



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE, H.E. KOSTYANTYN GRYSHCENKO**

As delivered by acting permanent representative Lars Løberg
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 20 June 2012

Mr. Chairperson,

It is a pleasure for Norway to warmly welcome the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, H.E. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko to the Permanent Council and thank him for presenting an outline of the priorities of the upcoming Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship for 2013.

We look forward to a close co-operation with him and his team, and stand ready to support Ukraine in addressing the many challenges ahead.

Mr. Chairperson,

Each new chairmanship inherits a legacy from the outgoing chairmanship, a continued responsibility for safeguarding our common values and obligations. In this respect we fully share the minister's intentions for the promotion of values and implementation of commitments across all three dimensions.

Norway also shares the many views expressed by Denmark on behalf of the European Union and we join their welcome of the intention to make use of Ukraine's special role as co-mediator and guarantor in the Transdnestrian settlement process to intensify the work for a sustainable and long-term settlement of this and other protracted conflicts in the OSCE area. This is a joint responsibility of all participating states.

Mr. Chairperson,

Norway fully shares the view expressed that the OSCE autonomous institutions are among the OSCE's greatest assets and that they in their respective fields are unique among international organizations. In this respect we agree with Minister Gryshchenko that the co-operation with the OSCE institutions has to be fruitful. We would also like to see more resources invested in these institutions – to the benefit of all participating states.

For Norway the human dimension remains a key priority. Our commitments to human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the foundation for security at all levels of the society. In this respect we also share the EU concerns about criminal proceedings against members of the former government of Ukraine and their recommendations for comprehensive judicial reforms. And we wish to stress the importance of free and fair elections to the National Assembly, the Rada, in October this year.

We are also concerned about the rights of persons belonging to national minorities all over the OSCE area, we fully support the work to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including by governments towards the LGBT-community, and we offer the Ukrainian chairmanship all the help we can provide on gender issues.

My final point, Mr. Chairperson, regards Freedom of the Media, where Norway strongly urges all participating states to implement their commitments, which necessarily also involves the new media and new technology, and to fully cooperate with the Representative on Freedom of the Media.

With this, Mr. Chairperson, let me once again reiterate our support for the Ukrainian chairmanship and our offer of assistance and good co-operation wherever needed to make this organization truly useful also for the years ahead.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.