



PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE HEAD OF THE SPILLOVER MONITOR  
MISSION TO SKOPJE, AMBASSADOR GIORGIO RADICATI

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the Permanent Council,  
Vienna, April 17 2008

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Like others we would like to welcome ambassador Radicati back to the Permanent Council and thank him for his comprehensive report.

Norway agrees with ambassador Radicati that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has come a long way since the 2001 conflict. In a remarkably short time, progress has been achieved in laying the foundation for a stable multiethnic democratic society. This positive development is not disregarded internationally - on the contrary. By granting the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia candidate status for EU membership and considering it a serious candidate for NATO membership, the international community gives the country strong and important incentives for carrying out political and economic reforms.

The prospect for joining the Euro-Atlantic structures is a driving force behind the reform policy and a very important integrating factor in the process of further consolidating the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a multiethnic society built on democracy and the rule of law. For regional stability, it is of paramount importance.

Mr. Chairman,

There is broad agreement that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia meets the criteria for NATO membership. Norway regrets that a consensus on an invitation could not be reached at the summit in Bucharest, but hopes for a speedy agreement on the name issue, in order for the country to be able to join the Alliance as soon as possible. We understand the disappointment, and have with all the more satisfaction taken note of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's commitment to continue the reform policy without delay. We

encourage the political parties to reinforce the political dialogue – not least in an election year - in order to defuse political tensions that hamper vital reforms.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway agrees with the Mission's priorities and the necessity to further streamline the Mission's activities, as expressed by Ambassador Radicati. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made remarkable progress in recent years, but is still facing serious challenges to become a fully integrated member of the European family. To assist the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in handling these challenges, Norway has an ongoing Bilateral Project Cooperation Programme with the country. The Norwegian Cooperation Programme is aimed at supporting European integration, and strengthening institutional capacity, the rule of law, political dialogue and inter-ethnic reconciliation.

Norway agrees with Ambassador Radicati that the rule of law should be the overarching priority for the Mission. There are still major tasks to be addressed in strengthening the law enforcement and judicial system. Since Norway is among those countries that have provided considerable financial support to enhancing capacity building in the police sector, we would encourage the Mission to reconsider its advice on the proposed organisational reform of the Police Academy. We still believe there are merits in the reform of 2003, which at that time was introduced in cooperation with the OSCE and the European Agency for Reconstruction.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we would like to wish Ambassador Radicati, as well as his competent and dedicated staff members, every success in their work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.