



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT BY NORWAY

As delivered by Counsellor Lars Løberg to the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting,
**PREVENTION OF RACISM, XENOPHOBIA AND HATE CRIMES THROUGH
EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS- RAISING INITIATIVES**
Vienna 10 November 2011

Thank you, Madam Moderator,

I have asked for the floor due to references made by ODIHR Director Lenarcic and yourself in your opening remarks, as well as by other participants, to the mass killings in Oslo and at Utøya on July 22nd.

Such mass killings are obviously a hate crime, and there is also an apparent link to racism and xenophobia in this specific incident. However, I have to remind you that the target for this shocking crime was the Norwegian Government and the Labor Party's youth organization.

Why did he choose these targets? The culprit accuses Norwegian politicians in general and particularly those from the Labor Party for having changed the public opinion in Norway, causing Norwegian society to become way too open and tolerant towards other races and other cultures. The message from his tragic and inexcusable actions, is, if he is right in his accusations, that Norway has changed in a positive direction when it comes to attitudes towards xenophobia and racism.

More so, this example underlines what political parties and political leadership can do over time to combat xenophobia and racism by working consciously to change basic attitudes in a society. This again proves the value of educational and awareness-raising initiatives.

Thank you, Madam Moderator.