



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
HEAD OF THE OSCE PRESENCE IN ALBANIA

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 26 November 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I join others in welcoming Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco to the Permanent Council, and thank him for his report.

Let me start by again offering our condolences to Albania with regards to the earthquake that struck exactly one year ago. Together with the outbreak of COVID-19 not long after, this has been a particularly difficult year for our fellow participating State. We commend the Albanian government on its actions to tackle both the earthquake recovery efforts and the pandemic, as well as on chairing this organization successfully in 2020. We also commend the efforts of the OSCE Presence in Albania to readjust its work in light of the situation.

Norway appreciates the Presence's support to reform efforts in Albania. An example is the work of ODIHR, which (our embassy informs me) has contributed very positively to the reform of election laws. With the upcoming elections in April, it is important to keep up the momentum in these and other reform efforts. They are important for the development of the country, and for the security and welfare of its people. In accord with the will of the host country, they will also aid in a further integration into euro-Atlantic structures.

The Presence reports that it coordinates its efforts with the international community in relation to issues such as gender equality, empowering civil society and youth,

supporting media development, and enhancing the capacities of the Assembly. It would be very interesting to learn more about this coordination.

We noted the Presence's gap analysis of *Co-operation and Co-ordination Between Prosecution and Judicial Police* in Albania, and its follow up. This is an interesting approach to the work of the Presence, and we look forward to hearing more about results in future reports.

We have also noted the activities on fostering co-ordination among donors, institutions, and communities during consultations on the drafting process of the Law on the Registration of CSOs. We appreciate this and other examples of concrete work to strengthening civil society, and hope to hear more about how these activities contribute to the overall development of civil society in the country.

In our response to the report to the Permanent Council last year, we called for more result-oriented reporting rather than the marked focus on activities. In an annual report such as this, we would appreciate receiving more insight into the contributions to overarching goals such as those described in the outcomes of the Unified Budget. Have targeted institutions become more effective, accountable and transparent? Did OSCE activities contribute to better working conditions for Albanian journalists? Reflections on challenges to the Presence' ability to reach its goals and carry out its mandate would also be valuable information for participating States.

In addition, we would be interested to hear whether the Office of the Head of Mission and the Fund Administration Unit programmes achieve their defined goals? This is very seldom discussed in the reporting, but never the less important elements in assessing to what degree the Presence can be expected to deliver on its programmatic goals.

Last year, we also called for further elaboration on the gender mainstreaming of the Presence' work in Albania. This report mentions several activities for gender equality, which are all appreciated, but includes no broader reflection of the concept of mainstreaming. Understanding and recognizing the specific situations faced by women is not only a question of equality. A gender perspective is relevant for the implementation of all OSCE commitments.

Thank you