



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON AFGHANISTAN

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna February 25, 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Like others, Norway welcomes the outcome of the London Conference, which reconfirmed the international community's continuing commitment to Afghanistan, while underlining the responsibility of the Afghan leadership for the future development of the country, not least with regard to security, but also as far as governance, economic and social development and anti-corruption measures are concerned. As part of our development assistance, Norway will maintain its substantial contributions to help Afghanistan achieve these aims.

We agree that the OSCE has a role to play in the overall international approach and note that the OSCE efforts on Policing and Border security were explicitly welcomed in the London Communiqué. Norway supports the evolvement of a closer OSCE cooperation with Afghanistan on border management and in combating crime and drugs trafficking. Like the EU, Norway attaches great importance to the implementation of the 2007 Madrid MC decision on OSCE engagement with its partner country in these areas.

We also share the view that OSCE/ODIHR, with its globally recognized expertise in election assistance and election monitoring, can make valuable contributions to improving the Afghan electoral process and strengthening its electoral institutions. We, too, hope that the recommendations from the ODIHR Election Support Team to the 2009 Presidential elections will be taken fully into account as part of the reform process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.