



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

NORWEGIAN STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESENTATION BY THE OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE 2014 UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council 10th October, 2013

Madam Chair,

I join my colleagues in thanking Secretary General Zannier for his thorough introduction of the proposed 2014 budget.

Madam Chair,

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. Next year's budget proposal has a total balance of 151 million euros. Adjusted for inflation more than one third of the budget we had ten years ago has been taken away. In other words, during the past ten years we have substantially reduced the capacity of our organization. We agree with the Secretary General that a continued zero nominal growth is not sustainable.

Madam Chair,

We are fully aware of the economic constraints facing many participating states. However, it is important that the Secretariat, the institutions and field missions are able to fulfill their mandates. An active and effective OSCE is essential for our common security.

We consider it particularly important to ensure that the institutions have the necessary human and financial resources. The recent Human Dimension Implementation Meeting showed yet again that the expertise and assistance of the institutions are widely sought after and appreciated. We are particularly concerned that ODIHR was not able to meet all requests for election observations last year. Therefore we consider the proposed increase in ODIHR's budget to be of paramount importance.

We fully support the inclusion of the Border Management Staff College into the unified budget.

Madam Chair,

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary General to cut costs and improve efficiency. This enables the OSCE to spend more of its resources on activities and projects. At the same time we must make sure that the OSCE is able to attract competent and dedicated staff. The salaries and remunerations of the OSCE must reflect this.

Madam Chair,

The budget proposes to continue the gradual transfer of resources from the Western Balkans to Central Asia. This is in line with our strategic priorities and my delegation can support this. However, we underline the importance of not rushing this process. Implementation should rather be marked by a gradual, measured and considered approach. Participants at the informal Ambassadorial visit to the Western Balkans last month could see for themselves that robust OSCE presence remains important. We also noted that our field missions there enjoy trust and support from authorities as well as from ordinary people.

An OSCE presence in Ulan Bataar has been requested by the Mongolian government. We should make room for this in the budget.

Madam Chair,

The aim of our discussions must be to give the Secretariat, the institutions and field missions a budget that enables them to fulfill their mandates and meet our expectations.

Finally, we wish the incoming chairman of the ACMF, Mr Alexander Hoffet, and his team every success in steering our efforts towards the timely adoption of the 2014 budget. I can assure him of our support.

Thank you, Madam Chair