



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

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STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR KONGSTAD

**On Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism (VERLT)
to the Permanent Council**

Vienna, 29 September 2017

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**Mr Chair,
Your Excellencies,**

Mr Chair,

We thank the Chairperson-in-Office and Foreign Minister Kurz for his introductory remarks.

We also thank Professor Neumann for presenting the report on countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization leading to Terrorism. We look forward to study the report in detail.

I would also add our thanks to the Secretary General for his report on OSCE activities related to VERLT.

As Chair of the Security Committee, Norway has highlighted VERLT at several of our Committee meetings. At the meeting in January, we addressed the importance of having a whole-of-society approach to this issue. Preventing and countering VERLT requires an approach that is comprehensive, community based and inclusive. In particular, closer cooperation with civil society is key. We need to provide positive alternatives to VERLT. The objective is to empower local actors who provide such alternatives, not to get informants who turn on their communities and thereby undermine social cohesion.

In June, the committee discussed the gender perspective and VERLT. A gender sensitive approach is necessary to make our efforts to prevent and counter VERLT more effective. It gives us a better understanding of the drivers behind radicalisation and how it affects women and men differently. It is also an enabler for tolerance and non-discrimination, equality and women's human rights. Moreover, terrorists have a deliberately gendered approach in their recruitment and propaganda. We must therefore increase our understanding and awareness of this gendered approach, and at the same time avoid using stigmatising gender or religious stereotypes.

In our view, the OSCE and its executive structures are particularly well placed to work on preventive measures. We are prepared to continue to support the secretariat, the field missions

and the independent institutions in their efforts in this area, because we see that the OSCE has real added value in this respect.

Norway has a national action plan against violent extremism and radicalization. At the heart of this plan is a coordinated approach to countering violent extremism. It is necessary to involve a number of actors early in order to increase the possibilities of succeeding in preventative efforts. Professor Neumann's report will help us evaluate our progress.

Norway's action plan is dynamic and sensitive to the changing nature of the threat. It is therefore continuously updated and subject to review every six months. We are working on better integrating the gender perspective in the plan. We look forward to drawing lessons from Professor Neuman's report and from the experiences of other participating States in the next review of our national action plan.

Thank you