



Norwegian statement on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects
of Security

As delivered by Mr. Bjørn Erik Brustad, Norwegian MFA,
at the Forum for Security Cooperation
Vienna, 9 November 2022

Mr. Chairperson, Dear Colleagues

Norway has aligned itself with the statement made by the European Union. Allow me to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

Norway commends the Belgian FSC chair for devoting a security dialog on the Code of Conduct. This is all more important since the annual Code of Conduct meeting planned in June this year could not be held. We all know why.

Today's security dialog focuses on a topic that is all too relevant. Through the Russian Federation's invasion of its sovereign neighbor, the world has once again been reminded of the disproportionate impact war has on us all.

The Russian Federation bears the full responsibility for this miserable state of affairs. Norway thus calls on Russia to respect and implement the OSCE principles and their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. These are adequately stated in the Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects of Security

Mr. Chair,

The topic of today's security dialogue underlines the importance of cooperation across the OSCE's three dimensions. We thank the three speakers for their insightful presentations of three important parts of the code.

On the 14 of September the Belgian FSC chair held a security dialog on "Children and Armed Conflict".

Allow me to recall and emphasize some of the recommendations from that meeting and the connected side-event, relevant for the FSC and the Code of Conduct.

- It is important that participating States educate their armed forces personnel on international humanitarian rules and conventions.

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- Military structures must abstain from occupying civilian protected objects. School buildings should not be occupied by armed personnel or artillery but continue to be used for educational purposes only.
- Parties must avoid placing military targets in proximity to schools and hospitals.
- Effective legislative provisions and proportionate criminal penalties must be issued for people who are guilty of violating children's rights and holding perpetrators accountable under national and international law.
- Parties must protect children from indecent assaults by armed personnel by keeping arrested or detained children separate from adults who are not family.

These recommendations from September, were described generally for all OSCE participating states, still we see them being broken by Russian forces in their war of aggression against Ukraine. Those responsible must be held to account, as also clearly mentioned in the Code of Conduct. We must do everything possible to ensure that children's basic human rights are respected, and that special attention is paid to children's conditions in times of war.

Mr. Chair,

Norway calls on all participating states to do everything possible to ensure that their Armed and Security Forces fulfill their responsibilities according to the Code of Conduct.

The undisputable relevance of the principles stipulated in the Code, including the provisions guiding the relations between States, is even more evident today, more than twenty-seven years after their adoption. Ensuring strict and verifiable implementation of OSCE politico-military commitments, in letter and spirit, by all participating States, remains a top priority for Norway.

Thank you!