



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
GERMANY, H.E. FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER**

As delivered by Counsellor Hilde Austad
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 2 July 2015

Herr Vorsitzender,

Norwegen möchte ebenfalls dem deutschen Aussenminister für die Ausführung seiner Gedanken um die Rolle der OSZE und die deutschen Prioritäten danken. Wir unterstützen die Hauptpunkte seiner Darstellung. Der Einsatz der OSZE für die Arbeit mit der Bekämpfung transnationaler Bedrohungen, Respekt der Menschenrechte und Konfliktlösung ist besonders wichtig für Norwegen. Wir möchten dem Vorsitz für nächstes Jahr unsere volle Unterstützung zusichern.

Mr Chairman,

Let me continue in English.

The crisis in and around Ukraine has had a profound effect on our organisation. It must be resolved. Germany, as part of the Normandy group, is in a position to contribute to a durable solution. This solution must respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr Chairman,

We appreciate the Foreign Minister's emphasis on human rights and human dimension commitments and fully share his views. As Chair of the Human Dimension Committee Norway has worked to build a common understanding of existing commitments and encourage better implementation. This has been done by inviting high-level experts to

introduce the topics. Through voluntary reporting from participating States throughout the OSCE area, we have discussed interesting examples of better implementation and best practices. We also try to prepare for negotiations on strengthening our commitments in Belgrade. Respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law is a condition for democratic and stable societies and thereby lasting security.

Mr Chairman,

We welcome that strengthening the OSCE's capacity for conflict prevention and resolution is an important priority for the chairmanship. The panel of eminent persons has given us ideas and recommendations that should be pursued. However, one basic condition has to be acknowledged: To strengthen capacity we need to give our organisation the necessary resources to fulfil the role we give it and achieve the results we demand from it. Several years of zero nominal budget growth is not the way to a stronger organisation.

Mr Chairman,

Norway fully supports the incoming chairmanship's intention to strengthen efforts to combat transnational threats. Combating violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism needs common responses and coordination of efforts. We need to involve civil society, including youth and women. Norway has seen a substantial number of young people who have left the country to join extremist groups as foreign fighters. This is deeply troubling, and we are prepared to join international efforts to stop this. Norway recently organised a European conference on countering violent extremism, as a follow-up to the global summit in Washington in February. A separate civil society event was organised, which resulted in the launching of a European youth network against violent extremism. We were pleased to cooperate with the OSCE in preparing for this conference.

Mr Chairman,

Foreign Minister Steinmeier has outlined important priorities that reflect our common challenges. We have great confidence in the ability of the incoming chairmanship to lead the organisation on our behalf. However, they will need support and political will from all participating States to succeed. We can assure the Foreign Minister of our full support for his challenging task.

Thank you, Mr Chairman