



**Statement in response to the report by the  
High Commissioner on National Minorities**

Delivered by Ambassador Anne- Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 6 July 2023

Mr. Chair,

I join others in welcoming the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Ambassador Abdrakhmanov, back to the Permanent Council and thank him for his report.

As a country with several national minority populations, Norway recognizes the usefulness of tools and recommendations developed by the office of the High Commissioner to assist States in improving sustainable integration of diverse societies. The country visits are important in identifying best practices and a service all participating States should make use of.

Norway appreciates the clear focus on gender mainstreaming in the work of the High Commissioner, and we welcome the efforts to increase knowledge about the intersecting root causes for inequality and discrimination. Thus, it would for instance be useful to look at the nexus of gender, national minorities, and youth. We are also pleased to hear that the High Commissioner stresses the importance of cooperation with other international and multilateral organizations. We agree that recognizing complementarity and seeking synergy is necessary to create lasting impact of the work. Security and stability in our region do indeed depend on international co-operation as well as on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

The role of the HCNM in identifying, de-politicizing and addressing causes of ethnic tensions involving national minority issues is of utmost importance. We need the High Commissioner to use the tools at his disposal to the best for war-affected populations in Ukraine and elsewhere. At the same time, we respect the value of silent diplomacy and confidentiality. This work method has proven both wise and efficient over the years.

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

With the recent Moscow mechanism report on Russia's deportation of Ukrainian children in mind, we take due note of the High Commissioner's warning that Russian actions designed to assimilate the population in occupied areas against their will seriously jeopardizes any hope for a just and sustainable peace in the future. We call on Russia to cease all such activities.

Mr. Chair

Norway is proud to contribute with extra-budgetary funding to projects in Georgia prioritized by the High Commissioner. We are at the same time conscious of the negative impact the non-approval of Unified Budget Proposals the last years has had on programmatic activities in the organization. It is not in itself conducive to the work of the institution if more activities are financed through extrabudgetary funds, but the lack of UB funding leaves no other alternatives. We again urge all delegations to do their utmost and be willing to compromise to join consensus on a Unified Budget for 2023.

We congratulate the Office of the High Commissioner on the 30th anniversary and look forward both to the meeting here in Hofburg tomorrow and to the high-level event to be held in the Hague in October.

Thank you.