



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY, MR. RANKO KRIVOKAPIĆ**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 31 October 2013

I join previous speakers in welcoming the President of the Parliamentary Assembly to the Permanent Council. I was pleased to note that he in his address highlighted several topics which also are high up on the agenda of the Norwegian government.

Mr Chairman,

First of all, I would like to commend the Parliamentary Assembly for its valuable contribution to the strengthening of peace, stability, respect for human rights and rule of law in the OSCE region.

The Parliamentary Assembly engages in important debates on topics across all three dimensions. In particular, we value its engagement in the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Allow me also to compliment their efforts to enhance the role of women in politics. Moreover, we highly value the Parliamentary Assembly's constructive contributions to the work of HDIM and other OSCE meetings and conferences.

Mr Chairman,

An aspect of the Parliamentary Assembly's work that is particularly appreciated by Norway is its contribution to election observation. We are pleased to see that the cooperation between the Parliamentary Assembly and ODIHR once again is running smoothly. Each institution adds its particular expertise to the election monitoring process, and for this reason it is important that they work hand in hand.

Norway regrets that different election observation missions at times have arrived at opposing conclusions concerning the same election. This issue has led some to argue that we have to come up with a universally agreed standard for election observation. However, the only way to reach this objective is for all other actors involved with election monitoring to adopt the standards of ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

In our opinion, monitoring missions that only serve to praise the fairness and freedom of an election are of limited value. Rather, the more critical and detailed the analysis is, the more valuable and useful it will be. By this scale, no election observations should be valued more highly than those of ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Thank you Mr Chairman.