



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT WELCOMING THE APPOINTMENT OF
AMBASSADOR JANEZ LENARČIČ AS DIRECTOR OF ODIHR**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 15, 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Let me join other speakers in an expression of satisfaction and congratulations on the appointment of State Secretary Janez Lenarčič of Slovenia as new Director of ODIHR, as from 1 July. We congratulate the Finnish Chair and its Friends of the Chair on having conducted the whole process in a very orderly, gentle and transparent manner, so that nobody can question the result. We warmly congratulate the successful candidate and the country proposing him, and pledge him our full support. We congratulate ourselves on an excellent choice and an excellent outcome of the process, which means that the new Director can start discharging his important mandate backed by an extraordinary vote of confidence and support.

We are also grateful to the other countries that presented very good candidates for the job, ensuring that the successful incumbent did not win by default, but which then joined in the consensus for the candidate that seemed so particularly tailor-made for the job at this juncture. I must mention in passing that I was especially favourably impressed by the Swiss delegation, which offered us a very interesting and well-qualified candidate, but which then immediately and very gracefully withdrew this candidacy in support of the candidate who turned out to have such overwhelming support already after the initial round of preferences.

Although we expect to welcome Dr. Strohal back to the Permanent Council and celebrate him in person before he takes up new duties, I would also like to take this opportunity to pay him a sincere tribute for the dedicated and tireless manner in which he has discharged his important responsibilities during his five year long tenure as Director of ODIHR.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.