



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN KAZAKHSTAN

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 30 April 2015

Mr Chairman,

In a press release yesterday, Norway's Foreign Minister, Børge Brende, expressed his disappointment with the way the recent presidential elections were conducted in Kazakhstan. In its preliminary report, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) indicated significant shortcomings and irregularities in the run-up to the election and the election itself. This increases our concern about the conditions for democracy in the country, the Minister said.

Foreign Minister Brende also pointed out that it has not been long since Kazakhstan held the chairmanship of the OSCE. The country is an important partner for Europe and for Norway. He underlined that we will continue to support reforms that promote democracy and respect for human rights. However, as he underscored, this is only possible if Kazakhstan shows, in practice, that this is what the country wants.

Kazakhstan must show that it is willing to follow up the obligations it has taken on. The shortcomings identified in the ODIHR report must be addressed, Foreign Minister Brende concluded.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.