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**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESSES BY THE SECRETARY
GENERAL OF THE COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC SPEAKING
STATES, AND BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 19 December 2013

Thank you, Mr Chairman,

I welcome the Secretaries General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries back to the Permanent Council and I thank them for their interesting addresses.

Mr Chairman,

Our own experience with Nordic cooperation has made us appreciate the benefits emanating from close regional cooperation grounded in shared history, shared priorities as well as – for three of the Nordic countries – shared language. The Nordic cooperation has served to strengthen democracy, rule of law and economic and social development in the member states. I understand that our guests today work towards many of the same objectives.

I would also like to mention that my country enjoys close relations with the members of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, both politically as well as economically.

Mr Chairman,

Among the stated purposes of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States are ensuring rule of law, good governance and protection of human rights. These purposes closely reflect those of the OSCE.

So does their aim of economic growth and social development. We therefore value this opportunity to learn more about how they work towards these ends.

Specifically, seeing how detrimental corruption is to good governance and economic development, it is unfortunate that three of the members of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States rank between 127th and 150th place in the 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International.

I therefore wonder whether the organisation and its parliamentary assembly have any strategies to enhance good governance in their member states.

Moreover, seeing that Turkey distinguishes itself positively by ranking significantly higher, I wonder whether there is any mechanism for exchanging best practices between the members.

In the same vein, media freedom is crucial to democracy, rule of law and to economic development. We therefore welcome the organization's objective of encouraging interaction of the mass media of the member states. Regrettably, all of the organization's members still face challenges in this area. For example, in the 2013 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters without Borders, the relevant countries rank between 106th and 156th place.

Here too it would be interesting to hear what measures our guests have introduced to improve the situation.

Mr Chairman,

Allow me finally to wish the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries every success in their important work.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.