



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON EUROPEAN SECURITY

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the joint meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 9 March 2016

Madam Chair,

I join others in thanking Political Director Michaelis and Professor Voorhoeve for their presentations. I do agree that Europe is facing formidable security challenges. I also agree that the OSCE can play an important role in meeting these challenges.

Madam Chair,

The situation in Europe was a central theme in Foreign Minister Børge Brende's annual foreign policy review to the Norwegian Parliament last week. There is a feeling of increased vulnerability, he said, a sense that the order we have built in Europe and globally during the past decades is more fragile than we thought. He argued that migration, unrest and extremism in countries south of Europe, in particular the civil war in Syria, and a more assertive and unpredictable Russia are the most pressing challenges.

On the migration crisis, the Foreign Minister underscored that we must analyse the root causes behind it. War and conflict on Europe's southern fringes force people to leave their homes. In other countries poverty motivates many to seek a better life in Europe.

The Foreign Minister underlined that implementation of the cease fire agreement in Syria is of paramount importance. He also said that we must continue to contribute to economic growth, education and job creation, not only in the Middle East and Northern Africa, both also in the rest of Africa, as well as in Asia.

Madam Chair,

While attempting to address the root causes, we must support the countries that bear the biggest part of the burden, including Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey. We will continue to increase our

efforts, in particular in the humanitarian field. We are also increasingly using the Norway and EEA grants to assist Greece in dealing with the crisis.

Madam Chair,

It is important that we identify where and how the OSCE can add value to our efforts to deal with the migration crisis. The Security Day in Rome last week devoted to this issue was therefore timely. We support the idea of organising a special PC on migration before the summer recess.

Madam Chair,

In his foreign policy review Foreign Minister Brende also highlighted the threat posed by terrorist networks, in particular Isil. Isil not only adds to the pain and suffering of the people of Syria, Iraq and other countries. European countries have also been brutally affected by their distorted ideology.

Isil and other organisations must be fought comprehensively, including militarily. The OSCE can play an important and practical role, as illustrated by recent ministerial decisions on joint action to fight terrorism.

Madam Chair,

The third of the major challenges facing Europe today, said Foreign Minister Brende, is a Russia that continues to move away from democracy and liberal values. We are faced with a more assertive and unpredictable Russia – both in Ukraine and in Syria. The Minister reiterated our support for Ukraine as well as our condemnation of Russia's violations of international law.

At the same time, the Minister emphasised that Norway wants good neighbourly relations with the Russian Federation and that we will continue our practical cooperation and constructive dialogue with Russia, where possible.

Madam Chair,

In his review Foreign Minister Brende stressed that freedom, democracy, human rights, gender equality and sustainable development form the basis for Norway's foreign policy. Security and human rights do not contradict each other. They are mutually reinforcing.

Madam Chair,

Our discussions in the PC and in the FSC illustrate, every week, that there is little trust among us, or rather between us and the Russian Federation. This lack of trust and confidence is in itself a serious challenge to the security of Europe. We therefore want to contribute to fulfilling the motto of the German OSCE Chairmanship, namely to renew dialogue, rebuild trust and restore

security. The basis for this must be the OSCE principles as laid down in the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents.

Finally, and related to the point on dialogue, trust and security, a word on arms control and CSBMs: We are convinced that we should aim at developing a renewed regime for conventional arms control in Europe, building on the CFE treaty. Our primary goal for 2016 should however be to reissue the Vienna document, with changes that would make it more in line with present-day needs.

We often hear that a substantial revision of the Vienna document can only take place against the background of renewed trust and confidence among us. We disagree with this approach. We need to remind ourselves of the concept itself, namely security and confidence building measures. The purpose of the Vienna document is not to reflect the level of trust among us, but to enhance it.

Thank you.