



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**JOINT STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
17th of May, 2012

Mr. Chairperson,

I am speaking on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway.

Every 17th of May, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is celebrated because it was on May 17, 1990 that homosexuality was removed from the International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization.

This is an occasion for us to reflect on the situation of LGBT persons in the OSCE region. Every day, LGBTs face discrimination or are even victims of acts of violence solely because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is hard to believe that in this day and age homosexuality is still criminalized in some OSCE participating states.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms pertain to every human being regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We are of the firm belief that the situation of LGBT persons must also be raised within OSCE because our organization is characterized by a comprehensive approach to security, in which all human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy constitute an integral and important dimension.

There is no doubt that all OSCE participating states have an obligation to protect the rights of LGBT persons under international law. Therefore we today again express our concern that several towns and municipalities of OSCE participating States have recently adopted laws that discriminate against LGBT persons.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that we will continue to press the participating States of the OSCE to live up to their obligations, and uphold the basic contract any government should have with its people. The criminalization of and intolerance towards homosexuality is clearly incompatible with the fundamental OSCE value of human rights.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.