



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Statement by Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the International Organizations in Vienna, at the 1324th Meeting of the Permanent Council on Agenda Item 2: Co-operation with Mediterranean Partners, Vienna, 15 July 2021

Madame Chairperson, dear delegates,

At the outset, let me express my gratitude to the Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship for including this item on our today's agenda. I would also like to thank the Polish Chair of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation Group for choosing this topic. As it is also one of the highest priorities for Slovenia, I would like to share with you a few points in my national capacity, besides what we have shared as EU.

Madam Chairperson, dear colleagues,

According to the 2021 report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Slovenia ranks 9th among 165 countries from all over the world in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. On the one hand, this makes us proud, but on the other hand, we are aware of the challenges that remain. And one of them is related to climate action.

In this context, I am pleased to inform that on July 13, our Parliament endorsed a resolution on climate strategy until 2050, under which Slovenia commits to become climate neutral in the coming 30 years. The document envisages an inclusive transition into a climate neutral society, taking into account the principles of climate justice, which means that the costs and benefits of this transition will be distributed fairly.

Slovenia also engages actively in environmental protection in the Mediterranean region, including by fostering the role of young people by promoting the Positive Agenda for the Youth in the Mediterranean. In June, Slovenia assumed the two-year chairmanship of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and hosted its 19th Meeting. A three-day event examined the report on sustainable development activities for the period between June 2019 and May 2021 and reviewed the progress in the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Madame Chairperson, dear colleagues,

Climate change is a global concern. Its impact reaches beyond the borders of individual countries and cross-border cooperation among countries is crucial. A global response is

needed and the OSCE, in its effort to strengthen co-operation on environmental issues as part of a broader effort to prevent conflict, build mutual confidence and promote good neighbourly relations, can play an important role.

In conclusion, let me refer to the guiding questions of our today's discussion. Climate change manifests itself primarily through changes in the water cycle. Positive examples of transboundary water co-operation therefore need to be showcased. Furthermore, a shift to circular economy is essential for achieving the climate goals. The OSCE could support us in exchanging best practices. When it comes to gender equality, Slovenia regards this as a cross-cutting issue that is crucial for achieving development in all dimensions. Good examples of integrating gender perspective into relevant activities therefore need to be shared.

Thank you.