



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Delivered by Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Henning Hj. Johansen to the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 25 July 2019

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

As nearly all participating States, and in accordance with historical and current practice, we find that the modalities for OSCE events are to be interpreted to allow the broadest possible participation of civil society. Broad participation of civil society at OSCE events is a specific strength and value of OSCE events. We remain unconvinced that current practice does not adequately implement the OSCE acquis.

Turkey has made arguments for why respect for the OSCE acquis requires revised implementation of paragraph 16, chapter 4, of the 1992 Helsinki document, that excludes organisations that resort to the use of violence or publicly condone terrorism from the modalities for non-governmental participation at OSCE events. Respect for the acquis is important.

We also take seriously the security concerns raised by Turkey on these issues. The safety of participants at OSCE events is an important issue. That is why organisations that resort to violence or publicly condone terrorism are excepted from the modalities for attendance. Registration for events can be made clearer and more efficient. Participants should themselves clearly certify that they do not resort to violence or condone terrorism.

We recognise that a safety concern may lead to a state choosing not to participate in the HDIM, as Turkey did in 2017 and 2018. We regret that Turkey could not participate, and remain committed to finding a way for Turkey to return that is in line with the OSCE acquis. However, we are disappointed that Turkey has found itself unable to allow the OSCE to continue the mandated preparations for the HDIM, which is putting the whole meeting at risk. Not allowing the preparations to continue is to disregard part

of the OSCE acquis. And not to hold the HDIM would in itself be a breach of the acquis and in direct disregard to a tasking given us by our heads of state at an OSCE Summit.

It appears to us that we disagree not so much about the understanding of the acquis, but about the potential specific instances of application of paragraph 16 to one, or other, prospective participant to an OSCE event. Application of paragraph 16 is, or can at least be perceived as, some kind of procedure for surrogate designation of a violent or terrorist organisation.

Since such application would be made in an organisation in which we participate, and that decides by consensus, we would obviously need to be part of the deliberations on application in every instance. We suspect that other states would have similar views and not let others make such surrogate designation on their behalf. Clearly then, deliberations must be open to all participating States.

In line with the role of the chairmanship, it should fall to the chair to facilitate consultation on such current business of the OSCE. The consensus reached, or spectrum of opinions expressed, would form a basis for the chairmanship to provide its recommendation to the Permanent Council for decision. If consensus was reached, a decision can be made. If not, the matter may be brought up for its attention. Respect for the acquis of the OSCE requires no less.

Thank you