



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF RUSSIA'S ILLEGAL
ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 17 March 2016

Mr Chairman,

I aligned myself with the statement by the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to add a few remarks regarding tomorrow's anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea.

Mr. Chairman,

We condemn Russia's occupation and illegal annexation. It violates the fundamental principles of international law of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it challenges the foundation of the international order. No other OSCE country has recognised this annexation.

Tomorrow, two years will have passed since Russia annexed Crimea and Sevastopol, after Russian soldiers first took control over the peninsula. We are gravely concerned by the human rights situation in Crimea, especially the political suppression of the Crimean Tatars and their organisations.

We expect Russia to reverse its illegal annexation, and we expect immediate and unrestricted access to the peninsula for international organisations, including the OSCE, the UN, and the Council of Europe.

Thank you, Mr Chairman