



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE MISSION TO SKOPJE

Delivered by Ambassador Anne- Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 7 April 2022

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

We thank ambassador Koja for his presentation to this Council, and for an informative report on the Mission's activities.

Norway strongly supports the reform agenda of North Macedonia and see the OSCE mission as an important actor in moving this agenda forward. Further support should be given especially in the areas of good governance, judicial reform, and the fight against corruption. It is important to resolve North Macedonia's outstanding bilateral issues with Bulgaria on language and identity. They risk halting further reforms in North Macedonia and the European integration in the country, but also in the broader region.

The report we have read describes a very broad set of activities implemented at both local and national levels by the Mission in collaboration with stakeholders. We wonder whether ambassador Koja could reflect on the priorities on the mission. Would there be room for a stronger concentration of the efforts?

We would welcome descriptions of challenges to the Mission's work in its reporting. We find that descriptions of obstacles and challenges, rather than diminishing our trust in the Mission, increases this trust and the understanding we as participating States have for the Mission's work.

The Mission clearly takes the issue of gender mainstreaming seriously. We highly appreciate the efforts to increase the level of mainstreaming, including through implementing a Participatory Gender Audit. We encourage the Mission to continue this path, and to share its experiences with other OSCE missions. We view the field operations as one of the strongest assets of the OSCE, and best practices and lessons learned deserve more attention.

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Lastly, I would like to thank the North Macedonian government for taking on the task of chairing our organization in 2023. We look forward to good cooperation.

Thank you