



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

PC.DEL/763/23

7 June 2023

ENGLISH only

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, H.E. MR. JEYHUN BAYRAMOV

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Special Permanent Council,
Vienna, 6 June 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Norway joins others in welcoming Foreign Minister Bayramov and thanks him for his address to the Permanent Council.

Mr. Chair,

Norway supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Sustainable peace is crucial. Peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and normalization between Turkey and Armenia, would create conditions for a better integrated and more prosperous region. It would make all three capitals in South Caucasus more able to resist pressure from those who want to keep the region weak and fragmented. In the present situation, the countries themselves are responsible for ensuring stability.

On this backdrop we welcome the intensification we have witnessed in the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalisation process during the past month, with meetings and peace talks at the highest political level taking place in Washington, Brussels and just recently in Chisinau on 1 June. We believe that it is important to maintain this momentum and avoid steps, including hostile rhetoric, that could put the peace process at risk.

Mr. Chair,

In order to maintain the momentum, it seems natural to start by implementing the ceasefire agreement of November 9, 2020. Traffic restrictions in the Lachin corridor have caused severe humanitarian difficulties for the population in Nagorno-Karabakh in the last six months. Norway calls on the Azerbaijani authorities and the Russian

Federation to guarantee the freedom and safety of movement along the Lachin corridor. I would also like to refer to the binding order issued by the International Court of Justice. Nagorno-Karabakh rightfully belongs to Azerbaijan. Accordingly, Azerbaijan would be well advised to build positive relations with the people who live there, not just tell them that they are free to leave.

Mr. Chair,

We need to remind ourselves that the OSCE and its institutions and field missions are established to the benefit of all participating States. The OSCE has a wide experience throughout all phases in the conflict cycle, including post-conflict rehabilitation but also conflict prevention. For instance, the field offices in South-Eastern Europe have a deep knowledge base concerning interethnic community building, cross-border Confidence Building Measures and dealing with the past. This knowledgebase, experience and lessons learned can be tapped into and used to the benefit of the South Caucasus.

I would like to underline that we have reached a critical point in this organization's history. Standing at this crossroads, we must make the right decisions to contribute constructively, and proactively to finding solutions to our common challenges and not least to the budget crisis. On the latter, we again urge our fellow participating States to stop using the budget as a bargaining chip and come to an agreement. In order to adopt a budget, we must make concessions. This goes to the very heart of the principles of diplomacy: diplomacy is about making compromises despite diverging positions. This is the only way forward.

Thank you.