



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 10 April 2014

Mr Chairman,

I join previous speakers in thanking you for inviting this group of high-level OSCE officials to the Permanent Council to inform us about the status of our organization's engagement with Ukraine. We appreciate their substantive and comprehensive presentations. A special welcome to the newly appointed Chief Monitor, Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan. We look forward to cooperating with him.

Mr Chairman,

We commend the Swiss Chairmanship and the OSCE Executive Structures for their efforts to implement measures to support Ukraine. These measures prove that the OSCE *does* play an important role in fostering security and stability in Europe, also when fundamental OSCE principles are being violated.

Norway has supported all these activities, with extra-budgetary contributions or with personnel, or with both. We are prepared to contribute also to additional projects in support of Ukraine. I therefore encourage our Institutions, the Secretariat, the Project Coordinator's Office as well as Ukrainian authorities themselves to continue developing new projects.

Mr Chairman,

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has already proven useful. We urge the Chief Monitor to proceed swiftly to strengthen and expand the mission in accordance with the Permanent Council Decision of 21 March. We encourage the Monitoring Mission to continue frequent and substantial reporting on the situation in Ukraine. It is of utmost importance that we receive objective and reliable information in a timely manner.

Mr Chairman,

The presentations today, and the spot reports received from the Special Monitoring Mission so far, do not dispel our deep concern about the ongoing situation in Ukraine, following the Russian Federation's illegal annexation of the Ukrainian Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

We are concerned by the concentration of Russian forces along the border of Ukraine, and we regret that the Russian Federation did not take the opportunity at the joint FSC-PC meeting on Monday to dispel these concerns. Not attending that meeting was a violation of the letter and spirit of the Vienna Document. It was also a missed opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue on legitimate security concerns stemming from the Russian military activities around Ukraine and to implement in good faith the politico-military commitments under Chapter III of the Vienna Document.

Mr Chairman,

We share the concerns expressed by the Representative on Freedom of the Media about the deteriorating media freedom situation, especially regarding the safety of journalists in eastern Ukraine. Attempts to silence members of the media cannot be tolerated, and there must be no impunity for the perpetrators.

Furthermore, as expressed in a statement by the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Crimean Tartars and the Ukrainian community in the Crimea are in a precarious position, and must be protected. In general, we also expect the interim government in Kiev to respect the rights of national, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities throughout the country.

Mr Chairman,

We are receiving worrying information from OSCE monitoring teams on developments in eastern Ukraine, including the seizure of public buildings and violent clashes between protesters and police, as well as between representatives of different political parties and groups. We urge all parties to refrain from any provocations and aggressive behaviour. A heavy responsibility rests with those who have instigated the recent demonstrations in eastern Ukraine.

Mr Chairman,

We urge the Russian Federation to de-escalate the situation by pulling back its forces along the border with Ukraine to their pre-crisis positions. They can further de-escalate the crisis by putting an end to the virulent anti-Ukraine propaganda in Russian government controlled media.

In conclusion, Norway welcomes the planned meeting between Ukraine, the United States, the European Union and the Russian Federation next week. We hope it will provide an opportunity for constructive dialogue.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.