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**Concluding Meeting of the 25th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum
“Greening the Economy and Building Partnerships
for Security in the OSCE Region”
Prague, 6-8 September 2016
Closing Session**

Statement by Switzerland

Mr. Chairman,

Switzerland appreciates the frank, open and constructive discussions that we have had throughout this concluding meeting. To us, the discussions have shown that we have a lot of common ground when it comes to environmental and economic issues.

Mr. Chair,

Discussions have shown great support for updating and strengthening our commitments with regard to environmental cooperation. Specific topics with strong security implications have been identified, such as reducing the risks from natural disasters, including those that have been caused and intensified by climate change. We also saw a strong support for supporting sustainable development, by enhancing the coherence of the OSCE's efforts with efforts in the UN and other multilateral forums.

We have also seen support for advancing our commitments with regard to economic cooperation. The link between job creation, social integration, and radicalization has been extensively discussed and supported. We also discussed the necessity of building partnerships between civil society, the private sector, and state institutions at all levels in order to ensure permanent training of workers, create jobs, and

ultimately bring new perspectives to all members of society. In this regard, it was noted that the OSCE can have a specific added value in providing frameworks for good governance.

We also discussed that enhanced regional cooperation with regard to trade and transport connectivity can further enhance economic growth, thereby providing new perspectives to populations and enhancing security. We also discussed connectivity and ecological threats as keys for cooperation across dividing lines. Maybe we can advance “common connectivity spaces” with regard to specific issues in some regions of the OSCE area, in order to enhance overall confidence and security. We took positive note of the intention of the future Italian chairmanship to continue this discussion and we can already announce our support.

In the last panel this morning there have been very interesting proposals for micro-connectivity in Eastern Ukraine as well as for more regional connectivity in Central Asia, and in the Western Balkans, this is very encouraging.

Mr. Chair,

Let me end by stressing that we fully support the Austrian chairmanship’s approach in the way up to the Vienna Ministerial Council and we will constructively and supportively engage in the negotiations of the two texts to be proposed. We hope that the constructive spirit of this meeting will guide us in the months ahead until the Ministerial Council.

Thank you.