



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE OSCE PROJECT CO-
ORDINATOR IN UZBEKISTAN

Delivered by Counsellor Marit Halsvik Lillealtern at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 9 March 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to welcome Mr. Ihm to the Permanent Council and thank him for the comprehensive report on activities carried out in the reporting period.

We are conscious of the negative effects monthly allotments and the high inflation rate have had on the Project-coordinator's ability to implement his mandate efficiently and deliver project activities in a timely. We use this opportunity to call on delegations to do their utmost and be willing to compromise to join consensus on a Unified Budget for 2023.

We also acknowledge that the context in which the Project Co-ordinator implements projects continues to change quickly due to major national reforms undertaken by the host country over the past years.

We are pleased to see a continued good co-operation between the Project Co-ordinator and the Uzbek authorities and the growing interest from the Uzbek authorities to develop this cooperation across all three OSCE dimensions.

We appreciate the well-established and good co-ordination with international partners and the strengthened co-operation with OSCE institutions and executive structures. We are also pleased to note that the Project Co-ordinator continues to facilitate civil society participation in events, thus enabling contributions to the country's development from voices outside the government.

On the Project Co-ordinator's project activities in Uzbekistan, I would like to point out three areas of work.

First, we are pleased that preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT) is a priority area in the first dimension. We

commend the Project-coordinator's contribution to consolidate the efforts of the international community in the fight against terrorism and emphasize the importance of international co-operation in countering transnational threats and challenges to international peace and security.

Second, we commend the work on enhancing the capacities of national stakeholders on good governance in anti-money laundering, asset recovery, and private property protection, also through international co-operation. Furthermore, efforts to enhance the use of open data for anti-corruption and to strengthen the capacities of the Anti-Corruption Agency of Uzbekistan are important to enable adequate environments for businesses and private initiatives to thrive.

Third, we salute the work done in the field of the judiciary and especially the continued efforts to promote the role of women in the judiciary. Important activities are carried out to educate defense lawyers on international human rights standards, and to train prosecutors to implement human rights commitments and the rule of law.

Mr. Chair,

By way of concluding we want to express our appreciation for the Project Co-ordinator's emphasis on gender equality in his report. We recognize the positive joint efforts with Uzbek authorities on media, human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. These are important OSCE commitment areas that are key to the development of good security sector governance and rule of law.

Thank you.