



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESENTATION OF
THE UNIFIED BUDGET PROPOSAL 2019

Delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 3 October 2018

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I thank the Secretary General for his presentation.

This year, the Unified Budget Proposal was distributed less than one working week before discussions in the Permanent Council. The Italian Chairmanship has admirably worked to distribute reports and documents in good time, but in this case there has not been sufficient time to review the Proposal. I therefore regret that the points I will be making, have to be of a rather general nature.

I should like to comment on some parts of the Secretary General's recommendation to the Permanent Council. We support the direction of efforts to areas where the OSCE has a comparative advantage. We welcome the emphasis on oversight and on strengthening infrastructure. And we appreciate that the Secretary General in his presentation highlighted that ODIHR must have an increase to address the demand of a busier electoral calendar.

The participating States of the OSCE have both common and particular goals and interests. We know that the 2019 budget eventually adopted by this Council, will be a compromise. We recognize and accept this.

However, we deeply regret that some participating States use the budget negotiations to slow or halt the implementation of already agreed commitments. Such practice is irresponsible and against the interests and commitments of the OSCE and the participating States.

The Executive Structures do not act, and should not act, on behalf of themselves. They act only as we jointly have instructed them. Most of the time, due to inadequate

funding, they are not even in a position to fulfill these instructions. The priorities in the Unified Budget must be directed to the implementation of our commitments, particularly to the work of the autonomous institutions and the field operations.

Let me state for the record: Norway has no policy of zero-nominal growth for the OSCE. As part of a joint effort, Norway is willing to contribute so that the OSCE can do more. At the same time, we call for efficient and effective management and operation. We regret the increasing dependence on secondments and voluntary contributions.

It rests on us, the participating states, to ensure that the OSCE has the required resources to perform the functions that we want and expect it to. To that end, we stand ready to support the incoming Slovak ACMF Chair in any way that we can.

Thank you.