

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE  
REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE OSCE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN NUR-SULTAN

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 23 June 2022

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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I join others in welcoming Dr. Volker Frobarth back to the Permanent Council and thank him for his comprehensive report. We are very satisfied with his and his staff's important work in Kazakhstan.

We are pleased to see the continued co-operation between the OSCE Program Office in Nur-Sultan and the Kazakh authorities and the continued, growing interest from the Kazakh authorities to further develop this cooperation across all three OSCE dimensions. The global situation with increased threats to both traditional security, economic growth and democracy clearly illustrates the value of the comprehensive security concept. We are pleased to note that the Programme Office continues to promote a broad and balanced portfolio.

In general, Norway takes the view that the Program Office contributes to the promotion of a prosperous, democratic, and stable Kazakhstan. There is still much work ahead in order to achieve these goals, but we also follow with interest the developments in the country. With respect for the many challenges, we are looking forward to solid results of work of the Office.

We welcome the Kazakh authorities' decision to include the broader population and local authorities in the political reform process, and the socio-economic reforms announced by President Tokayev. We also positively note that ODIHR was invited by the host country to monitor the 5 June referendum on the planned constitutional changes.

However, along with colleagues, we remain concerned about the imprisonment of opposition demonstrators and court cases in the wake of the uprising in January. It is our

firm conviction that they represent something that we should not condone in a country that claims to be founded on democratic values.

Norway is pleased to have supported the Program Office's project related to police reform in line with the host countries priorities and OSCE commitments. Furthermore, Norway assisted the Program Office in facilitating a study trip for representatives from the Kazakh Senate to Oslo in May this year. The Kazakh parliamentarians met with Norwegian public administration, officials, and academia in the field of Defence, Justice, and Governance to discuss Security Sector Reform and implementation of parliamentary oversight.

It is our belief that host countries benefit from the comprehensive approach to capacity building across all three dimensions of security. As a result, we all benefit from the increased security in our OSCE region. Norway will continue to support the OSCE Program Office in Nur-Sultan.

Let me seize the opportunity to wish ambassador Frobarth and his staff the best of luck in their important work.

Thank you.