



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**VISIT OF OSCE AMBASSADORS TO ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN,
SEPTEMBER 7 – 11, 2012**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 20, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to give the Council a brief account of a visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan, undertaken by 19 OSCE Ambassadors from the 7 to the 11 of September 2012. I speak in my capacity as coordinator of the visit.

In Yerevan, Armenia the program included meetings with the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly and leaders of political factions of the National Assembly. The group also met with representatives of civil society and of organizations representing Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan. At the Police Educational Complex we were introduced to the OSCE Police Educational Reform Project. The group furthermore participated during a ceremony to mark the 20th anniversary of Armenia's participation in the OSCE.

In Azerbaijan the group of Ambassadors was first taken to the town of Gabala to meet with the President. The subsequent program in Baku included meetings with the Foreign Minister, Chairman of the National Assembly, leaders of political parties represented in the National Assembly as well as with representatives of parties not represented in the National Assembly. The group also met with representatives of the "Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region of the Republic of Azerbaijan", as well as with representatives of civil society. The group received briefings on the State Oil Fund, the State Oil Company and on transnational threats.

The visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan gave the participants firsthand information about the challenges facing the two countries and their work to meet these challenges. In both countries the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was high on the agenda of our interlocutors.

On behalf of the group of Ambassadors I would like to thank our host country colleagues here in Vienna, Ambassador Arman Kirakossian of Armenia and Ambassador Galib Israfilov of Azerbaijan. Without their hard work and dedication the visit would not have been possible. I also thank Deputy Director Pascal Heyman and his able staff in the Policy Support Service of the CPC for their support before and during the trip. Last but not least I would like to express our gratitude to the heads of the OSCE offices in Yerevan and Baku, Ambassadors Andrey Sorokin and Koray Targay and their staff, for indispensable advice and for making the necessary arrangements for our visit.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman