



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
NORWAY, MR.ERLING SKJØNSBERG, ON UZBEKISTAN (CURRENT
ISSUES)**

OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna
19 May 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Norway is deeply concerned about the use of force in connection with the recent demonstrations in Uzbekistan. The death toll is not yet confirmed, but hundreds of people are reported dead. The shooting of civilians is unacceptable and must be condemned. We send our condolences to the families of the victims.

All parties must now refrain from further violence and use of force. The conflict can only be solved through dialogue and democratic means. We urge the Uzbek government to cooperate with the OSCE and the international community. We support the call for an independent inquiry into these tragic events.

It is the responsibility of the Uzbek government to find peaceful and political solutions and to bring about reconciliation between the various religious and opposition groups. It is also the responsibility of the government to ensure respect for basic human rights, as well as promoting development and combating poverty. This is the only course of action that may remedy the fundamental causes of the conflict.

Thank you.