



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**OSCE High Level Meeting
Statement by Ambassador Robert Kvile (full version)**

as delivered in
Helsinki, 10 July 2015

Thank you, Mr Secretary General.

Among the many things we need to do in this organisation is to develop our ability to engage in an interactive dialogue. First on your question, Secretary General, about the lessons learned from the crisis in and around Ukraine:

For me the single most important lesson is that disrespect for basic OSCE principles brings insecurity and instability to Europe. I agree with those who argue that the crisis we are faced with is not a crisis in and around Ukraine, but rather a crisis stemming from violations of basic principles and of international law by the Russian Federation.

I do agree with the delegation that earlier today underscored that it is unfortunate that Russia is not present. The decision to be absent from Helsinki this week was, however, taken by the Russians themselves, not by anybody else. Back to the lessons learned: Ukraine has illustrated that the OSCE is indispensable. No other organisation could have replaced the OSCE.

Our engagement in Ukraine has also illustrated that our conflict resolution capability needs to be developed. And that our financial mechanisms are not sustainable. Therefore I would like to repeat a point I have made many times before: We need to invest in the OSCE, in its institutions and in its field missions.

Our US colleague pointed out earlier today that the independent institutions are our early warning system. We must ensure they have the necessary resources they need to fulfil that role, he said. I do agree.

We cannot build a relevant organisation through year after year of zero nominal budget growth. The budget policy of the last decade is not sustainable. We have noted the recommendations put forward by the Panel of Eminent Persons on how we can develop the conflict prevention and conflict resolution capability of the OSCE. These recommendations should be discussed further.

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Then, Secretary General, to your point on the way forward on the ground in Ukraine. I have two perspectives on this. Firstly – the OSCE should continue to do what it is already doing: monitor the Minsk agreements and package and facilitate contact through the Trilateral Contact Group.

As most OSCE pS we would have liked to see an even greater role for the SMM. We regret in particular that we have not been able to agree on a greater OSCE role in effective border control between Russia and Ukraine. Preventing the inflow of fighters and military hardware into Ukraine would substantially contribute to de-escalation.

Beyond the military conflict – and secondly – we must assist Ukraine in preparing and implementing necessary political reforms. Our institutions – the HCNM, ODIHR and RFOM – can all play a positive role in assisting Ukraine in this regard. And again: They can play a supportive role in and for Ukraine only if we ensure they have the resources needed.

Our UK colleague made an important point in his statement: The OSCE can only support and facilitate. Kyiv must itself push the reform programmes forward.

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Finally, Secretary General, on your question concerning “a space for broader positive engagement” between participating States and on possible “key priorities in addressing the current crisis of European security?”

Our US colleague said in his statement that we should be patient, and confident that we in the end will succeed. I think he is right.

The history of this organization tells us that dialogue – and patience – can produce important results even when there are fundamental disagreements among us. In times of crisis we need more, not less dialogue. When we disagree on the bigger picture, let us make an effort to move forward and build trust in selected areas. Such areas include conventional arms control (CAC) and CSBMs. The importance of CAC and CSBMs was pointed out by our German colleague in his introductory remarks and repeated by Poland and by others.

All delegations around this table agree. Our problem is that we need to convince the leaders in the Kremlin that more of it – more transparency and openness – produce more security and more stability.

Other areas where prospects for progress should be good are international terrorism, radicalisation, trafficking in drugs and people and cyber security – to mention a few. I would like to underline that in order for us to succeed in our dialogue efforts, we must all respect the principles this organization is built upon, most notably respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries.

And one more thing: Dialogue must be carried out in good faith. Dialogue is not effective – does not produce results – when someone tries to convince me with arguments I know are false or with information I know is untrue.

Finally a point on the so-called economic connectivity, mentioned by many today. I share the view that stronger economic links – stronger economic interdependence – is good for security and stability.

We should however always ask what the OSCE can do that is not already done – and perhaps done better – by others. The question was asked by a colleague earlier today: Should we not strive towards a more focussed agenda? Too many issues are now under discussion in the OSCE, he suggested.

Thank you, Mr Secretary General.