



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Counsellor Hilde Austad
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 28 August 2014

Mr Chairman,

Norway has aligned itself with the statement of the European Union. However, I would like to add a few points in a national capacity.

The latest developments in Ukraine are very concerning. There are reports of an increasing flow of military equipment and soldiers across the border from Russia. There are also reports of armed conflict further south. These reports have made it clear that Russian soldiers are taking part in the destabilization of the country.

This is unacceptable, and represents a further escalation of the conflict.

It is vital that the contact group of the OSCE, Russia and Ukraine intensify their efforts to reach a cease-fire and ensure effective securing of the border.

President Putin stated at the Minsk summit that Russia would contribute to creating confidence in a negotiating process. Reports of increased Russian military presence on the ground in Eastern Ukraine stand in stark contrast to such statements.

Russia must now contribute to de-escalation of the conflict and stop their destabilizing actions.

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende and Minister for EU and EEA Affairs Vidar Helgesen will travel to Kiev this Sunday to discuss the situation with the Ukrainian political leadership, and to show our clear support in the critical situation the country is in.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.