance and Promoting Connectivity (MC Decision No. 4/16)”*. Let me also refer to the link between **digitalization** and **security**. The *2018 Milan OSCE Ministerial Council Declaration “Digital Economy as a Driver for Promoting Co-operation, Security and Growth (MC.DOC/2/18)”* represents a commitment of the OSCE participating States to strengthen their co-operation in order to maximize the benefits and mitigate the security risks associated with digital transformation.

Fifth, addressing environment and security challenges, including climate change: Climate change is a major global threat to sustainable development with a highly complex risk landscape. Related challenges are best addressed by a broad coalition of actors. In the OSCE, we continue to identify, map and address on the ground potential security risks stemming from climate change through participatory approaches engaging governmental agencies including the security actors, as well as civil society, the research community and others.

Before concluding, allow me to highlight very broadly some **areas that we need to focus more and accelerate our efforts** in the future:

First, we need **dialogue and effective multilateralism**. There are many challenges to sustainable development and to security and most of them are too complex to be tackled by any one actor or to be solved unilaterally. The variety of issues that we have addressed this afternoon and the diversity of the organizations and stakeholders present here already demonstrates the multi-dimensional nature of sustainable development and security nexus. Co-operation on implementation of SDGs can be a positive example of effective multilateralism.

Second, we need to have a holistic approach **move away from the silo mentality** with a strong focus on the **interconnections** among SDGs. The OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security provides the medium for these interconnections.

Third, progress on sustainable development agenda requires **collaboration at all levels and new forms of partnerships**. We need to further expand and diversify the partnerships using the **convening power** of “**sustainable development**” and “**prevention**” to bring together a wide spectrum of interest and stakeholders.

Fourth, a “**whole of society**” approach is essential for achieving sustainable development as it is for enhancing security and stability. There is a need to continue collaborating with **civil society, reinforce gender equality**, and utilize the full potential of **women and youth** in this process.

As the *fifth* area, let me emphasize once again the importance of **transboundary and regional co-operation**. Working at the regional level can definitely accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda while contributing to co-operative security.

In the OSCE, we will continue to **align our activities to the 2030 Agenda in a demand driven manner** in response to the needs of our participating States. In this context, let me mention a few important events which we recently organized: **the OSCE Secretary General's Security Days Event** on "*The OSCE and the Sustainable Development Goals*" (Vienna, 4 June 2019), which discussed in detail the OSCE's contribution to 2030 Agenda and possible next steps; and last week's high-level discussion on "*Promoting the Role of Women in Addressing Environment and Security Challenges*" (Vienna, 5 July 2019) that we hosted at the OSCE.

There are also other activities organized by other executive structures, such as the **Annual Session** of the **OSCE Parliamentary Assembly** that convened last week around the topic of "*Advancing Sustainable Development to Promote Security- the Role of Parliaments*" (Luxembourg, 4-8 July 2019); or a side event which will be organized next week by the **OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities**, in co-operation with the **2019 Slovak OSCE Chairmanship** on *Preventive Diplomacy in the Changing Landscape of Modern Conflict: The Role of Regional Organizations* (New York, 19 July 2019).

We invite you to join our efforts and make sustainable development and sustainable peace a reality by 2030.

Thank you.