



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement at the 32nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Darrell Owens
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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The United States is pleased to join participating States and other distinguished guests for this year's Economic and Environmental Forum. We thank the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for convening a discussion that speaks directly to the security and prosperity of this region.

Let me be clear: Economic security is national security. The Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity or TRIPP which is supporting peace in the Caucasus is a model in this respect and the OSCE should support this and similar efforts. Building economic linkages that promote trade and commerce foster peace and security. In addition, transparent regulatory systems, predictable investment climates, secure borders, and the rule of law are not abstract principles — they are the foundation on which sustainable growth and long-term regional stability are built.

The United States remains committed to an OSCE that is focused, effective, and delivers practical results. That means sharpening our priorities, eliminating duplicative efforts, and directing resources toward work that genuinely advances the organization's core mandates. The Economic and Environmental Dimension has a critical role to play in that effort. As we look to the year ahead, several priorities stand out for the United States within this Dimension.

Strengthening regional connectivity — improving east-west transportation links, trade facilitation, border procedures, and energy connections — will help diversify the region's economic partnerships and reduce overreliance or dependence on one or two countries.

The United States is deeply concerned about risks posed by untrustworthy suppliers whose hardware, software, and services may be subject to disruption, manipulation, or control by authoritarian regimes for censorship and

surveillance. These technologies threaten national security, economic security, data security, privacy, and the right to freedom of expression. Transparent investment environments, reliable transportation routes, and local processing capacity are essential to secure and resilient supply chains. We have a shared interest with allies and partners in addressing national security risks related to foreign investment – such as risks to critical technologies, critical infrastructure, and sensitive personal data – without deterring benign investment or harming economic good.

Our engagement with a range of partners around the world on investment screening has already supported the establishment and enhancement of dozens of investment screening mechanisms and will remain an important tool as this Administration engages the global community on critical economic and national security issues. Some OSCE participating States have made progress in passing foreign investment screening laws or building a robust investment screening framework, modeled on the U.S. CFIUS process. This is an area where we should do more. We welcome greater private-sector participation in this space.

Energy security depends on reliable, affordable, and diversified systems —and stronger protection of critical infrastructure and grid security.

I would also encourage this organization to take advantage and support innovation in emerging technology even as we work together against emerging threats. Emerging technology such as artificial intelligence can foster great prosperity, but the OSCE will need to work with the private sector to secure infrastructure and protect intellectual property as we also work together to tackle emerging threats such as online scam centers and cybersecurity issues. A level playing field for businesses — one grounded in transparency and fair competition — ensures that OSCE activities reflect economic realities on the ground and identify genuine opportunities for cooperation.

Finally, combating illicit finance — including sanctions evasion, misuse of virtual assets, organized crime, terrorist financing, and corruption that disadvantages legitimate businesses — remains essential to sound economic governance across the region.

Nowhere is the opportunity for economic connectivity more evident than in Central Asia. Strengthening secure trade, transport, and energy links across Central Asia and the South Caucasus will help participating States reach global markets, attract investment, and generate durable growth. This is a priority for the United States. To this end, I am pleased to announce that we have directed over €365,000 in Extrabudgetary funds to the OSCE Border Management Staff College to help fund an additional month-long course for Central Asian customs and border officials in 2027 on best practices, emerging technologies, new

trends, and techniques to stop the illicit flows of people and goods and promote well-regulated cross-border legal trade and travel.

The Trans-Caspian Corridor, in particular, holds significant promise — provided it is backed by stronger customs cooperation, harmonized procedures, and transparent regulatory frameworks. There is an opportunity and while other bodies have the lead on these issues, the OSCE needs to find ways to support innovative ideas, such as facilitating customs exchange, to foster prosperity and security across the region.

This is precisely why OSCE reform matters. Without a sharp focus on priorities, political commitments on connectivity, trade facilitation, and economic governance risk remaining just that — commitments, not outcomes. We support efforts to reduce waste, eliminate duplicative activities, strengthen field operations, improve project oversight, and give the Coordinator a clearer strategic role. Strengthening the Organization's capacity to support regional economic integration, especially in Central Asia, will ensure the OSCE delivers real, measurable benefits to participating States and their citizens.

The United States looks forward to substantive discussion over the next two days and to working with all participating States to ensure the Economic and Environmental Dimension delivers tangible results. I will close by asking all of you to think creatively and identify concrete steps that the OSCE can do to demonstrate that it can deliver real, measurable benefits to participating States and its citizens in the vital Second Dimension.

Thank you.