



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY ON THE DECISION ON THE 2008 UNIFIED
BUDGET**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
7 March 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Norway is pleased that the Unified Budget 2008 has finally been approved. We express our most sincere appreciation and thanks to the Finnish Chairmanship – in particular the able Chairperson of the ACMF, Katja Pehrman -, to the Secretariat who provided information and answered questions to our full satisfaction, and to all the others who have put in a lot of patience and constructive effort to bring the 2008 budget discussions to a long overdue completion.

This being said, and as already stated in my intervention on 21 December, Norway regrets that the participating States were not able to meet the budget deadline of 20 December. At the outset of the budget discussions, Norway was ready to accept the Unified Budget Proposal as presented by the Secretary General. We believe that it all in all reflected the priorities and tasks set by the decision making bodies of this organization.

Much to our regret, the approved Unified Budget reflects a substantial real decline in the budget level of the Organization in 2008. In our opinion, 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 Secretariat and the Institutions, as well as some important Field Operations.

Mr. Chairman, the narrative text of the decision on the 2008 Unified Budget reveals that a number of important financial and management related tasks will have to be further addressed in the coming months. Norway looks forward to continued good cooperation in the ACMF and other fora in order to find appropriate solutions to these important issues.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me also emphasize that Norway is deeply concerned about the continued lack of consensus regarding the scales of contributions for 2008-2010. We urge all participating States to accept the proposal of the Chairmanship for a three years' rollover of the 2005-2007 scales without any further delay.