



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY ON THE ADDRESS BY THE
REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA**
As delivered by acting permanent representative Lars Løberg to the Permanent
Council,
Vienna, 21 June 2012

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Let me join others in warmly welcoming Ms Dunja Mijatović back to the Permanent Council. We fully subscribe to the appreciation expressed by the EU and other previous speakers for the quality of the work done by her office. We are also fully behind the views presented by the EU on internet freedom, safety of journalists and media pluralism.

Mr. Chairman,

To us, the long list of activities listed in today's report underlines both the engagement of the representative and her staff and how much work that still has to be done on this important field of activities until we can state that all commitments are fully implemented in all participating states. That is also why we repeatedly have argued in favour of more resources for her office and why we keep funding ExB-projects and conferences under her umbrella, despite the urgent need to fund so important and regular activities over the Unified Budget.

There is every reason to be concerned about the commitments on freedom of the media not being sufficiently respected or implemented in a number of participating States. Single cases and incidents involving journalists have been, and will continue to be, brought to the attention of the Permanent Council. Norway has aligned herself to these initiatives, and we will continue to be active in such cases.

We will continue to support OSCE events on media freedom and on the safety of journalists, and we certainly second the chairmanship's priority for a decision during the upcoming Dublin ministerial in this field.

We reiterate the importance of each and every participating State welcoming the Representative on Freedom of the Media and her staff on assessment visits. There simply is no excuse for any participating State not to welcome representatives of the OSCE when they travel on a mission.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to highlight one subject important to all of us, namely how to manage the balance of freedom and security in a digital world, as addressed by the representative in her Stockholm speech in April. Norway believes that governments and regulators are obliged to safeguard pluralism in an increasingly digital world. The universality of human rights does not change with the introduction of new information technologies and they shall apply with equal force online as they do offline. The participating States will benefit from the Representative's assistance in the constantly changing field of digital media in the years to come. But we cannot expect that she and her staff will be able to be on top of this highly technical area if we are not willing to provide her with sufficient resources.

Mr. Chairman,

Freedom of expression is a priority in Norway's human rights policy. Freedom of expression is essential for the realisation of other fundamental rights, like freedom of assembly and access to information. It is a cornerstone of democracy.

There is a need for concrete action in all OSCE participating States regarding legislative requirements, including guarantees for media freedom and the creation of media laws which properly respect freedom of expression. We are fully behind the priorities given by the Representative, and we are ready to support her in her work for our common good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.