



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY ON THE SIGNING OF A “TREATY”
BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE BREAKAWAY REGION OF SOUTH OSSETIA**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 19 March 2015

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Deputy Foreign Minister Dondua, welcome back to the Permanent Council!

Mr. Chairman,

Norway firmly supports Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We are deeply concerned by Russia's security and military presence in the breakaway regions of the country. We again call on Russia to fulfil its commitments of 12 August 2008 and the subsequent implementing measures, commitments that Russia still has not met.

Mr. Chairman,

In the Permanent Council, on 27 November last year, I quoted Norway's Foreign Minister, who in a statement regretted the so-called agreement on alliance and strategic partnership entered into between Russia and the Georgian breakaway region of Abkhazia. In that statement, the Foreign Minister underlined that “The agreement is in breach of principles of international law. It violates Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it will make it even harder to resolve the conflict over Georgia's breakaway regions”.

Mr. Chairman,

Today we deplore the signing yesterday by the Russian Federation of a so-called “treaty on alliance and integration” with Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia. This is yet another clear violation of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The signing took place exactly one year after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. This may be a coincidence, but it serves to underline Russia's total disregard for basic principles of international law.

Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to reiterate our view that there is an urgent need for a meaningful OSCE presence throughout Georgia, including the breakaway regions. Reestablishing a field presence in the region would be an important element of our work on this protracted conflict, as there is a dire need for unbiased information about the situation on the ground in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Thank you, Chairman.