



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE
FOREIGN MINISTER OF SERBIA, H.E. VUK JEREMIC

OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna
17 JULY, 2007

Norway welcomes H.E. Vuc Jeremic to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his interesting statement.

On previous occasions Norway has commended the Serbian government and people for the smooth running of the parliamentary elections in January. The new parliament better reflects Serbia's multiethnic composition and it is encouraging that women have doubled their representation.

Norway welcomes the fact that the new government has been formed. There seems to be a clear vision of the democratic road ahead. Norway, on her part, remains committed to supporting reform and processes of Euro-Atlantic integration for Serbia. It is encouraging that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations (SAA) with the European Commission have resumed. Norway considers the SAA process an important force for reform and modernisation in the Western Balkans.

Norway welcomes the stated commitment and improved co-operation of the Serbian Government with the ICTY. The arrest and transfer of Ratko Mladic to the Hague will further confirm this commitment.

We are pleased with the good working relationship between the new government and the OSCE mission. This is important in order for the reform agenda to continue.

Norway's cooperation with Serbia is focused on support for reform initiatives and institution-building. The rule of law and reform of the judiciary and police are among our main priorities. We are pleased to note the important progress being made within this sector. Norway appreciates the longstanding and constructive co-operation with the OSCE mission in these areas.

Mr. Chairman,

The process regarding the future status for Kosovo must continue. The status quo is not an option. It is important that the process takes place within the framework of the UN Security Council. The international community must contribute constructively to the process. The aim must be a stable multi-ethnic society in Kosovo that contributes to regional political stability for the longer term. We call on Belgrade and Pristina to adopt a flexible and constructive approach in view of reaching a durable solution as soon as possible.

In closing, let me wish H.E. Vuk Jeremic all the best in his important position and reiterate Norway's willingness to support the ongoing reform efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman