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**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN EGYPT

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 3 February, 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me first state that Norway associates itself fully with the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of the EU of 31 January, as just referred to by the distinguished representative of Hungary.

Allow me also to share with you a few quotes from our Foreign Minister, Mr. Jonas Gahr Støre, from a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs just an hour ago:

“We condemn the use of violence in the streets of Cairo. The clashes in Egypt must not be used as a pretext for cracking down on the reform movement and impede an orderly transition to democratic rule. The Egyptians’ right to freedom of expression and the media’s right to report freely must be respected.

“The government and the law enforcement authorities are responsible for preventing violent assaults such as those we have seen in Tahrir Square and elsewhere in Egypt”.

“Norway supports the Egyptian people’s legitimate demand for democratic and fundamental political change. All parties must refrain from violence. The political leadership has the primary responsibility for initiating dialogue and embarking on fundamental political reforms.”

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.