

## **The OSCE and the Sustainable Development Goals**

**4 June 2019**

### **Rationale**

The 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders in September 2015 officially came into force on 1 January 2016. The SDGs are grouped around five major pillars: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships, and are reviewed regularly by the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The 2019 HLPF will convene in July around the theme of *“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”* and carry out an in depth review of Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17.

Closely linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions but also Goal 13 on climate change with its compounding effect on conflict, is the newer UN “Sustaining Peace” agenda. Two UN resolutions adopted in 2016 and the UNSG’s 2018 report “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” call for better linkages between the UN’s three foundational pillars: peace and security, development, and human rights. This includes a stronger focus on prevention, in particular through an enhanced understanding of root causes of violent conflict and the need for inclusive approaches aimed at increasing resilience.

The OSCE has made a link between security and development since the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. Its comprehensive approach to security rests on the recognition that conflicts may arise not only from political and military threats but also from economic tensions, environmental degradation, and social insecurity, as well as deficiencies in relation to the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, all relevant for the achievement of the SDGs. Furthermore, since conflict prevention has been central to the OSCE’s work, the organization makes – across its three dimensions - a valuable contribution to the realization of Goal 16.

### **Objectives and expected outcomes**

The Security Day would focus on two main objectives: analysing 1) the application of the SDGs, particularly Goal 13 (and the link between climate change and security) and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (particularly conflict prevention) and 2) the role of the OSCE as a partner (in the spirit of Goal 17), that can contribute to sustainable peace, security and development.

Specifically, the discussions would analyse the opportunities and challenges associated with this work as well as explore the following issues:

- **The link between sustainable peace, security and development.**
- The relevance of the OSCE’s work in assisting states to implement the SDGs including 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth), as well as 13, 16 and 17.

- **What are inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict?** What are key factors for transition to sustainable peace and security in post-conflict contexts? What is the role of civil society, youth and women in building and sustaining peace – particularly in the OSCE context?
- Discussing the **character of Goal 16 both as an outcome as well as an enabler** of sustainable development due to its close linkages with most of the other SDGs.
- Drawing on the **OSCE’s more than twenty years of experience in operational and structural prevention** and taking into account the conceptual framework as outlined in the World Bank/UN report on “Pathways for Peace”, and showing **how the implementation of its toolbox, including in particular programmatic work in all three dimensions, contributes to achievement of Goal 16**, including in particular inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making, access to justice, good governance, anti-corruption, rule of law and human rights.
- **The relationship between climate change and security, how climate diplomacy and disaster risk reduction can contribute to conflict prevention and confidence building** within the context of Goal 13, and the complementarity of OSCE activities in the economic and environmental dimension.
- **Overall OSCE role as a regional arrangement** under the UN Charter in supporting achievement of SDGs at national and regional levels, in line with Goal 17 on “partnerships”.
- How to **raise the OSCE profile and international visibility** in its work to support the achievement of the SDGs.

#### **Format**

The Security Day on 4 June 2019 will be structured around four main sessions (see annex): 1) The relevance of the SDGs to the OSCE area, 2) climate change and security (Goal 13), 3) sustaining peace and conflict prevention (Goal 16), focusing in particular on structural prevention, and 4) perspectives on the OSCE’s role, from parliamentarians, heads of institutions, civil society, and youth, and the prospects for partnership (in the spirit of Goal 17).

The SG will summarize the discussion and draw conclusions, including on ideas for possible future work.