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PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the 814th Plenary Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation,
Vienna, 16 March 2016

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Let me at the outset join speakers before me that have condemned the terror attack in Ankara last Sunday and expressed their condolences to our Turkish colleagues and to the people of Turkey.

Madam Chair,

Thank you for recapitulating the highlights of your chairmanship. Allow me to respond in a few points, also marking that Norway now will be leaving the FSC Troika.

Madam Chair,

The Security dialogues are at the heart of the FSC work. They provide opportunities to discuss issues of common interest and of relevance to European security.

Your program, Madam Chair, met our expectations. In addition to topics belonging to the core business of the FSC, you gave us an excellent opportunity to familiarize ourselves with sub-regional cooperation among the Benelux countries and Germany. During our chairmanship of the FSC last autumn we organized a similar introduction to defence related cooperation among the Nordic countries. This kind of cooperation should inspire other regions in the OSCE area to develop similar arrangements.

Madam Chair,

We cannot talk about your chairmanship without mentioning the High Level Military Doctrine Seminar. It gave us a welcome opportunity to follow up on Germany's ambition of renewing the

dialogue. Many delegations were headed by high ranking officers, some – as Norway – even at Chief of Defence level.

Norway's Chief of Defence told me that his two days in Hofburg were well spent time. He would however, he said, wished to have seen more of his chief of defence colleagues in the Neuer Saal during the seminar.

Madam Chair,

The debate on European security in the recent joint FSC-PC was among the most inspiring we have had during my time at the OSCE. Thank you and thank you to our German colleagues for having brought brilliant people to introduce our debate.

I should add that we appreciated that you organized a special FSC with the Defence Minister of Georgia.

Madam Chair,

Discussing the crisis in and around Ukraine has become a prominent part of the work of the FSC. It is a pity that this extremely important debate has developed into a practical headache for the FSC chairmanship, including for me when I chaired the Forum last autumn.

I believe that our discussions on the crisis in and around Ukraine would be more useful if all participants could concentrate their statements on possible ways forward in resolving the crisis and – in addition – not spend time on issues that fall outside the purview of the FSC.

Madam Chair,

You have chaired the FSC in an excellent way – with the same degree of excellency as the chairmanship preceding yours, if I may say so.

We have admired you for the way you have coped with demanding parallel tasks, for example that your turn to chair the FSC coincided with your presidency of the European Union.

Madam Chair,

You will today leave the FSC chairmanship and you have already handed over the FSC insignia to our Polish colleagues. We look forward to working with them, and to support them during their tenure. Our Polish colleagues have shared with us in the Troika their ideas for Security Dialogue topics, and I am confident that we can look forward to interesting and relevant discussions.

We can today welcome our Portuguese colleague to the Troika. Portugal will – as we did in 2015 – chair the FSC in the autumn. I hope that the atmosphere this time will be more conducive to making decisions.

Madam Chair,

Before I conclude allow me to reiterate a point on arms control and CSBMs I made in this room last Wednesday: 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. The purpose of the Vienna document is not to reflect the level of trust among us, but to enhance it.

We will support Poland and Portugal – as well as the FSC coordinator for the Vienna Document – in their endeavours to reach consensus on updating this, for European security, crucial document.

Madam Chair,

We will now leave the Troika. Being in the troika, and chairing the FSC, has been a very positive experience, I am glad I had the opportunity – I am glad I had the pleasure. To my colleagues in the Troika during the last year: Thank you for excellent cooperation. Thank you to Serbia and Germany for your support. Thank you as well to the FSC coordinators and chefs de file, to the FSC Support Section and to the Conference Services.

Thank you.