



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO
THE HEAD OF THE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN BISHKEK
AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE OSCE ACADEMY IN BISHKEK**

Delivered by Minister Counsellor Henning Hj. Johansen to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 6 June 2019

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I join others in welcoming the Head of the Programme Office in Bishkek, Ambassador Pierre von Arx, and the Director of the OSCE Academy, Dr. Alexander Wolters, to the Permanent Council and thank them for their reports.

Norway appreciates the close working relations between the Programme Office and the Kyrgyz government. The field missions' effectiveness are dependent on a common understanding of priorities and commitments from our missions and the host country. We are pleased that the programme office is engaged in the increased cooperation between the Central Asian countries as we believe a cross-border approach to common security challenges are often more efficient.

The program office is engaged in a wide spectre of programmatic activities across all three dimensions of security. The programme office has shown great initiative in developing a strategy to gender mainstream its activities according to its mandate. Consistent use of gender-disaggregated, as well as gender-sensitive, data and indicators can improve the mission's impact on the ground.

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Preventing violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism is an area where we believe the use of gender mainstreamed approaches are especially well suited. Increased use of regional, cross-border initiatives could also contribute to reducing the risks of tensions that could in its turn contribute to radicalisation. We would like to underline the importance of keeping such activities compliant with human rights and OSCE commitments.

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek continues to be a flagship for our organisation. Feedback from students and others testifies to the high level of education at the academy. The efforts to further strengthen academic research, as well as cooperation with other academic institutions, will also contribute to raising the academic standards of the growing number of applicants.

Norway is proud to be a consistent, major contributor through the Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs and is happy to see an increase in the Academy's funding also through the Unified Budget and from other participating states.

Thank you.