



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT MARKING TEN YEARS SINCE  
THE TERROR ATTACK IN NORWAY**

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 22 July 2021

Mr. Chair,

Today, ten years ago, a right-wing extremist conducted a terrorist attack in Norway. He killed a total of 77 people that day.

The terrorist set off a car bomb adjacent to the main government building in Oslo, killing eight and injuring over 200. He then went to the island of Utøya, where more than five hundred young people were attending the summer camp of the Norwegian Labour Party's youth organisation. There he shot and killed another 69 people, one by one, most of them very young, and 32 of them only children. At least another 110 were injured.

I was in Oslo that day. I heard the sound of the bomb exploding in our little peaceful capital. I cannot even begin to describe the shock when the horrors of the attacks at Utøya dawned upon us later the same afternoon. I was lucky not to be in my office in the government building that day, nor did I have a son or daughter participating in the summer camp. Still, the memories of that day are stuck with me for the rest of my life.

The hateful so-called "ideology" of the terrorist is marginal, but still alive. We owe it to the victims of 22 July, to the survivors and to everyone else, to stand up against it. The OSCE has a role to play in combatting such violent extremism and radicalisation that leads to terrorism.

The terrorist wanted to stop political engagement. He wanted to scare people to silence.

This must never be allowed to happen. Engaged people, young and old, women and men, of all political parties, must be allowed to gather, to organise, and to discuss politics without fear of attacks or oppression. Diverging political views must be met by arguments – not by hatred or violence.

What happened on 22 July 2011 is being commemorated all over Norway today. The scars of the attacks will never quite heal. It was an attack on innocent, engaged youth and government officials. It was an attack directed against both our government and against one specific political party, the social democrats. It was an attack on our democracy.

Today we honour the memory of those who lost their lives. At the same time, we remind each other of the need to continue the battle against all forms of hate speech, racism, and extremism.

Thank you.