



**NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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ENGLISH only

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY FOR THE SIDE EVENT CONCERNING LHBTI
OF THE OSCE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE
ON TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

By Ambassador Robert Kvile, Tirana
22 May 2013¹

**Side event on Challenges and perspectives regarding discrimination against LGBTI persons:
awareness-raising, prevention and protection**

Mr. Moderator,

First of all let me thank the speakers as well as those who have organized this side event.

The situation for LGBTI persons is perhaps the most important – and difficult – tolerance and non-discrimination issue today, for the OSCE as well as beyond our organization.

I will limit myself to three points:

First, we must keep on repeating the basic point, namely that the human rights are inherent by birth and apply to all, regardless of national or ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, colour, religion or belief, language or any other status.

Second, we must acknowledge that the LGBTI issue is sensitive to many. But also racial and gender equality were controversial struggles. It will take time to fight the prejudices against LGBTI people. And therefore it is very unfortunate that some OSCE participation States have adopted – or plan to adopt – legislation that may reinforce already negative sentiments towards them.

¹ Please note that this statement was not delivered due to time constraints

Third, on the way ahead: We must continue to fight for the rights of LGBTI persons – in our societies, in the OSCE as well as in other international organizations.

The international conference in Oslo in April this year, devoted to human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, concluded that the UN Human Rights Council has a responsibility to address human rights violations against all persons, including against LGBTI.

The conference therefore recommended that questions concerning the situations for LGBTI persons must be integrated more systematically into the work of the UN. Specific measures were put forward.

A prominent role for the UN in the fight for the rights of LGBTI persons does not diminish the role of the OSCE – on the contrary. Looking towards the OSCE Ministerial in Kiev in December, our objective should be to adopt a decision on tolerance and non-discrimination that reconfirms our rejection of discrimination on any ground.

Thank you.