



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 17 July 2014

Mr Chairman,

Before I come to the main point of my brief statement I would like to say that we regret that we today were not able to agree to prolong the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. But we expect it to happen during the next few days. We also look forward to an early decision to deploy monitors to two crossing points at the border between Russia and Ukraine, not because we believe that such a limited operation would stop any flow of weapons and paramilitary forces across the border, but because we regard it as a first step, which hopefully also will contribute to building confidence.

Mr Chairman,

I wanted to draw your attention to a statement issued last Friday by the Foreign Minister of Norway. In that statement the Minister said that he is deeply concerned about developments in eastern Ukraine, since pro-Russian separatists are using increasingly heavy military equipment, which is resulting in loss of life and destruction of infrastructure.

The Minister underlined that Ukraine has the right to defend itself against acts of war by separatists. The separatists must lay down their weapons immediately. The foreign nationals among them must leave the country, and negotiations must be initiated with legitimate representatives of the people in eastern Ukraine.

The Minister went on to say that it is Norway's view that President Poroshenko's peace plan is still the only way forward, and that we support the work of the Trilateral Contact Group.

The Minister regretted that Russia is not helping to stabilize the situation as we had hoped and expected. Russia must immediately take steps to stop weapons and paramilitary forces from crossing the border, and use its influence over the rebel groups to bring the hostilities to an end.

He added that the international community must provide assistance for the people of Donbass, but it is only the Ukrainian authorities in Kiev who have the right and duty to restore law and order in the area.

And finally my Foreign Minister underlined that the people in the areas that are now being returned to the Ukrainian authorities' control must receive the help they need as soon as possible. It is important, he said, that priority is given to improving relations between the central authorities and the local people in order to restore confidence. We expect both parties to do their utmost to prevent further loss of life and damage to property, he concluded.

Thank you, Mr Chairman