



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 9 June 2016

Mr Chairman,

I join speakers before me in welcoming Secretary General Jagland back to the Permanent Council. It is of course a particular pleasure for me to speak to a previous boss of mine. Your presentation, Secretary General, clearly illustrates how strongly the goals of the Council of Europe and the OSCE coincide.

Mr Chairman,

We see the Council of Europe's work to promote respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law as fundamental for stable, inclusive and secure societies. Lack of enjoyment of human rights, discrimination and exclusion will lead to instability. This is why we are greatly concerned when freedom of expression or assembly are restricted, when human rights defenders are prosecuted or when freedom of the media and of the internet are suppressed. Human rights are under pressure in many participating States. This is a problem for the people of those countries, and for our whole region.

Promoting freedom of the media and the safety of journalists is important for both our organisations. We commend the platform for the safety of journalists that was recently established in the Council of Europe. We also look forward to a similar platform which we understand is underway for human rights defenders.

Mr Chairman,

Implementation of international obligations and OSCE commitments requires political will, but also sometimes concrete assistance. We highly value the efforts of the Council of Europe, including its field offices, in providing expert advice to its member states. We are pleased to contribute to these efforts. For

Norway, the Council of Europe is an important partner in implementing our human rights objectives, both nationally and internationally.

Mr Chairman,

The Council of Europe and the OSCE share a common vision in promoting tolerance, non-discrimination and social inclusion. This must include confronting old prejudices, and not establishing laws or rules that reinforce them. We also have common goals in countering violent extremism and radicalisation that can lead to terrorism.

The two organisations must continue to keep each other informed of their activities in all areas to ensure maximum results. We encourage further cooperation, including between field offices, when all parties find this useful.

Mr Chairman,

Norway continues to encourage more transparency and NGO involvement in the work of the Council of Europe. We welcome current plans to strengthen interaction with civil society. This will allow the Council to profit from constructive input from organisations with concrete knowledge and experience. It will also be a way of making the Council's work known to those concerned. Also the OSCE should expand the involvement of civil society, to mutual advantage.

Mr Chairman,

A broad approach is necessary to tackle the migration challenges, addressing both countries of origin and transit, as well as finding effective measures in Europe. Many of the areas of responsibility of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE are important elements in tackling different aspects of migration. This includes combating trafficking in human beings and promoting tolerance and integration.

Mr Chairman,

In my response to the Foreign Minister of Estonia, who addressed the Council as Chair of the Committee of Ministers two weeks ago, I said that we look forward to the day when *all* European OSCE participating States are members of the Council of Europe.

Let me conclude by reiterating this point.

Thank you, Mr Chairman