



Distinguished Minister Borell,
Distinguished Minister Lajčák,
Your Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues,

Allow me to begin by thanking our hosts for organizing this year's Mediterranean Conference on energy and environmental cooperation and for bringing together key energy experts from the public and private sector from both sides of the Mediterranean to discuss policies, develop strategies and identify business opportunities.

OSCE is a forum for dialogue and discussion for Participating States as well as for our partners, offering a toolbox and a platform to decrease tensions, correct misperceptions, and promote a culture of tolerance across the OSCE area and beyond. Helsinki Decalogue recognized the importance of the Mediterranean dimension and its relevance for the security and stability in Europe. This link has been obvious especially in these challenging times, when complex tensions and conflicts again highlight the increasing interdependence of our regions. Based upon the existing decisions and declarations in the OSCE's Economic and Environmental dimension, our Organization is well-placed to contribute to energy and environmental cooperation and to complement the efforts of other international organizations.

We note, with appreciation, that the 2018 Mediterranean Conference, and in particular its high-level political segment, is focused on how to leverage energy to promote economic growth and international co-operation in the Mediterranean region. Therefore, this year's Mediterranean Conference has good potential for increasing cooperation between the OSCE and Mediterranean Region. This important event will provide us with an opportunity to exchange views on issues that are highly relevant to the agenda of both sides of the Mediterranean. Security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean as a whole, and economic, energy and environmental issues are increasingly important factors of the Euro-Mediterranean security equation.

The decades-old OSCE Mediterranean Partnership traditionally geared towards the goals of peace, stability, and prosperity, has much to gain from enhanced dialogue on energy and environmental cooperation. Sustainable and reliable energy at affordable prices is a precondition for prospering economies and peace and security throughout the OSCE and its Mediterranean Partners.

There is hardly another domain than energy in which the indivisibility of Euro-Mediterranean security is more important and consequential for the stability of States, the prosperity of local economies, and the well-being of societies. The development of clean or renewable energy technologies can provide economic opportunities to countries with substantial conventional energy resources, as well as those who lack such resources by offering an alternative means to power their economies and generate jobs for their citizens. Renewable energy today represents a key solution to the challenges of energy supply, security and climate change.

The OSCE serves as a platform for dialogue and co-operation in a number of fields, and offers a suitable venue for exchanging best practices and building capacity to maximize the economic benefits of renewable as well as of traditional forms of energy, facilitating public and private partnerships and the transfer of know-how. Energy enables not only economic development, it also contributes two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions and is, therefore, critical for the climate change process. Cooperation in securing the energy supply, transit and demand chain, and the use of new and renewable sources of energy should aim at building a vision for a sustainable energy future in the 21st century in the Mediterranean region and beyond.

The magnitude and complexity of the challenges faced by the Euro-Mediterranean region cannot be addressed by a single state or organization on its own. Therefore, there is no alternative to working together. Moreover, dealing with complex challenges that we are facing will only be successful if we join our efforts and manage to act with full respect to the basic values, principles and commitments of the OSCE.

The Republic of Serbia remains committed to pursuing and strengthening cooperation with Mediterranean partners, including through the OSCE, wherever the Organization can be of assistance with its comprehensive approach to security.

Thank you, Mr.Chairman

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