



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

JOINT STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY THE
FOREIGN MINISTER OF AUSTRIA, MR. SEBASTIAN KURZ

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 30 January 2014

Thank you Mr Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of Mongolia and Norway.

We join others in welcoming Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz to the Permanent Council. Thank you for your inspiring address.

We fully support the points already made by the EU, and we will therefore limit ourselves to the following two additional points, both of which are of great importance to our countries.

Firstly, the OSCE has throughout the years developed an elaborate system of commitments, not least in the human dimension. Unfortunately we have seen that the task of ensuring their implementation by all participating states have proven difficult. In an attempt to remedy this, Switzerland has made the strengthening of existing commitments a top priority during their chairmanship. We strongly support this effort, and we see it as an important guiding principle for the Human Dimension Committee, which is currently chaired by Norway.

Cooperation between international and regional organizations is essential in this regard. We should therefore look for ways to improve cooperation between relevant international and regional organizations with a view to strengthen monitoring and implementation.

We believe that closer cooperation between the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, between their headquarters and field missions, would greatly improve our

shared ability to assist the participating states in implementing their commitments. Not least because it would allow the organizations to better coordinate recommendations to national governments. This would make implementation on the part of the participating states easier.

Our cooperation with the Council of Europe is particularly important in this respect. Since Austria is currently chairing the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, we encourage you, Minister Kurz, to help promote closer ties between the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Secondly Mr Chairman, OSCE foreign ministers have launched a very ambitious program to reinvigorate our organization. Although we do not believe that the Helsinki +40 process constitutes a "be or not to be" for our organization, we do see its success as important to the strengthening of security and stability in the OSCE area. As such, the Helsinki +40 process is essential to the fulfillment of the Swiss leitmotif of creating a security community for the benefit of everyone.

Yet to achieve this we need strong – and constructive – involvement by our political leaders. The foreign ministers need to be involved, and invest politically, in the organization's work. We therefore greatly appreciate the presence of Minister Kurz here today. It is testament to his commitment to the OSCE, and we sincerely hope that also other foreign ministers will engage actively with our organization.

Thank you Mr Chairman.