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STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION IN KOSOVO

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 13 October 2022

Mr Chair,

It is our pleasure to welcome Ambassador Michael Davenport back to the Permanent Council and thank him for his latest report.

Norway supports Kosovo and the other Western Balkan countries in their Euro-Atlantic ambitions. Full integration in these structures will however not be possible for neither Kosovo nor Serbia without a comprehensive agreement on full normalisation of relations. There is no alternative to the EU-led process, dialogue, and compromise. Norway will continue to contribute to the normalization process between Kosovo and Serbia.

A stable and prosperous Kosovo is crucial to the security and stability of South-East Europe, and consequently to the entire OSCE region. Efforts to strengthen regional cooperation and socio-economic development in Kosovo are important in this regard.

We welcome the energy road map agreement reached in June with Serbia and the agreement on ID-cards reached in August under the EU-facilitated dialogue, improving the free movement between Kosovo and Serbia. We however strongly regret the increased tensions in Northern Kosovo ahead of the agreement and call on the parties to refrain from any unilateral actions that may cause further tensions in the area. Kosovo signed the Brussels agreements of 2013 and 2015, and they must be respected and implemented. Now the Association of Serbian Municipalities should be established as agreed.

Mr Chair,

We continue to praise the work of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. It no doubt achieves results in for example its assistance to legislative developments, strengthening of democratic institutions, support to independent media and in the fight against domestic violence. I would like to point specifically to the Mission's assistance to the Kosovo police as well as its continued efforts to combat trafficking in human beings. With regards to anti-trafficking, may I ask ambassador Davenport for more information on

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how recommendations made by the Mission this spring have been implemented by the relevant local and national institutions?

We see a need for less activity-based and more results-oriented reporting in order to demonstrate clearly to participating States where and how the OSCE Mission makes a difference. In this regard, we appreciate the annex to the report, exemplifying concrete results of the Mission's advocacy work.

Mr. Chair,

Through tailor-made assistance to the host countries, the field operations contribute directly to improving the situation for the population on the ground. The Mission to Kosovo also has an important early warning mandate. The Mission remains a key international institution for building democracy and institutions in Kosovo and for protecting and promoting human rights.

Thank you.