



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY
THE HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION IN KOSOVO**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 12 February 2015

Mr Chairman,

I would like to commend Ambassador Schlumberger and the OSCE Mission to Kosovo for the way they fulfil their mandate. The OSCE clearly continues to have an important role to play. The Mission is highly regarded and trusted by all communities throughout Kosovo.

Mr Chairman,

This high level of trust is especially apparent in the four Serbian-majority communities in Northern Kosovo. We support the Mission's efforts here, notably the work of the "Task Force North" and the specialized training for police officers. The OSCE is actively engaged in a variety of activities that contribute to the alignment of these municipalities with the rest of Kosovo.

In recent months, we have noted the inclusion of Local Public Safety Committees from several northern municipalities in local security and confidence-building among and between communities. This is practical, hands-on confidence-building that results in tangible results in villages throughout Kosovo. We should not underestimate the importance of this work in creating the conditions for security, stability and reconciliation at local level.

Mr Chairman,

The OSCE Mission provides crucial support for dialogue between communities and between neighbouring countries. Inter-ethnic dialogue meetings are important confidence-building measures as they provide a forum for discussion of common issues of concern.

The Mission's support for women parliamentarians and the promotion of regional cooperation among parliamentarians is of great importance. Support for the Budva Process should continue. Gender equality and joint initiatives between women from Priština and Belgrade are key issues to empower women in all spheres of Kosovo's society.

Mr Chairman,

Kosovo has recently experienced the most violent political demonstrations since 2007. We fully endorse and support Ambassador Schlumberger's condemnation of the violence and his strong public support for the necessity for political dialogue. The challenges facing Kosovo cannot be resolved through violence in the streets. They must be resolved through constructive debate in Kosovo's elected and democratic institutions.

Mr Chairman,

We must continue to assist Kosovo in developing democratic institutions and a functioning legal system. In our own bilateral support we have concentrated on justice reform, job creation and enterprise development.

The OSCE Mission has been an integral part of these efforts. Now, as Kosovo is passing from the mentorship of the International Community it is vitally important to ensure that the progress achieved is safeguarded and consolidated. This is important for the continued progress of Kosovo on its path toward Euro-Atlantic integration. The OSCE Mission continues to play an important role in monitoring and assisting in this process.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.