



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO H.E. THORBJØRN JAGLAND,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik to the Permanent Council, Vienna
1 July 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Norway joins others in extending a most cordial welcome to H.E. Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland on the occasion of his first visit to the Permanent Council. We thank him for his interesting and informative presentation of current discussions and ongoing efforts in the Council of Europe, and in particular for his thoughtful remarks on the prospects for further enhancing the already excellent co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Mr. Chairperson,

As a founding member of the Council of Europe, Norway has always strongly supported the Council's strenuous efforts to develop legal norms and standards for strengthening democratic societies based on the rule of law and unequivocal respect for human rights. The OSCE and the Council of Europe are committed to the same values and work towards the same aims. Our memberships overlap to a large extent, and even beyond this, the Council of Europe has been able to spread its positive influence throughout the whole OSCE region. The Council of Europe's valuable normative work underpins OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, without which there can be no lasting peace and no real stability. The Council of Europe is a fully integrated part of the European security architecture. As we now address key issues of security in the context of the Corfu Process, Norway believes – like other partners – that drawing on the valuable experience of the Council is highly relevant for the success of this exercise.

Mr Chairperson,

Norway welcomes and fully shares the Secretary-General's main message; that we need to continue our efforts to pool resources and avoid unnecessary duplication of work, if we are to succeed in protecting human rights and promoting democracy and the rule of law in an efficient and cost-effective way. We welcome the substantial progress achieved in enhancing practical co-operation - between headquarters and in the field - in the four priority areas outlined in the Joint Declaration of 2005: a) Fight against terrorism; b) protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; c) combating trafficking in human beings, and d) promoting tolerance and non-discrimination.

In particular, we highly value the fruitful co-operation that has developed between the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Council of Europe on the very important issues related to the treatment of national minorities, which can be a source of frictions between states, and have been among the root causes of many of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE region.

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that the division of responsibilities and the complementary roles of the OSCE and the Council of Europe are now generally well recognised, and that substantial progress has been made in achieving synergies in our pursuit of widely shared goals. However, this does not mean that we cannot do better. Resources are scarce, and duplication of work seldom renders good results. Therefore, Mr. Secretary General, Norway very much welcomes your ambitious reform programme, which we understand is already being translated in concrete actions, not only at CoE headquarters, but also with regard to its external presence. In this context, Norway welcomes the proposal to set up a Council of Europe Liaison Office in Vienna, which we think will be very useful in facilitating and improving day-to-day contact between our two organisations, and in developing the cooperation even further.

Finally, Mr, Chairperson, let me wish the Secretary-General and the Council of Europe every success in pursuit of their important mission.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.