



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE  
HEAD OF THE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UZBEKISTAN

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 20 May 2021

Madame Chair,

I join others in welcoming Ambassador von Arx to the Permanent Council for the first time in his new capacity and thank him for his report.

We commend the cooperation between the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan and the host country authorities and are pleased to see a continued, growing interest from Uzbek authorities to develop this cooperation across all three dimensions. This cooperation is a good example on how the OSCE field missions contribute to capacity building in line with mandates, common commitments and in line with host country priorities. The report gives a substantial overview of the office's activities, I will only comment on a few.

An active civil society is a prerequisite for a functioning, prosperous democracy. We are happy to note that the Project Co-ordinator continues to facilitate NGO participation in events, thus enabling contributions from voices outside the government to the country's development.

Seeing good security sector governance through lenses of human rights, the rule of law and gender equality demonstrates OSCE's comprehensive approach to security in practice. It would be interesting to hear more on how, or whether, the workshop on the role of parliament in the oversight of the security sector has influenced reform of the sector in Uzbekistan.

We highly appreciate the Project Co-ordinator's emphasis on gender equality throughout his report. Making sure that gender mainstreaming is included in all aspects of the office's work, will significantly improve the outcomes of the work done.

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For the time being, Norway contributes financially to three different projects under the Project Co-ordinator. We hope it will be possible to a continue such cooperation, within the coordinator's mandate and in line with Uzbek and Norwegian priorities.

Central Asia is an OSCE region with special challenges, given the situation in Afghanistan. We are happy to note that there is a growing interest in regional cooperation. We encourage the Project Co-ordinator to continue expanding such cooperation within existing mandates and in line with host country priorities.

Thank you