



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

NORWAY ON THE ELECTIONS IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 29 May 2014

Mr Chairman,

In a statement issued on Tuesday the Foreign Minister of Norway, Mr. Børge Brende, congratulated the people of Ukraine on the successfully conducted presidential election. While he commended the way the election was conducted, he regretted that many Ukrainians in Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea were prevented from participating. He concluded that the election reflects the will of the people of the country and that therefore Mr Poroshenko is the legitimate president-elect of Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Brende underlined that it is important that all OSCE participating States, including Russia, recognize the outcome of the election and help bring much needed peace and stability to Ukraine.

Mr Chairman,

Not using the right to vote is a missed opportunity. But denying others the right to vote is criminal. We believe that the violent separatists in Eastern Ukraine very well understand that a high voter turnout also in Donetsk and Luhansk would demonstrate that separatism and violence do not enjoy broad popular support.

Mr Chairman,

In his statement on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Brende also said that Mr Petro Poroshenko faces a momentous task as Ukraine's new president. Not only will he have to combat corruption and lay the groundwork for investment and new economic growth, he will also have to build bridges

between different parts of a strongly divided nation. I think, Foreign Minister Brende added, that Mr Poroshenko understands the challenges ahead and the need for hard work and tough reforms.

Ukraine's democratically elected president has Norway's support as he takes on these responsibilities, Foreign Minister Brende concluded.

Mr Chairman,

The elections in Ukraine took place under challenging circumstances. I take this opportunity to praise the courage of the many citizens of Ukraine that exercised their democratic rights in an environment of violence and threats.

Ukraine hosted for this presidential election one of the biggest ever election observation missions. I would like to conclude by thanking ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for their crucial work.

Rarely have election observers carried out a more important task than during this election.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.