



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

Delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 11 October 2018

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I thank the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. George Tsereteli, for his address to the Permanent Council today. He has sketched a concerning picture of the situation in the OSCE region: War is back on the continent; populations suffer from protracted conflicts; nationalism, racism and intolerance is spreading; disinformation and propaganda stain political dialogue. The list goes on.

The OSCE is one of the tools available to the participating States to address these issues. We must empower it to do so. As indicated in the President's address, the strength of a consensus-based organisation is diminished when the single-country veto is misused. As it stands, decision-making in the OSCE is at an unsustainable impasse.

One example is the lack of new commitments in the human dimension over the last several years. A more imminent example is the unified budget. It has hardly been adopted on time once in the last decade. Nor has it reflected the increase in tasks imposed on the organisation, except for the SMM. We welcome the Parliamentary Assembly's call to provide the OSCE with the resources needed for effective operations.

Mr. Chair,

Tensions in the OSCE region are on the rise. Conflicts remain unsolved. States are turning inward, away from international collaboration. In their national roles, in dialogue with their compatriots, parliamentarians can contribute significantly to support for an international political order beneficial to all.

Taking part in international collaboration, members of the Parliamentary Assembly are, as parliamentarians, uniquely situated to raise the level of national debate on the benefits of international commitment. That is one way to remain vigilant and to defend the rules based international order that we have built. As President Tsereteli said: If we

genuinely care for the people now living in the OSCE region and the generations to come, we must use the OSCE in the collective interest of all.

Thank you