executive structures. We will focus on environmental issues such as renewable energy, good governance and participation in environmental policy making and mitigating climate change.

In the field of cybersecurity, Austria intends to further develop confidence- and security-building measures to strengthen implementation of existing agreements. This includes organisation of a conference on critical infrastructure and a workshop of Cyber Security experts with a view to strengthening cooperation in case of cyber emergencies and attacks.

The organization’s work in the human dimension is not only a critical element in ensuring security within the participating States, but also in rebuilding trust between them. The Chairmanship will nurture dialogue, focusing on specific areas of added value. We will not only facilitate constructive dialogue on a broad range of topics pertaining to human rights and democracy, with the aim of strengthening common interest in our region, but also work closely with the OSCE structures on practical steps toward enhancing the effectiveness of their existing activities in these areas. This will include crucial outreach to civil society, NGOs and the media.

In the fight against trafficking in human beings, Austria will support activities regarding a range of elements including migration, foreign terrorist fighters and radicalisation. A conference will be held in October in honour of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day.

An important element in addressing common threats and challenges lies in the partnerships the organization has developed with States in Asia and in the Mediterranean. Austria will build on these partnerships as they have evolved positively in recent years, and work towards their further development.

STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION

Together with the Troika partners Germany and Italy and as reflected in the “Hamburg Declaration: A Strong OSCE for a Secure Europe”, the Chairmanship firmly believes that the OSCE can play a key role in addressing and resolving security concerns in its area. It is, indeed, indispensable in this regard. The Chairmanship will therefore undertake all efforts to ensure the organization’s capacity and strength to deal with all concerns put to it by the participating States:

1. Continue engagement to provide the OSCE with a legal personality

   The organization’s entities operate under a broad variety of legal statuses, resulting in a patchwork of responsibilities, privileges and immunities – and many gaps, which hamper the OSCE’s ability to implement its mandate. The Austrian Chairmanship will continue the efforts of previous Chairs to achieve an overarching agreement granting the organization legal personality. It will also take practical steps to reinforce the OSCE’s legal personality, to the extent possible.

2. Support the organisation’s autonomous institutions and field operations

   Austria believes that the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and field operations make a crucial contribution to ensuring that the values of the OSCE are felt by the people on the ground. It is the goal of the Austrian Chairmanship to enable these instruments to reach their fullest potential. Austria will work to ensure stronger engagement by all participating States for the instruments created by them and their operational capacities, as well as to work towards longer planning horizons and stronger evaluation tools.

3. Strengthen the organization’s resource base:

   Austria will act as an honest broker, with the goal of maintaining a level of resources that allows the organization to be strong and competitive, capable of recruiting the best personnel available, and able to effectively implement its mandate.

OUTLOOK

Austria’s Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2017 will have to address key security challenges facing Europe, including violent conflicts, radicalisation and a crisis of confidence. We will make our contribution to enable the OSCE to fully implement its mandate, to strengthen comprehensive and co-operative security as well as security within the organization’s 57 participating States, and to begin rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE area.

A key element of the Austrian approach to the Chairmanship is the emphasis on dialogue. Throughout the Chairmanship, Austria will provide opportunities for experts and diplomats, activists and stakeholders to come together to discuss perceptions and develop common solutions.

The work of the Chairmanship is not to be seen in isolation, but in continuity and cooperation with previous and subsequent Chairmanships. Overall, it is designed to preserve the enduring value of the organization. Austria will continue its traditional role as a bridge-builder during its Chairmanship and will act as an honest broker, open to and encouraging constructive dialogue. For this, we hope for the active support of all participating States.

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The conflicts and challenges that we are currently facing are international; they require international cooperation. The OSCE, as the platform for regional dialogue, should play a key role in bringing the parties to the negotiating table, in assisting in the normalization of security and stability in the OSCE area, and in undertaking broader security sector governance and reform. Together with other participating andobserver States, the Austrian Chairmanship will support efforts to increase the participation of wider layers of society in the political-military dimension. Women's inclusion is essential for the sustainability of efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Peace processes can only be successful in the long term when the voices, perspectives and needs of the entire population are taken into account.

Therefore, the Austrian Chairmanship will support efforts to increase the participation of wider layers of society, in particular women, in the political-military dimension. Women’s inclusion is essential for the sustainability of efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Peace processes can only be successful in the long term when the voices, perspectives and needs of the entire population are taken into account.

It is obvious that these are significant challenges, which will not be resolved quickly or easily. Nevertheless, the Austrian Chairmanship will focus on measures to reduce the intensity of existing conflicts, by building trust and undertaking broader security sector governance and reform. Together with other participating and observer States, the Austrian Chairmanship will support efforts to increase the participation of wider layers of society in the political-military dimension. Women’s inclusion is essential for the sustainability of efforts to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Peace processes can only be successful in the long term when the voices, perspectives and needs of the entire population are taken into account.

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