



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY ON THE DECISION ON THE 2009 UNIFIED
BUDGET**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
2 April 2009

Madam Chairperson,

Norway is pleased that the 2009 Unified Budget has finally been approved. We express our sincere appreciation and thanks to the Greek Chairmanship, and in particular to the Chairperson of the ACMF Despina Ipioti, to the Secretariat and the Fund Managers, and to all the others who have put in a lot of hard work to bring the budget discussions to a long overdue completion.

This being said, Norway regrets that once more, the participating States were not able to meet the budget deadline of 20 December. Looking back on the process, we know little or nothing now that we did not know at the end of December, so the quality of our decision has not gained much by dragging on the discussions until now. Unfortunately, approval of the Unified Budget on overtime seems to have become a bad habit in this Organization, and we are worried about the negative impacts this may have on its image and on the orderly implementation of the work programmes.

To our further regret, the approved Unified Budget also reflects a substantial real decline in the budget level of the Organization in 2009. At the outset of the budget discussions, Norway was ready to accept the overall budget figures as presented by the Secretary General in the Unified Budget Proposal. We once more reiterate our firm belief that the budget level should be based on actual needs. We must secure the resources that are necessary to follow up on the political decisions that have been made by this Organization. We reiterate our concerns regarding the possible negative effects of the approved Unified Budget on the future activities of the Organization.

Norway strongly supports a future OSCE presence in Georgia. We regret that despite intensive efforts by the Greek Chairmanship, consensus could not yet be reached with regard to the continuation of the work of the OSCE Mission to Georgia. A decision to this effect should now be made without any further delay, and an additional budget proposal be submitted to the participating States.

The narrative text of the 2009 Unified Budget decision provides a number of taskings in the financial and management area to be further addressed by the ACMF. Norway looks forward to the continued good cooperation in the ACMF under the Greek Chairmanship in order to find appropriate solutions to these important issues.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson