



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
HEAD OF THE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN DUSHANBE

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 29 April 2020

Madame Chair,

I join others in welcoming Ambassador Chiveri back to the Permanent Council and thank him for his report and the information provided.

One of OSCE's main assets, is our organisation's presence on the ground in several participating states. Through our field missions our organisation is able to contribute substantially to capacity building according to host countries' priorities, and in line with our common commitments. In the current pandemic situation, this work has been more difficult. We would therefore like to thank the team at the Programme Office for their continued efforts, and are happy to note that work in the office in Dushanbe is slowly returning to normal.

We appreciate the work done to increase national border management capacity. We recognise the continued challenges related to Tajikistan's long southern border, of which substantial parts are not guarded on the Afghan side. This is not less important in light of the plans for withdrawal of the international presence in Afghanistan. The work of the Programme Office, as well as the particular work done through the OSCE's flagship, the Border Management Staff College (BMSC), increases our common security in the OSCE region. This benefits us all.

Engagement with the people of the host country is important. We appreciate that the Programme Office works with representatives of civil society as well as officials, and would like to see more of this. As a consistent contributor of extra budgetary funding

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we are happy to note that there is more reporting on results and not only activities. However, we do think there is still room for improvement on the matter.

Over the last year, when the international presence in the office has been reduced, we have again seen the importance of the Women Resource Centres. Having such a widespread presence in the country allows the OSCE to reach a larger proportion of those vulnerable to, for instance, domestic violence. Norway aims to continue our strong support to the centres.

The Programme Office continues to emphasise gender mainstreaming in its work. We especially appreciate how this approach is included in the work in the first dimension and also in the BMSC. This underlines how gender mainstreaming is a cross-cutting priority. Thus it contributes to achieving better results than we would have if we were to confine gender issues to issues dealt with under the third dimension.

Thank you