



## PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

### STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF GEORGIA, H.E. MR. ZURAB NOGHAI DELI

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna  
30 October 2007

Norway warmly welcomes the Prime Minister of Georgia, Mr. Zurab Noghaideli, to this Special Permanent Council meeting. We have listened carefully to his statement and his comprehensive review of Georgian affairs.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway recognises the considerable efforts and results achieved by the Georgian government on democratic and economic reform. We continue to support these efforts through broad and extensive project cooperation.

Strong and transparent judicial institutions are crucial for the development of a stable democracy, as well as for sustainable economic growth. Norway is very content with our cooperation in the judicial sector since 2004. We see it as a direct and pragmatic way of exchanging experience which is useful for both our countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway has followed the 6 August missile incident in Georgia and its aftermath with great concern. The incident is worrying and yet another reminder of how fragile the situation in the Caucasus is. The OSCE is the proper forum for dealing with incidents of this nature, and hence the Organization should use all necessary means and mechanisms to avoid their repetition.

As identified in the Spanish Chairmanship's food for thought paper on "the Missile Incident and the way forward", the OSCE is already in possession of a wide range of tools and mechanisms to deal with incidents like this. We should update and strengthen these mechanisms so that they can be applied in a coherent and timely manner.

Furthermore, finding solutions to the protracted conflicts in Georgia remains of utmost significance for achieving sustainable regional stability. The conflicts can only be

resolved through peaceful negotiation and with full respect for Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is Norway's sincere belief that the OSCE can continue to play a positive role in this regard.

An important confidence building mechanism in the case of South Ossetia is the economic rehabilitation programme, which is conducted under the auspices of the OSCE. Experience has shown us time and again that economic prosperity and stability is essential for restoring mutual trust and creating more propitious conditions for a constructive political dialogue.

We have witnessed progress on a number of projects, such as the construction of schools and implementation of water-related projects. These are important projects that will benefit all residents of the region and contribute to stability and promote dialogue and cooperation between the parties. Norway has contributed approximately € 250 000 to the programme. We urge the Georgian Government to fulfil its pledge to match contributions made by the donors.

To further enhance confidence-building measures in South Ossetia, Norway reiterates its call for more OSCE observers in the zone of conflict. This could help reduce tensions and build confidence. We hope that the Organization can reach agreement on the deployment of eight Mission Monitoring Officers as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also reiterate our full support to the OSCE Mission in Georgia. The Mission's activities supporting the Georgian authorities in promoting democratic reforms are very valuable. Norway welcomes the ongoing democratic reforms in Georgia and encourages the authorities to continue their efforts in this regard.

Finally, let me once again thank Prime Minister Noghaideli for his presentation, and reiterate our interest in further cooperation towards the goal of a peaceful and prosperous Georgia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.