



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY MR. JONAS GAHR STØRE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF NORWAY, AT THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

OSCE Ministerial Council, Ljubljana
December 6, 2005

Thank you Mr Chairman,

We need the OSCE. 30 years after Helsinki the common principles and goals that unite us are still the same. Our vision is about democracy, security and sustainable development. Our approach is comprehensive and operational. Our institutions and field operations are uniquely suited to achieving these common objectives.

I would like to use this opportunity to focus on three areas that require urgent attention:

- What our priorities should be.
- How we can make the OSCE more effective.
- And, how we can improve cooperation with other international organisations.

First, on priorities. Multilateral cooperation is the best way of meeting common threats to our security. Democracy and the rule of law is the best recipe for achieving stability and economic growth. Every country must make its own way, based on its own experience. No single approach can be universally applied. But, there are core values and standards that we are all committed to. The OSCE must help secure these values and standards.

Then there are new challenges – or threats – to political stability and human security emerging across our region. Terrorism, trafficking of all kinds, migration and issues of integration and xenophobia are all serious problems that can best be dealt with through multilateral cooperation.

However, the focus on old and new challenges must not result in our losing focus on the conflicts in our region that are still unresolved. The decisions and commitments made in Istanbul must be implemented in full.

Mr. Chairman,

One new challenge that requires our urgent attention is the global fight against one of the most horrendous criminal activities of today – trafficking in human beings. Norway welcomes the addendum on child trafficking to the OSCE Action Plan.

Criminal networks take advantage of people in poverty and in search for better lives. What we decide in the OSCE is important. But concrete steps taken by each participating State are what matters. We must address all aspects. We must all fight poverty and protect victims of trafficking to make them able to return to a meaningful life.

Sadly, we often see an increase of human trafficking in connection with peacekeeping operations. We need to cooperate with others, especially NATO, the EU and the UN, on combating this evil. A common approach is needed to ensure that the presence of international troops is not a contributing factor to the demand side.

Let me also comment on one aspect of our economic and environmental cooperation, keeping in mind the OSCE's role as a comprehensive security organization. Transportation is a promising main theme for the next Economic Forum. Transportation is key to our economic performance. Norway supports the initiative taken by the incoming Belgian Chairman-in-Office. We stand ready to contribute actively, and to share the experiences we are making in Nordic region and in the Euro Barents region.

And now to my second point, Mr Chairman, on making the OSCE more effective.

We should seize the opportunity provided by the Panel of Eminent Persons to regain a sense of a common purpose. We cannot afford to let new dividing lines develop. Political disagreement must not prevent us from finding solutions that will benefit the organization and make it more effective.

I realize that we need more time to reach consensus on the future of the OSCE. But Norway welcomes the "road-map" on the way ahead in the reform process.

We should start next year's work with the same goal - to improve the effectiveness of the OSCE. Reform should serve the interests of all States.

But reform must not be at the expense of OSCE activities that are getting results. Election monitoring and follow-up must continue to be a core function of the OSCE.

Key issues for Norway are stronger coherence within the organisation and a greater focus on the core tasks. We are ready to implement and support the implementation of all initiatives to this end.

Thirdly, Mr Chairman,

We must look to other organisations that can have an impact on European security. Our guiding principle should be to identify our strengths and the areas where we can provide added value. Norway welcomes the closer co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The cooperation is pragmatic and focuses on specific issues. We must also cooperate closely with the UN, NATO and the EU, to optimize the use of resources. There is an obvious gain in working closely together where we are all engaged.

Finally, I would like to thank you, Mr Rupel, and your team, for your leadership and efficiency during the Slovenian Chairmanship. Your dedication and efficiency have impressed us all. I look forward to cooperating closely with our Belgian colleague next year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.