



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT BY NORWAY CONCERNING REGIONAL LEGISLATION IN ST.
PETERSBURG AND CERTAIN CITIES IN MOLDOVA BANNING AGGRESSIVE
PROPAGANDA OF NON-TRADITIONAL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS

as delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna March 22nd, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

I spoke on this issue last week and did not intend to do so this time. But after having heard the responses by my distinguished colleagues from the Russian Federation and the Holy See to the statements made by the US and France – on behalf of a number of countries – I would like to offer the following comments:

First, the arguments of the Russian Federation and the Holy See seem to imply that they regard human rights as a sort of a catalogue from which you can pick and choose. It is not. We cannot deny anybody their rights simply because we disapprove of their opinions, their background or their sexual orientation.

Second, we have today again heard the argument that LGBT issues fall outside the scope of the OSCE because the OSCE is a security organisation. This argument cannot be accepted since the OSCE is characterized, ever since its inception in 1975, by a comprehensive approach to security, in which human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy constitute an integral and important dimension.

Third, Mr. Chairman, we cannot argue that LGBT falls outside the scope of human rights and fundamental freedoms because LGBT persons are not explicitly mentioned in OSCE documents, the European Convention on Human Rights or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Conventions must be read in conjunction with the jurisprudence developed since they were adopted. Decisions made by the European Court of Human Rights are therefore important for those 47 of us – Russia included – that are members of the Council of Europe. The positions of the UN Human Rights Committee are of great importance to all of us. There is therefore no doubt that all OSCE participating states have an obligation to protect the rights of LGBT persons under international law.

Thank you.