



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE 3 FEBRUARY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN SERBIA

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 7 February 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Like others, Norway closely followed the second round of the presidential elections held in Serbia on 3 February. It is with great satisfaction we note that international observers were allowed to observe the elections without any restrictions, and more important, that the very same international observers deem the elections to have been free and fair and conducted in line with OSCE and Council of Europe commitments for democratic elections.

The high turnout confirms a high level of public interest in the elections and is at the same time a testimony to the strong foundation for democracy in Serbia. We have noted with satisfaction that, in spite of the narrow margin, there was no dispute about the outcome of the elections. The losing candidate's graceful acknowledgement of defeat, testifies to the political maturity of the country.

Norway congratulates President Tadić on his re-election for a second term in office. We see the election of Tadić as a confirmation that the Serbian people have chosen the European path for their country. We are confident that President Tadić will be able to bridge societal and political divides and unite the Serbian people in order to strengthen the process of European integration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.