



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA, H.E. MR. GELA
BEZHUASHVILI**

**OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL, VIENNA
14 JUNE 2007**

Norway joins others in warmly welcoming H.E. Foreign Minister of Georgia Gela Bezhushvili to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his presentation.

Norway recognises the considerable efforts and results done by the Georgian government on democratic and economic reform. We continue to support these efforts through broad and extensive project cooperation.

Strong and transparent judicial institutions are crucial for the development of a stable democracy as well as for sustainable economic growth. Norway is very content with our cooperation in the judicial sector since 2004. We see it as a direct and pragmatic way of exchanging experiences that are useful for both our countries. The importance Norway attaches to this cooperation was illustrated by the visit of our Minister of Justice to Tbilisi in April.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway has on many occasions stated its firm commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. We support all efforts for a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The peaceful resolution of these conflicts is of vital importance for the region.

Norway has contributed with approximately € 250 000 to the economic rehabilitation programme in South Ossetia. This programme contributes to stability and promotes dialogue and cooperation between the parties.

To further enhance confidence-building measures in South Ossetia, Norway calls for more OSCE military observers, which would help reducing tensions and build confidence.

Let me also state our full support to Ambassador Reeve and the OSCE Mission. The Mission's activities supporting the Georgian authorities in promoting democratic reforms are highly valuable. Norway welcomes the ongoing democratic reforms in Georgia and encourages the authorities to continue their efforts in this regard.

Finally, let me once again thank H.E. Foreign Minister Bezhuashvili for his presentation, and reiterate Norway's wish to cooperate to achieve the goal of a peaceful and prosperous Georgia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman