



United States Mission to the OSCE

Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting Session 2: Follow-up to the Astana Summit and the “V to V” Dialogues

As delivered by As delivered by Charles Hornbostel
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It seems like it wasn't that long ago that we were preparing for the Astana Summit, even as we now look ahead to the rapidly approaching Vilnius Ministerial. At Astana, as our colleague Mr. Suleimanov noted, we found much agreement on steps to take toward full implementation of our economic and environmental security commitments. Despite the fact that we ultimately could not find consensus on the entire Framework for Action, we pledged to continue the dialogue and seek agreement on elements upon which there was broad consensus. Under the Lithuanian chairmanship, we've continued that dialogue. It is the sincere desire of the United States that this ongoing dialogue bears fruit in Vilnius.

We've already discussed in Session 1 the proposals on energy security and strengthening transport dialogue. In this session, we would like to reflect on some of the other proposals that have been tabled in preparation for Vilnius.

As already mentioned, one of the items included in the draft Framework for Action was a pledge to “promote development of human capital, including equal opportunity for women and men in the economic sphere.” At the recent APEC Women and the Economy Summit, which concluded just last month in San Francisco, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spelled out the key economic argument for why this issue is important. As she noted, “with economic models straining in every corner of the world, none of us can afford to perpetuate the barriers facing women in the workforce. Because by increasing women's participation in the economy and enhancing their efficiency and productivity, we can bring about a dramatic impact on the competitiveness and growth of our economies.” To this end, we wholeheartedly welcome the adoption at Vilnius of the Ministerial Council decision on Promoting Equal Opportunity for Women in the Economic Sphere.

We also discussed in the draft Framework for Action the need to “[e]nhance the early warning and analytical capacities of the OSCE to respond to economic and environmental threats to security, by, inter alia, fully employing the tools within its mandate in order to strengthen mutual confidence and promote good neighbourly relations.” As Ambassador Norkus reminded us, the Chairmanship Workshop in May on Economic and Environmental Activities as Confidence Building Measures not only spoke directly to this issue, but expanded it by recommending additional, detailed actions the OSCE could take to increase confidence and build security through economic and environmental activities. As Ambassadors Feruta and Remler both remarked, these activities can address the living conditions of those in conflict zones without reference to the political disputes that drive conflicts. The resulting draft Ministerial Council decision to develop these confidence building measures is a fitting

response to these discussions, and the United States echoes Ambassador Ildem's remarks in saying we look forward to working to build consensus on the adoption of such measures.

We have covered a lot of ground since Astana, and we have set before ourselves a number of worthy proposals to assist us in the implementation of our economic and environmental commitments. Now is the time to come together in the spirit of cooperation and mutual action to build the consensus necessary to realize the potential of our second dimension commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.