



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 15 May 2014

The situation in Ukraine is not moving in the right direction. We are concerned by the continued efforts by pro-Russian separatist to destabilise Eastern and Southern Ukraine. We condemn the illegal and illegitimate referendum conducted last Sunday and we will not recognize it. The way in which it was organized – and the situation in which it was organized – make it impossible to argue that such a referendum somehow could represent a free expression of the will of the citizens of Donetsk and Luhansk.

We repeat our support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

It is now more important than ever that the Geneva Joint Statement is fully implemented. We call on the Russian Federation to do their part to help de-escalate the crisis. This includes withdrawing the troops along Ukraine's eastern border. It includes giving a strong and unambiguous message to the separatist to lay down their arms, remove roadblocks and vacate occupied buildings. It also includes withdrawing the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil.

We commend the steps taken by the Government of Ukraine towards implementing the Geneva Joint Statement and we are supportive of the engagement of CiO Burkhalter and of his proposals on the way forward. It is important that the processes are owned and led by the Ukrainians themselves.

Like speakers before me, I call on Ukraine to develop a national disarmament programme together with OSCE specialist. We are ready to support such a programme.

Mr. Chairman,

We strongly support the holding of free and fair presidential elections in Ukraine on 25 May. We welcome the deployment of the ODIHR Election Observation Mission, to which we have contributed both personnel and funding.

Successful elections are vital for Ukraine's ability to implement necessary reforms and to begin the process of reconciliation and stabilization. We expect from the transitional authorities that they implement their OSCE and Council of Europe commitments regarding the rights of all national, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities. My Government is committed to support Ukraine long term and proposed to Parliament earlier this week to increase allocations to projects in Ukraine considerably, to 18.5 million euros. Our priorities will include democratization, energy efficiency, environment and education.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank ODIHR and the HCNM for their report on the human rights and minority rights situation in Ukraine. We will study it carefully, but note that the main findings include that the victims of a significant number of human rights violations were primarily pro-Maidan activists and journalists. We also note that Ukrainian military personnel in Crimea and members of the Crimean Tatar community have been subject to grave violations of their human rights. We furthermore note with concern that events in Ukraine are having a serious effect on the situation of national minorities, especially in Crimea.

We have received the Russian White Book on violations of Human rights and the Rule of Law in Ukraine, which we also will study carefully.

We look forward to the briefings Monday afternoon by UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights Mr. Ivan Šimonović and by outstanding representatives of our own organisation.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude with a point on the Special Monitoring Mission. We are confident that this mission represents a tangible contribution towards de-escalation of the crisis in Ukraine, including in implementing the Geneva Joint Statement. It demonstrates that the OSCE can play an important role in crisis situations in Europe.

We support a rapid expansion of the Mission in line with the mandate we adopted in March. We will continue to nominate further candidates to the positions of the SMM. And finally, Mr Chairman, I take this opportunity to pledge a further 500.000 Euros to the mission, bringing the total contribution of my country to 1 million Euros.

Thank you.