



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE OSCE  
MISSION TO MONTENEGRO**

As delivered by chargé d'affaires a.i. Knut-Are Okstad at the Permanent Council, Vienna,  
4 July 2024

Madame Chair,

I welcome Ambassador Dominique Waag back to the Permanent Council and thank her for her comprehensive and informative report.

Norway supports the Mission's efforts to advance reforms that contribute to Montenegro's European Union accession process, particularly in electoral reform, good governance and the rule of law. We value the Mission's support to the Parliament of Montenegro and the State Election Commission, which is crucial for increasing election transparency and promoting good governance. Additionally, we welcome the focus on promoting media literacy, freedom of information and journalism professionalism, as well as the safety of journalists.

Let me also take this opportunity to extend Norway's congratulations to Montenegro on receiving the positive Interim Benchmark Assessment Report from the EU last week. This is indeed a significant milestone in the country's Euro-Atlantic integration process and clear feedback on the positive developments in Montenegro lately.

Madame Chair,

Allow me again to stress the importance of reaching a consensus for a unified budget. While Norway this year signed a new and flexible 4-year cooperation agreement with the OSCE, providing funding for various extra-budgetary projects, including activities in Montenegro, the lack of an approved unified budget still represents a severe challenge for any OSCE body.

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As donors to the OSCE field operations, it is our responsibility and duty to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively. Avoiding the fragmentation caused by individual participating States imposing their national priorities on the work of the field operations would also contribute to their effectiveness.

To conclude, I wish Ambassador Waag and her team the best of luck in advancing the work of the Mission. You can count on Norway's support.

Thank you.