



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY SWITZERLAND AND NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE
PRESENTATION OF THE 2013 UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL
BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
11 October 2012

Mr. Chairman,

I speak on behalf of Switzerland and Norway.

We join colleagues in thanking Secretary General Zannier for his thorough introduction of the proposed 2013 budget and would like to offer the following comments:

Mr. Chairman,

During the last ten years the reductions in the Unified Budget have been substantial. We had a top level of around 185 million euros in 2003, which adjusted for inflation should be about 224 million 2012-euros. Next year's budget proposal has a total balance of 148.6 million euros.

More than one third of the budget we had ten years ago has been taken away.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the OSCE is important for our common security. In a time of emerging new threats we should therefore increase rather than decrease the budget of our organisation. We are in particular concerned by what we regard as insufficient resources to the institutions in the present proposal. We note the Secretary General's warning that protracted zero nominal growth is not sustainable without affecting implementation of individual mandates.

Mr. Chairman,

The budget proposal indicates a shift of resources from the West-Balkans to the benefit of literally all other regions or funds. This is in line with our strategic objectives and something we will support. We will however come back to details concerning the allocation of these resources.

My next point, Mr. Chairman, concerns the staff in the institutions and field missions. They are highly qualified and without them nothing would be achieved. We would like to remind colleagues that we have a consensus policy to align local staff to a minimum of 80 % of the UN scales.

We are not prepared to move away from this principle.

We are also concerned about the secondment system. It creates an extremely unjust situation where some staff are paid a lot less than others for doing equal work. The system also erodes the recruitment basis for many important jobs in our organisation. Worst hit are the institutions, where seconded staff don't even receive BLA.

In principle we would call for a strategy of replacing seconded posts by contracted ones. But given the current financial constraints we can probably not ask for more than an allocation of BLA also for the institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

We regret the premature closings of the field missions in Belarus and Georgia. We should set aside resources in the unified budget to reopen these field missions with relevant mandates.

Finally, we are aware of national constraints that limit the scope and the possibilities for budget increases for 2013. But the fundamental question we have to ask is how much it will cost to ensure that our organisation can produce the security we expect from it, not to ask how much security we can provide with the limited resources we already had last year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman