



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 14 May 2015

Mr Chairman,

The situation in Ukraine remains a matter of serious concern to us. Norway has taken a clear stance on the situation since its very beginning, a position in defence of principles that underpin this organization: territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders, peaceful settlement of disputes and promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law.

Mr Chairman,

Norway's Foreign Minister Brende visited Ukraine this week. This was his sixth visit to the country since his appointment 18 months ago. There could be no clearer sign of our support. In his meetings with President Poroshenko, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and members of his government, the Foreign Minister underlined that Norway aims to be a reliable partner for Ukraine at a time when the country needs our support.

In Kharkiv, the Foreign Minister met with some of the many Ukrainians who have had to flee from their homes because of the conflict. As Minister Brende said, it is surreal that we face a humanitarian crisis of such proportions in the heart of Europe in the 21st century. The humanitarian needs are serious and the international community has a duty to help. The Foreign Minister announced another 5 million Euros (NOK 40 million) in humanitarian aid to assist the international humanitarian organizations in their efforts.

Mr Chairman,

Humanitarian aid can only alleviate the worst consequences for the people affected. The real challenge is to make Ukraine ready for the future. This is the goal of the Ukrainian government's reform efforts. We want Ukraine to succeed. In 2015, our combined support amounts to almost 40 million Euros (NOK 315 million), aimed at the focus areas of energy sector reform, security- and justice sector reform and trade facilitation. The Foreign Minister made clear during his visit that Norway will continue and increase its support, provided the Ukrainian government remains committed to reforms.

Mr Chairman,

The conflict in Ukraine was not unavoidable. If the principles of this organization had been observed, it would have been averted. The only durable solution lies in reestablishing the respect for those very principles. As speakers before me, I urge Russia to contribute to stabilize the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles.

Mr Chairman,

The SMM does a remarkable job in the most difficult of circumstances to help deescalate the conflict and promote full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The daily reporting is of great value. The Foreign Minister met with SMM staff in both Kyiv and Kharkiv and praised their efforts. He discussed issues related to safety and security for the monitors and he emphasized that SMM must be given unhindered access to all parts of the conflict area. The Minister underlined continued support for the SMM, including by nominating additional qualified candidates to the mission.

Thank you.