



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY

**As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the 812th Plenary Meeting (Special) of the Forum for Security Co-operation,
Vienna, 23 February 2016**

Madam Chair,

In join the previous speaker in welcoming Georgia's Minister of Defence, Ms Tinatin Khidasheli, to the FSC. Thank you, Madam Chair, for convening this Special FSC, and thank you, Madam Minister, for addressing us. Your presentation today goes right to the core of issues that are and must remain high on our agenda.

For my country the meeting today is also a welcome occasion to express our support to you, Madam Minister, to your reform efforts and to your struggle to restore the territorial integrity of your country.

And this, Madam Chair, is my first point: We confirm our full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. We call on Russia to fulfil its obligations under the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement and its Implementing Measures of 8 September 2008.

We reiterate our denouncement of Russia's so-called "treaties" with the de facto authorities of the breakaway Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which foresee the integration of these regions into Russian civilian and military governance structures. These "treaties" represent clear violations of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and have no legal standing.

Madam Chair,

We remain concerned about the human rights situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This adds to the arguments for re-establishing a robust and cross-dimensional OSCE presence in Georgia, with a mandate covering the entirety of the country.

Madam Chair,

When visiting Georgia last September, Norway's Foreign Minister Børge Brende stated that – and I quote – «the conflict in Georgia must not be forgotten. We cannot in the 21st century

accept attempts to enforce so-called “spheres of influence”. This is as unacceptable in Georgia as it is in Ukraine» – end of quote.

Madam Chair,

Last month bilateral consultations between Norway and Georgia on defence related matters took place in Oslo. We underlined our continued support to the so-called *Substantial NATO-Georgia Package* (SNGP), agreed at the NATO summit in Wales in 2014. An important contribution from our side is coordination of the Nordic-Baltic support to the *Joint Training and Evaluation Centre* (JTEC) in the framework of the *Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme* (NBAP).

We are confident that our cooperation will help modernize Georgia’s armed forces and promote interoperability with NATO.

Let me add that Norway and Georgia continue cooperation on matters related to our Home Guards and to Human Resource development in Georgia’s Ministry of Defence. In the civilian sector we continue running joint projects on education, judicial reform, social services and on developing the hydroelectric potential of Georgia.

Madam Chair,

Let me conclude by stating that Norway supports the Geneva International Discussions and hopes to see more progress in resolving the protracted conflict in Georgia in 2016. We again call on Russia to revoke its recognition of the Georgian breakaway regions, to withdraw its military forces from Georgia, and to engage constructively in resolving the conflict.

Thank you, Madam Chair.