



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 20 March 2014

Mr Chairman,

I join others in warmly welcoming Foreign Minister Deshchytzia to the Permanent Council and thank him for his important address at a critical point in time for Ukraine and for Europe.

I would like to add Norway's voice to previous speakers who have expressed concern over the situation in Ukraine, following Russia's de facto annexation of part of the country. We consider the recent developments to be alarming, and the situation is followed closely in Oslo. I would like to draw your attention to the press statement issued by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday, in which he inter alia said the following:

“Norway condemns Russia's annexation of the Ukrainian Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which is in violation of international law. The use of military force by Russia to redraw national boundaries is unacceptable.

The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine must be fully respected. Norway will continue to view Crimea as part of Ukraine.

The Government considers it deeply regrettable that the Russian authorities have chosen to disregard the clear signals from the international community. Russia has a responsibility to comply with its international obligations and work towards a political solution.

Norway stands together with its allies and partners in NATO and the EU. Norway supports the restrictive measures imposed by the EU on a number of specified individuals from Russia and Crimea.” End of quote.

In addition, I would like to add the following points:

Firstly, in this situation the OSCE is well positioned to play a constructive role to help overcome the current crisis. We deeply regret that the Russian Federation is blocking the deployment of a monitoring mission to Ukraine.

Secondly, Norway will continue to support Ukraine. We will show solidarity towards the transitional government and will increase our financial support considerably, including to projects developed by the Secretariat, the institutions and the Project Coordinator in Ukraine.

We will also provide both long-term and short-term observers for the presidential election in May.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the seriousness of this situation, and point out that President Putin's speech earlier this week represents a clear setback for security and stability, not only in Ukraine, but in Europe at large.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.