



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE CHIEF MONITOR  
OF THE SMM TO UKRAINE, AMBASSADOR APAKAN**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile  
to the Permanent Council,  
Vienna, 10 July 2014

Mr Chairman,

I join previous speakers in welcoming Ambassador Apakan back to the Permanent Council. His frequent and regular reports to us are very welcome.

Mr Chairman,

The Special Monitoring Mission plays an important role in our efforts to help Ukraine overcome the current crisis. It is doing outstanding work, under demanding circumstances, including with regard to mediation and dialogue facilitation. We appreciate the daily reports they produce. These reports are an invaluable source of reliable and balanced information on the developments on the ground.

Mr Chairman,

A few weeks back the situation in eastern Ukraine forced the SMM to limit operations in the areas where monitors are most needed. We support the decisions that were made on reconfiguring deployments in the oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk.

It is remarkable that the SMM in such a situation was able to maintain a presence in these oblasts. As soon as the security situation allows, we look forward to SMM being able to re-establish normal activity throughout the eastern part of Ukraine. I take this opportunity to reiterate a point I have made before, namely that safety and security of the SMM personnel must come first. We are pleased that this has been underlined repeatedly by the SMM leadership, including today, as well as by the Secretary General.

Like others we were immensely relieved when the two abducted teams were finally released. We thank Ambassador Apakan and his staff for their hard work that eventually brought the eight monitors out of captivity.

Mr Chairman,

We are convinced that the SMM will be needed also in the coming months. We therefore look forward to an early decision on extending the mission's mandate beyond the initial six months.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.