



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

PC.DEL/1279/20
5 October 2020

ENGLISH only

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
PRESENTATION OF THE UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL 2021

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 1 October 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Chair,

Thank you, Ms Tuula Yrjöla, for the outline given, and the transparency in the process so far

As we look back upon an extraordinary year in the history of the OSCE, it is more important than ever for us as participating states to work together towards our common goal: A well-functioning organisation, which delivers on its mandate and thus helps us fulfilling our commitments.

We have mandated the OSCE, its institutions and field operations with a wide range of tasks, believing that cooperation is the best way to achieve security in our region. The Unified Budget is our tool to supply sufficient resources for the executive structures to perform these tasks.

Over years, a zero nominal growth Unified Budget has contributed to an organization less able to implement activities in the way we want. It cannot recruit the staff it needs, nor develop the executive structures adequately.

We expect the new secretary general to be a top manager devoted to the efficient and transparent use of the organization's resources and to the effective management of the secretariat. However, efficiency gains can only take us so far. Activities come with costs. Progress and development demand resources. In addition, inflation is a reality we cannot ignore.

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

In insisting upon Zero-Nominal-Growth-budgets year after year, we as participating states are effectively telling our organization to reduce its activity.

As part of a joint effort, Norway is willing to significantly contribute so that the OSCE can do more and better. The programmatic activities in the field operations and in the autonomous institutions are our priority. We must ensure that we act in support of the structures that we have, and do our best to maintain their ability to fulfil their mandates.

We regret how budget negotiations have developed. We have seen how the secretariat, the autonomous institutions and the field operations describe the late UB approval as a main obstacle to implementation and efficiency across the organization. It also severely hinders necessary recruitment processes.

We have confidence in the Secretariat to present us with a draft unified budget. We greatly appreciate the work that has been done to complete this in time for participating States to discuss, and eventually approve it. To us, it is obvious that the acting secretary general has not only the mandate, but also the obligation to fulfil this task, even if it is unusual. Here I would support the remarks made by Switzerland.

A transparent and informative dialogue between the secretariat and the participating states is crucial to find common ground in the budget process this year. Norway is also supportive of a development towards a multiyear budget.

We stand ready to support the Swedish chair of the ACMF in efforts to facilitate a rational and constructive budget discussion. It must be our common goal to aim for approving the 2021 budget before the end of 2020, in order for the organisation and its autonomous institutions and the field missions to work efficiently next year.

Thank you.